



PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 17 JULY 2023

10.30 am COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

MEMBERSHIP - Councillor Johanna Howell (Chair)
Councillors Sam Adeniji, Charles Clark, Penny di Cara, Chris Dowling,
Kathryn Field, Nuala Geary, Wendy Maples, Stephen Shing, John Ungar
(Vice Chair) and Trevor Webb

Miss Nicola Boulter, Parent Governor Representative
Maria Cowler Roman Catholic Diocese representative
Trevor Cristin, Diocese of Chichester Representative
John Hayling, Parent Governor Representative

A G E N D A

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (*Pages 3 - 8*)
2. Apologies for absence
3. Disclosures of interests
Disclosures by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
4. Urgent items
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgent.
5. Verbal update on the implementation of Schools White Paper Reforms
6. Work programme (*Pages 9 - 58*)
7. Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) (*Pages 59 - 270*)
8. Adult Social Care and Health Equality and Inclusion Scrutiny Review (*Pages 271 - 302*)
9. Use of Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Review (*Pages 303 - 326*)
10. Any other items previously notified under agenda item 4

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent
LEWES BN7 1UE

7 July 2023

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

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the People Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 16 March 2023.

PRESENT Councillors Johanna Howell (Chair) Councillors
Miss Nicola Boulter, John Hayling, Sam Adeniji,
Penny di Cara, Chris Dowling, Nuala Geary, Wendy Maples,
Stephen Shing and John Ungar (Vice Chair), Stephen Murphy

LEAD MEMBERS Councillors Bob Bowdler and Bob Standley

IN REMOTE ATTENDANCE Councillor Roy Galley Chair of East Sussex Standing
Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)
Mr Trevor Cristin (Diocese of Chichester Representative)

ALSO PRESENT

Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services

Claire Lee, Head of Policy

Claire Roberts, Senior Manager: Improvement and Intervention

Rachel Sweeney, Senior Policy and Scrutiny Adviser

Samantha Williams, Assistant Director, Strategy, Commissioning and Supply Management

32. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

32.1 The Committee RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2022 as a correct record.

33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

33.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Charles Clark, Kathryn Field (Councillor Murphy substituting) and Maria Cowler (Roman Catholic Diocese Representative).

34. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

34.1 There were no disclosures of interests.

35. URGENT ITEMS

35.1 There were no urgent items.

36. STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) ANNUAL REPORT

36.1 The report was introduced by the Chair of East Sussex SACRE. The Chair noted that SACRE was obliged to have an agreed syllabus for maintained schools which is revised every 5 years. A new syllabus had been developed in the last 12 months with training offered to teachers in primary and secondary schools on the content. The Chair noted that take up of training had been good and that most schools were adopting the syllabus, including academies who were doing so voluntarily.

36.2 There was ongoing work with schools, including special schools, and visits would be resuming in the Spring.

36.3 The Chair of East Sussex SACRE noted that the SACRE budget, which was historically increased in years when the development of a new syllabus was required, was set to return to its original budget next year and that he would like to seek a continued increase in the budget to fund activities including a teacher and student conference.

36.4 The Committee welcomed the update and discussed the report. This covered:

- **Collective Worship** – the Committee asked if the review of determination procedures had taken place yet. The Chair of East Sussex SACRE confirmed that it had and confirmed that collective worship should be applied in all schools and should be of a broadly Christian nature. In areas where there were large populations of other religions, schools could ask for determination for collective workshop to have a different focus. The Chair confirmed that there had been no applications for this in East Sussex, but there was a policy in place for future potential requests.

The Committee asked about a parent's right to withdraw their children from collective worship in schools and to what degree this was being exercised. The Senior Manager for Support and Intervention Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service noted that this was a local issue which head teachers of individual schools would consult on with parents and that therefore the County Council did not hold any data on this.

- **Diversity of SACRE membership** – the Committee asked for an update on the work of SACRE to support diverse representation in its membership in order to reflect the wide range of beliefs across the county, including humanist groups. The Committee heard that

SACRE members included councillors, the Church of England, other faiths and teachers offering different views. SACRE had previously included humanist, Muslim and Buddhist representatives, but these representatives had stepped down. Maintaining representation across the religious spectrum was challenging and was an ongoing activity. The Chair of SACRE noted that there was not currently a large local Sikh or Hindu community in East Sussex, but SACRE would welcome any involvement from these communities.

- **Future funding of SACRE** – The Committee asked what steps SACRE was taking to increase funding. The Chair of SACRE responded that additional funding had been previously generated before the pandemic through a paid conference and that other options for funding were being explored. The Committee agreed that religious education in schools was very important, especially with the inclusion of a broader narrative around world religions and humanism. Officers from Children’s Services clarified that increased funding was provided to SACRE every five years to develop a revised syllabus, but otherwise the budget remained stable. The Director of Children’s Services agreed to look at the implications of holding the annual SACRE budget at £7,000 with current inflation pressures, and the potential impact on the running of SCARE, as part of the RPPR process, and to provide an update to the Committee on this during the RPPR process throughout the year. The department would also support SACRE with seeking external funding.

36.5 The Committee RESOLVED to note the work of SACRE in the implementation of the Local Agreed Syllabus, raising the profile and importance of religious education, and supporting East Sussex Schools with the delivering of high-quality teaching of Religious Education post Covid.

37. ARMED FORCES COVENANT

37.1 The Director of Children’s Services introduced the report which highlighted the work undertaken by the Council, including its recent application for Gold Accreditation under the Defence Employment Recognition Scheme.

37.2 The County Council’s Armed Forces Champion, Cllr Bowdler, stated that he was pleased, as a veteran, to champion this work. He noted the enthusiasm of ESCC officers and members, although he recognised that there was still work to do, especially in supporting families of Armed Forces personnel. He also noted the varying level of engagement across the District and Borough Councils (D&Bs) and that this engagement was a work in progress. The Armed Forces Champion reminded the Committee about the training on offer to officers and members and that he hoped to see a continuation of training and an increase in attendance.

37.3 The Committee welcomed the update and discussed the report. This covered:

- **Engagement with the Armed Forces Covenant in local areas** – The Committee noted the large number of events which had taken place and questioned whether this had included the Rother area, given the large number of veterans in the area. The Committee heard that partnership work in that area was still in progress.

The Committee noted the good work taking place across the county but recognised there was still work to do. The Committee asked if there were areas showing good

practice and what the council could do to learn from this. The Armed Forces Champion stated the importance of support from both members and officers in supporting engagement with D&Bs.

The Committee asked if there was more ESCC could do to support Parish and Town Councils, including working with champions in the local authorities, recognising that although they do not have a statutory role to play, many areas were very passionate about supporting this work. The work of local British Legions in identifying veterans that need support was also noted by the Committee. The Armed Forces Champion responded to say he would investigate increased collaboration with Parish and Town Councils and informed the Committee that there was good support available to veterans and families but that it needed to be communicated through champions and officers so that people were aware of the support available.

- **Families of Armed Forces personnel or veterans** – The Committee welcomed the recognition of families in the Armed Forces Covenant, including the impact that moving on a regular basis had on children's education. The Committee asked for further information on how schools supported children with parents or grandparents in the Armed Forces given the significant number of children affected in East Sussex. The department stated that schools did offer support to children and families and were sensitive to needs, and that capacity to increase support would need to be considered alongside other Children's Services priorities.
- **South East Reserve Forces and Cadets** – The Armed Forces Champion noted that there were local reserve forces that attended barracks in Brighton and Eastbourne as well as cadets across the county and advocated the role they play in supporting this work.
- **Employment support for veterans** – The Committee enquired about any additional support given to veterans to apply for jobs within the Council. The department informed the committee that where an applicant meets the essential criteria, if they are a veteran, they are guaranteed an interview, but under employment law they do not receive any preferential treatment in the interview for appointment.

37.4 The Committee congratulated the department and the Armed Forces Champion on the work being done, including the application for the Gold Award, and noted the contribution of veterans, families and cadets to the community during remembrance services and events.

37.5 The Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

38. WORK PROGRAMME

38.1 The Chair introduced the report which outlined the Committee's latest work programme.

38.2 The Director of Children's Services was asked to comment on the recent Government budget announcement around provision of childcare. The Committee heard that the department awaited more detail on this but anticipated providing additional support to the Early Years sector in order to deliver the national commitments over the coming years.

38.3 The Committee asked about what communication was in place between schools and extra-curricular activity providers, including after school clubs, to ensure concerns and achievements are highlighted. The Committee heard that if an after-school club had a safeguarding concern, there was clear guidance on how to proceed. It would be at the

discretion of the provider and the school to share other updates and information, however there were many examples where achievements were celebrated in school.

Prevention in Children's Services

- 38.4 The committee noted that the Review Board for Prevention in Children's Services had recommended that, as work on key projects and programmes was clearly under development and progressing at pace, the issue would be better considered by the committee through a Reference Group which could provide regular and timely scrutiny input.
- 38.5 The Director of Children's Services presented a Quality Demand Reduction Diagram outlining the link between cost and quality issues, and the department's ambitions to become both financially resilient and to improve outcomes for children needing the most intensive levels of care. The department's approach was to prioritise reunifying children with their family where possible and increased focus on supporting birth families, so they are able to parent in the future, enabling children to avoid becoming looked after.
- 38.6 Councillor Geary, referring to her role on the East Sussex Fostering Panel, highlighted the need for more foster carers within the county. The Director of Children's Services responded to say that the department could provide information for the Committee to disseminate to support the ongoing work to recruit foster carers.
- 38.7 The Committee RESOLVED to convert the Prevention in Children's Services Scrutiny Review to a Reference Group.

School Exclusions

- 38.8 The Chair asked the committee to review the proposed Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Review of School Exclusions.
- 38.9 The Committee discussed the following:
- **Exclusions and elective home education** – The Committee asked for clarification about the distinction between exclusions and elective home education, citing that some parents view there to be an overlap between the two. The Committee heard that no parent should experience any pressure to make the decision to educate their child at home and there was no current evidence of this happening. The department was piloting attending some meetings with schools and parents around decisions to home educate. Work was also ongoing to support schools with issues around attendance and absence, including part-time timetables. The Lead Member for Education and ISEND informed the Committee that he had received a reply to his letter to Government regarding home education and that he would circulate this to the Committee.
 - **Review Witnesses** – The Committee asked if it was possible for the Board to hear from children who had been excluded, to share their understanding and experiences of the issues as part of the review. The Director of Children's Services suggested that the department could support with participation work to give young people a voice in this review.
- 38.10 The Committee RESOLVED to agree the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Review of School Exclusions and to appoint Councillor Adeniji as Chair, and Councillors Field, Howell, Maples and Nicola Boulter and John Hayling, Parent Governor Representatives, to the Review Board.

Educational Attainment and Performance Reference Group

- 38.11 The Committee RESOLVED that an update on this work would be received by circulating the minutes of the last meeting.

Forward plan

38.12 The Committee reviewed the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions.

Work Programme

38.13 The Committee RESOLVED to agree the updated work programme.

39. RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES (RPPR)

39.1 The Chair introduced the report which reviewed the Committee's input into the RPPR cycle for the 2023-24 financial year.

39.2 The Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting ended at 11.56 am.

Councillor Johanna Howell (Chair)

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 17 July 2023

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Purpose: To review and discuss the People Scrutiny Committee's future work programme

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) review and agree the latest work programme set out at Appendix 1;
 - 2) review upcoming items on East Sussex County Council's Forward Plan as set out at Appendix 3 to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny.
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1 Background

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

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

2 Supporting information

Work programme

2.1 The Committee's latest work programme is attached at Appendix 1, incorporating a number of updates including those outlined below. The Committee is asked to consider, discuss and agree the work programme, subject to any further changes required.

Scrutiny Reviews

Adult Social Care and Health Equality and Inclusion

2.2 The review into Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health has concluded and the final report is included on this meeting agenda.

School Exclusions

2.3 The Review into School Exclusions is underway. Review meetings are considering evidence around preventative strategies, work with early help and education services, appropriate responses to children at risk, the role of governors and council messaging.

2.4 The Board has agreed a planned timeline to report to the Committee in November 2023 which is reflected in the attached work programme.

Reference Groups

Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HASCIP) Reference Group

2.5 The Reference Group met on 1 June 2023 to consider and comment on key elements of the draft Sussex Integrated Care Strategy Shared Delivery Plan ahead of it being considered by the Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development (SMED).

2.6 The Reference Group welcomed the Plan and discussed: how the Plan's actions will be delivered and resourced; the use of digitisation to deliver services; community engagement, including with seldom heard groups; the place-based governance arrangements and the impact on staffing. The Group's comments on the Plan were submitted to the Leader and Lead Member for SMED to inform his consideration of the Delivery Plan.

Prevention in Children's Services

2.7 Following the agreement at the March Committee that the Prevention in Children's Services Review be converted into a Reference Group, the Group held its first meeting on 29 June 2023. The Group heard from the Department about its work on Family Safeguarding and Family Hubs, both of which focus on whole family support and early intervention to prevent the need for more serious intervention later.

2.8 The Reference Group enquired about how these programmes would be supported on the ground, including the recruitment of staff and governance; monitoring progress; access to this support for people in rural areas and in areas of deprivation and how this support will be promoted to families. The Group agreed that this work would be of interest to the wider Committee and to share the presentations and minutes of the meeting. The presentation slides are included at Appendix 2 and the minutes will be circulated by e-mail when available.

Reports for Information

Adult Social Care Strategy

2.9 The new Adult Social Care Strategy was agreed by Cabinet on 27 June 2023. A briefing was provided to Committee Members on the Strategy in advance which covered the key elements of the Strategy; work undertaken to develop the Strategy, including extensive community engagement and the proposed approach to launching the Strategy and communicating it to stakeholders.

2.10 Committee Members welcomed the Strategy and asked a range of questions to gain a better understanding of the key priorities and the implications this would have on staffing, resources and budget.

Forward Plan

2.11 A copy of the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 October 2023 is included at Appendix 3. The Committee is requested to review the forthcoming items on the Forward Plan to identify any issues within the remit of this Committee that may require more detailed scrutiny. The Forward Plan is revised and published on a monthly basis and Committee members should regularly review the Forward Plan.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 An important part of managing the work of the People Scrutiny Committee is regularly reviewing its future work programme. This involves the Committee assessing its priorities, ensuring its ongoing reviews are completed in a timely fashion and identifying new areas for scrutiny.

PHILIP BAKER
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People Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme

Current Scrutiny Reviews		
Title of Review	Detail	Proposed Completion Date
ASC Equality and Inclusion	<p>The Committee accepted the recommendation of the Initial Scoping Board that the Committee proceed with a review of this area, looking at how the Department engages with 'seldom heard' groups and whether residents of all backgrounds know how to access ASCH services.</p> <p>Membership of the Review Board: Councillors di Cara, Geary, Ungar (Chair) and Webb.</p>	July 2023
School Exclusions	<p>The Committee has accepted the recommendation of the second Scoping Board that the Committee proceed with a review of this area, focusing on role the of the Council in reducing the levels of school exclusion in East Sussex, with a particular regard to vulnerable children and young people. The review is considering preventative strategies, the role of early help, appropriate responses to a child at risk of exclusion, the role of governors and clarity of messaging.</p> <p>Membership of the Review Board: Councillors Adeniji (Chair), Field, Howell, Maples and Nicola Boulter, Parent Governor Representative and John Hayling, Parent Governor Representative.</p>	November 2023
Initial Scoping Reviews		
Subject area for initial scoping	Detail	Proposed Dates
School Attendance	<p>The Committee heard at their 2021 work planning awayday that overall school absence and persistent absence rates across East Sussex are high, when compared to national and statistical neighbours; and that East Sussex has a significant number of children and young people deemed too ill to attend school due to anxiety and poor mental health and increasing levels of Emotionally-Based School Avoidance.</p> <p>A scoping board meeting was held on 10 March 2022 and the Board agreed that although the subject was appropriate for a Scrutiny Review, as so much of the current situation regarding school absence rates in East Sussex was related to the ongoing impact of, and disruption from, the coronavirus pandemic, it was too early for the Committee to undertake a scrutiny review of school attendance.</p>	To be confirmed following a further short scoping board in October/November 2023.

	<p>The Board therefore agreed that the review should commence in 2023 when we expect to have a clearer sense of the long-term impact of COVID on school absences. A further short scoping board meeting will be held in late 2023 to build on issues discussed at the 2022 scoping board and to review the draft Terms of Reference for this review, as well as considering any related issues arising from the Scrutiny Review of School Exclusions.</p> <p>Membership of the Scoping Board: Cllrs Adeniji, di Cara, Field and Howell (Chair) and Nicola Boulter, Parent Governor Representative.</p>	
Suggested Potential Future Scrutiny Review Topics		
Suggested Topic	Detail	
Scrutiny Reference Groups		
Reference Group Title	Subject area	Meeting Dates
Prevention in Children’s Services	<p>The committee agreed in March 2023 to convert a planned Scrutiny Review on prevention in Children’s Services into a Reference Group in order to provide regular and timely input into key project and programmes which are under development and progressing at pace. The group is considering work to develop preventative approaches including Family Hubs and the Family Safeguarding model, providing ongoing scrutiny challenge.</p> <p>Membership of the Reference Group: Councillors Adeniji, Field, Howell and John Hayling, Parent Governor Representative (Chair).</p>	Next meeting: December 2023
Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HASCIP) Reference Group	<p>The Committee agreed to establish a Reference Group to monitor progress of the East Sussex Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HASCIP) and identify areas for future scrutiny. It reviews HASCIP progress reports provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board and meets on an ad hoc basis as required to consider issues arising in more detail.</p> <p>The group last met on 1 June 2023 to consider and comment on key elements of the Sussex Integrated Care Strategy Action Plan ahead of it being considered by the Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development (LMSMED). The Group welcomed the plan and submitted comments to be considered with the report to LMSEMD.</p> <p>Membership of the group: Councillors Clark, di Cara, Geary (Chair), Ungar and Webb.</p>	Next meeting: TBC

Educational Attainment and Performance Scrutiny Reference Group	<p>The Committee agreed in June 2018 to establish a Reference Group to focus on reviewing data on educational attainment in East Sussex and related issues. The group meets on an annual basis.</p> <p>The Reference Group met on the 7 March 2023 to review the attainment data for the 2021/22 academic year.</p> <p>Membership of the group: Councillors Adeniji, Field (Chair) and Howell and Nicola Boulter, Parent Governor Representative.</p>	Next meeting: Early 2024
Adult Social Care reforms Reference Group	<p>The Committee agreed at its 2022 work planning awayday to establish a Reference Group to consider the impact and implementation of the national Adult Social Care charging reforms. Implementation of the reforms was subsequently delayed in the 2022 Autumn Statement from October 2023 to October 2025 and the first meeting of the Group will take place closer to implementation.</p> <p>Membership of the group: Councillors di Cara, Geary and Ungar.</p>	First meeting: closer to implementation of the reforms in Oct 2025
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) Board	RPPR Board meets annually to agree detailed comments and any recommendations on the emerging portfolio plans and spending and savings proposals to be put to Cabinet on behalf of the scrutiny committee.	Next meeting: December 2023
Reports for Information		
Subject Area	Detail	Proposed Date
ASC Strategy	A briefing was provided to the Committee on 16 June 2023 on the key elements of the new ASC Strategy before it was presented to Cabinet. Presentations from the Department detailed the work undertaken to develop the Strategy, and the proposed approach to launching the Strategy and communicating it to stakeholders. The Committee welcomed the new Strategy.	
Training and Development		
Title of Training/Briefing	Detail	Proposed Date
People Committee awayday	To review the Committee work programme and discuss any key issues in further detail.	02 October 2023
Future Committee Agenda Items		Author
25 September 2023		

Committee Work Programme	To manage the Committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping boards, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Senior Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	To continue the Committee's work on the RPPR process for 2024/25 financial year.	Becky Shaw, Chief Executive
Safeguarding Adults Board - Annual Report	The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report outlines the safeguarding activity and performance in East Sussex during the previous financial year, as well as some of the main developments in place to prevent abuse from occurring.	Chair, Safeguarding Adults Board
Annual Review of Safer Communities	To update the Committee on performance in relation to Safer Communities in 2022/23 and the priorities and issues for 2023/24 that are highlighted in the Partnership Business Plan.	Assistant Director - Planning, Performance and Engagement
East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) Annual Report	<p>Presentation of the annual report of the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.</p> <p>This report will include a progress update on the work of multi-agency exploitation coordinators as requested at the March 2022 Committee.</p>	Independent Chair, East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership
13 November 2023		
Committee Work Programme	To manage the Committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping boards, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Senior Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
Elective Home Education	The Committee requested at its November 2022 meeting an update on the work of the Elective Home Education service.	Assistant Director, Education
School Exclusions Scrutiny Review	The final report of the Scrutiny Review of School Exclusions to be presented to the Committee	Councillor Sam Adeniji, Chair of the Review Board
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	To continue the Committee's work on the RPPR process for 2024/25 financial year.	Becky Shaw, Chief Executive
March 2024		
Loneliness Stewardship Group	The Committee agreed at its December 2022 meeting to request an update on progress with partnership work to address loneliness, particularly on the work of the	Assistant Director – Planning,

	Stewardship Group established following the conclusion of the 'Community Wellbeing: Connected People and Places' Project.	Performance and Engagement
Use of Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Review	12 month monitoring report on progress with the Review's recommendations.	Director of Adult Social Care and Health

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Family Hubs and Start for Life

A new way forward
for **every** family

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Appendix 2

Overview

- The story behind Family Hubs and Start for Life

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Family Hubs vision

- Positively changing lives of families and communities-
Start for life funded strands



Our Early Help 0-19 Service

- Youth
- Community
- Keywork
- Health Visiting
- Start for Life
- Voluntary
- SPOA



Challenges our population face

- Total Population 545,800
- 1/5 are children
- 20% living in low income families
- 22 areas in top 10% most deprived in the country
- 10 x more likely to be looked after or on a child protection plan
- Higher levels of obesity
- 2-3 x more likely to develop mental health problems
- Significantly higher infant mortality rate



Specifics issues in rural areas

- Access to transport
- Pockets of deprivation
- Higher proportion of poor quality housing, increased fuel costs and poor energy efficiency
- Lack of services available



Family Hubs and Start for life- why?

- Government commitment 2019
Levelling Up- make life more equal
- First 1001 days are critical-
conception to 2
- Recognition of the effects of the
pandemic on children and their
development

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Family Hubs in East Sussex

- East Sussex has been selected as one of 75 local authorities to deliver the Family Hubs programme and improve the Start for Life offer
- 3 year funding until 2025
- Improving the lives of those living in the most deprived areas
- Early intervention- normalising and destigmatising support
- Easily accessible 0-19 service to **ALL** families within their local communities
- Strengthening connections with families and community as a visible and trusted and source of information





Youth Hubs in East Sussex

- Working in conjunction with the Family Hubs development
- Transforming 4 current youth centres into Hubs
- Re-shaping how we deliver services over the next year
- Successful round of bidding to transform current buildings
- 3 year funding from public health to develop volunteer opportunities

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What will Family and Youth Hubs look like?

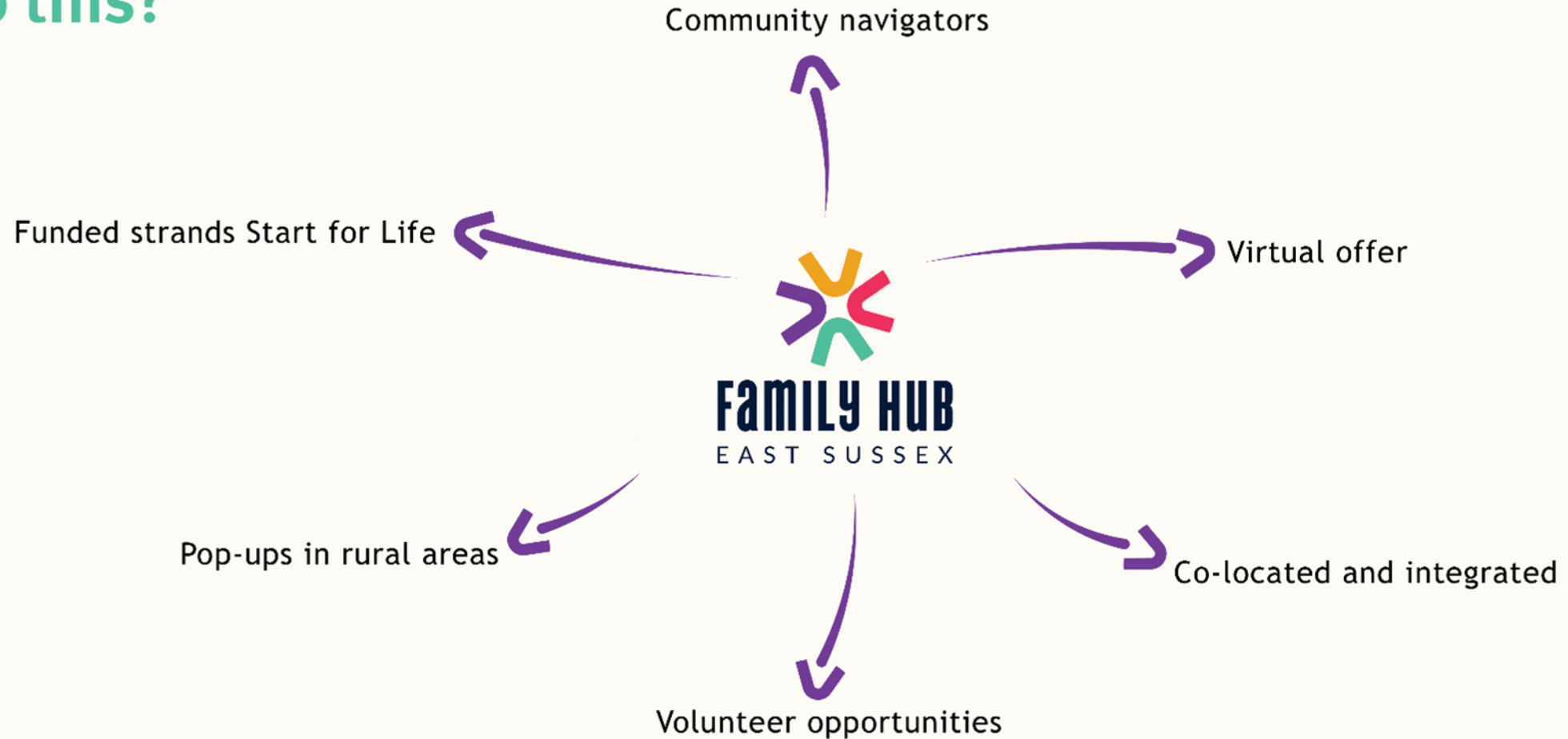


Family Hubs and Youth Hubs will offer both a physical and a virtual space that will mean everyone in the family has access to support for a wide range of issues, will enable them to take part in new activities, to ask questions and to meet other families from the community.



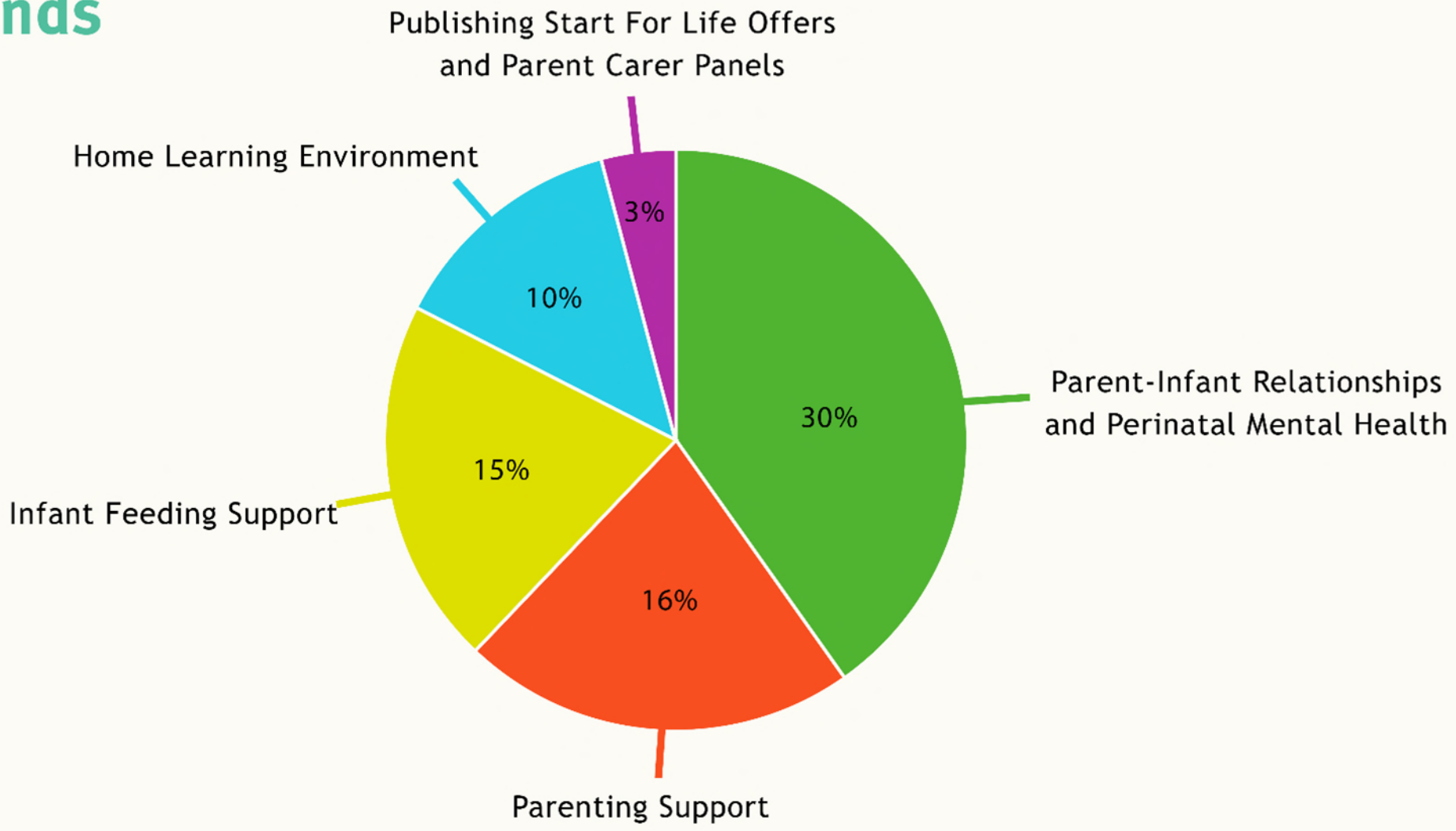
Family Hubs will be the 'go to' places in the community for all families; a one-stop-shop to access support, get information and ask questions to make you and your family's life better.

How are we going to do this?



Start for Life

5 funded strands



Parent Infant Relationships

WE are TRAILBALZERS-additional funding

- 27% of mums, 10% Dads & NBP's suffer a diagnosable MH issue in the perinatal period
- Move from primary focus on parental perinatal MH to include parent infant relationships by expanding our offer:
- VIG - expanding the team and increasing number of families who receive support in 0-2
- Time for Me (including for Dads and non birthing parents)
- Advice line for professionals to support guiding into the right intervention
- Emotional wellbeing visits
- Parents in Mind for mothers and fathers
- BrightPIP commissioned to offer Parent Infant Psychotherapy



Infant Feeding

- Improving breastfeeding rates through an improved universal offer
- Increase Peer support service
- Ensure Family Hub buildings are welcoming for breastfeeding
- BFI accreditation- continuing to meet standards of high quality
- Routine telephone contact
- Breastfeeding support groups



Parenting

- Parenting support becomes the next natural step for parents and carers after their antenatal classes.
- Recognising that parenting is challenging and to normalise parenting support for all
- Provide and deliver Solihull, antenatal and postnatal evidence based parenting programme, virtually and face to face, in an accessible way.
- Train current workforce to deliver a universal parenting offer

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Home learning environment

- Recognising the impact of COVID on school readiness and language development
- Expanding our workforce to ensure that more families have access to support
- Recognise the success of HENRY and will be expanding our delivery
- New Programmes-REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy)



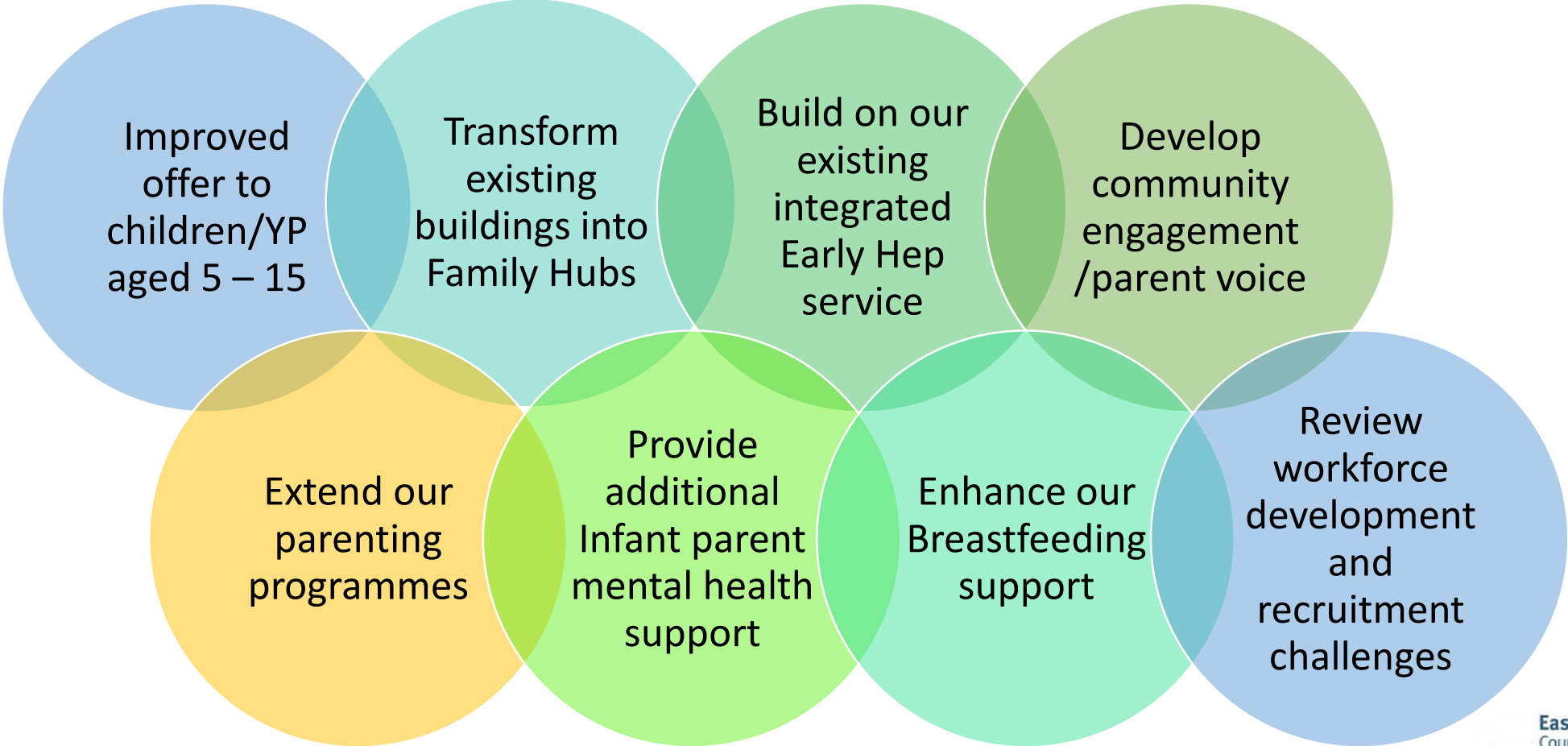
Parent carer panels and consultation

- Parents/carers to have a voice in the development of their local hub by becoming an active member
- We are going to create a forum within family Hubs where parents meet regularly to discuss what they want to access for their families
- Consultation- Parents, carers, youth and professionals.



Family Hubs in East Sussex

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Family and Youth Hub Locations

Site Name	Telephone	Address / Title	Post Code	Manager	CoP Tel Number
Eastbourne Hailsham & Seaford Area					
Archery Youth Hub	01323 463244	Archery Recreation Ground, Willoughby Crescent, Seaside Road, Eastbourne	BN22 7RR	Simon Stanley	07876 037445
Devonshire Family Hub	01323 463244	43 Seaside, Eastbourne,	BN22 7NB	PingPing Xiao Askaroff	07557 748633
Hailsham Family Hub	01323 463244	Hailsham East Community Centre, Vega Close, Hailsham,	BN27 2JZ	PingPing Xiao Askaroff	07557 748633
Shinewater Family Hub	01323 463244	Shinewater Primary School, Milfoil Drive, Eastbourne,	BN23 8ED	PingPing Xiao Askaroff	07557 748633
Hastings & St Leonards Area					
East Hastings Family Hub	01424 724004	46-48 Chiltern Drive, Hastings,	TN34 3PZ	Jacqui Lane	07500 123650
Hastings Town Family Hub	01424 724004	Waterworks Road, Hastings,	TN34 1RT	Jacqui Lane	07500 123650
Hollington Youth Hub	01424 724004	1 Wishing Tree Road North, St Leonards, Hastings,	TN38 9LL	Simon Stanley	07876 037445
Robsack Family Hub	01424 724004	Robsack Centre, Bodiam Drive, St Leonards On Sea,	TN38 9TW	Jacqui Lane	07500 123650
St. Leonards Family Hub	01424 724004	Clyde Road, St Leonards,	TN38 0QE	Jacqui Lane	07500 123650
High Weald Area					
Heathfield Youth Hub	01273 336930	High Street, Heathfield	TN21 0UP	Simon Stanley	07876 037445

Uckfield Family Hub	01273 336930	1 Manor Close, Uckfield,	TN22 1DL	Michelle Hocking	07876 037445
Proposed - Crowborough Pop Up Family Hub	FamilyHubs@eastsussex.gov.uk	Crowborough Community Centre, Pine Grove, Crowborough	TN6 1FE	N/A	N/A
Lewes & Havens Area					
Lewes Family Hub	01273 336930	Malling Community Centre, Spences Lane, Lewes,	BN7 2HQ	Donna McAdam	07500 123652
Peacehaven Family Hub	01273 336930	Meridian Way, Peacehaven,	BN10 8NF	Donna McAdam	07500 123652
The Joff Youth Hub	01273 336930	Roderick Ave, Peacehaven	BN10 8BL	Simon Stanley	07876 037445
Rother Area					
Sidley Family Hub	01424 725995	Sidley Community Centre, 121 Ninfield Road, Sidley, Bexhill,	TN39 5BD	Aimee Richards	07718 575953
Proposed - Ticehurst Pop Up Family Hub	FamilyHubs@eastsussex.gov.uk	Ticehurst Village Hall, Lower High Street, Ticehurst, East Sussex	TN5 7BB	N/A	N/A
Pop up Hubs proposed in Seaford and Rye		Still exploring venues			

Connected Families

Family Safeguarding, The East Sussex way...

eastsussex.gov.uk



“In the majority of cases, families become involved with children’s social care because they are parenting in conditions of adversity, rather than because they have caused or are likely to cause significant harm to their children. We have a shared obligation to help families raise their children.”

The Case for Change. The independent review of children’s social care <https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk>

Family safeguarding model

- Intensive support for adults in the three key areas of domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse
- Social Worker retains case management for the child
- Avoids delay in access to adult services and ensures a tailored, whole family response
- The model of small multi-agency teams of specialist adult workers, trained in a range of effective interventions integrated within social work teams
- Originally developed by Hertfordshire in 2015, has been independently evaluated as effective and has been adopted by 12 other local authorities
- Family Safeguarding model is referenced heavily within the Care Review, which recommends that Children's Services should draw on a multidisciplinary workforce with the time, skills, and autonomy to give children and families the support they need, pursuing adult as well as child outcomes.
- Expected to be a DfE national implementation programme

Evolution

- Early Help-Keywork-Team Around the Family
- SPOA and MASH-partnership working
- Connected Practice (including MI), trauma informed, whole family, strengths based.
- SWIFT (MDT)
- Foundations
- FGC/Lifelong Links
- Connected Families-Edge of Care, MST, Connected Coaches

Implementation-Connected Families +

- Builds on existing agency partnerships, SWIFT-clinical supervision and specialism
- Recruit 3 thematic teams of Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse and Adult Mental Health workers
- Workforce co-location with social workers and practitioners within Locality Social Work-managed within Specialist Services-building on SWIFT model
- The costs of the programme incorporate Service/Team Management and administrative support
- Workforce will be adult intervention focussed, with capacity for assessment, support, treatment.
- Develop workforce planning now, taper recruitment, get ahead of OLA's

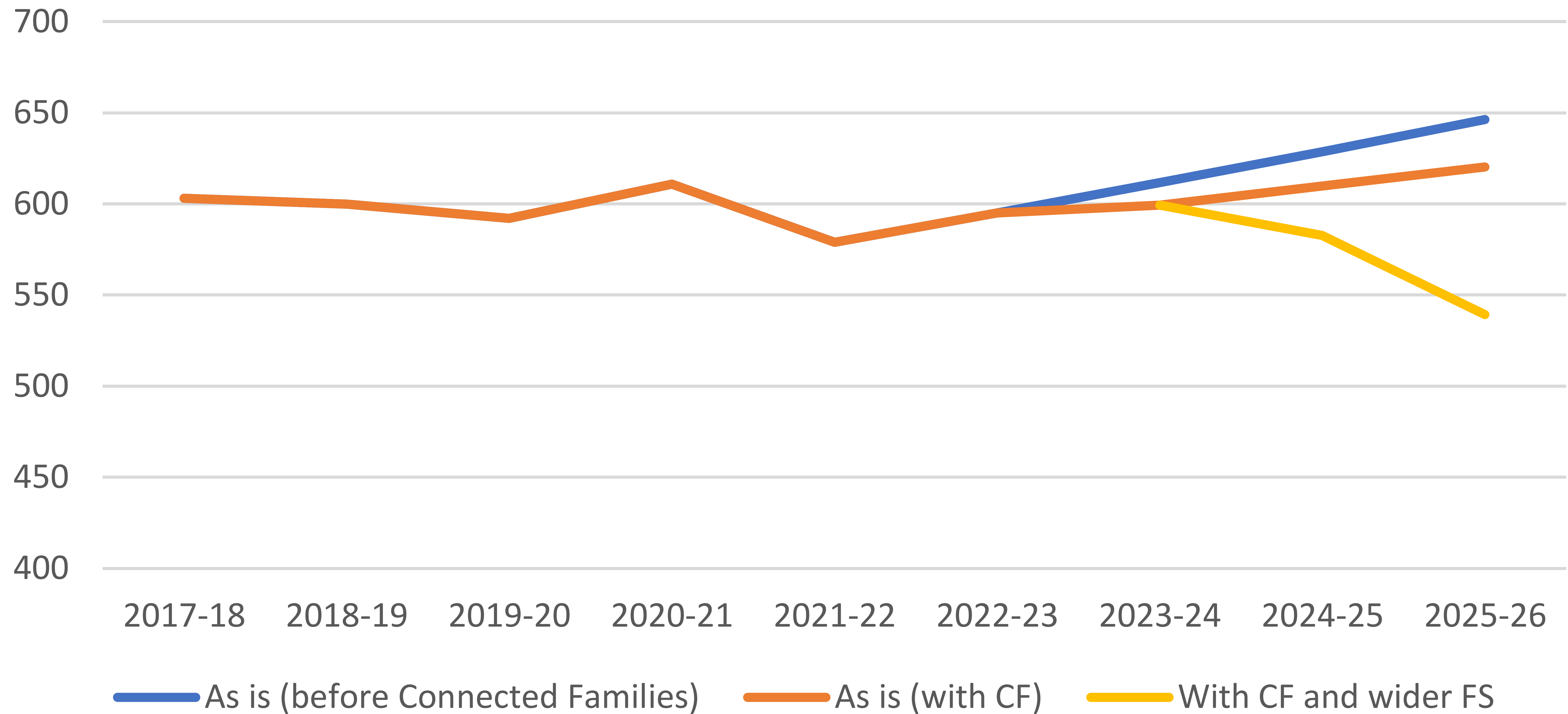
The key intervention models

- Motivational Interviewing (part of our 'Connected Practice' approach)
- Tailored parenting interventions
- Intervention programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse (including impact on children)
- Intervention programmes for victims of domestic abuse (including impact on children)
- Programmes to increase children's resilience - Steps to Cope
- Drug and Alcohol Recovery programmes
- Mental Health Interventions - Emotional Regulation, Distress tolerance, Consequential Thinking, Self Esteem/Assertiveness, Well Being, Mindfulness, DBT

Anticipated Outcomes

- More rapid, earlier multi-disciplinary interventions to enable children to live safely within their families – fewer children coming into care
- Delivering support to parents and carers where there is potential for looked after children to be reunified with their families – sustained reunification of families
- Fewer children needing to become subject to CP planning/legal processes
- Increased recruitment and more stability across the workforce
- Positive feedback from families
- Reduction in Police call outs
- Decrease in frequency of unplanned, reactive mental health contacts amongst adults
- Reduction in caseloads
- Net savings of £5.5 million.

Number of LAC (excl. UASC): projections



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EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN

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

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

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

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

- Page 47
- the name of the individual or body that is to make the decision and the date of the meeting or relevant time period for an officer decision
 - the title of the report and decision to be considered
 - groups that will be consulted prior to the decision being taken
 - a list of documents that will be considered when making the decision
 - the name and telephone number of the contact officer for each item.

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

Meetings of the Cabinet/individual members are open to the public (with the exception of discussion regarding reports which contain exempt/confidential information). Copies of agenda and reports for meetings are available on the website in advance of meetings. Key decisions taken by officers will not be taken at a meeting – documents listed can be made available on request to the contact officer, with the exception of those which contain exempt/confidential information.

For further details on the time of meetings and general information about the Plan please contact Stuart McKeown at County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE, or telephone 01273 481583 or send an e-mail to stuart.mckeown@eastsussex.gov.uk. For further detailed information regarding specific issues to be considered by the Cabinet, individual Member or officer please contact the named contact officer for the item concerned.

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE

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

FORWARD PLAN – EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (including Key Decisions) –1 July 2023 TO 31 October 2023

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

Cabinet membership:

Councillor Keith Glazier - Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development
Councillor Nick Bennett – Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change
Vacancy – Lead Member for Economy
Councillor Claire Dowling – Lead Member for Transport and Environment
Councillor Carl Maynard – Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Councillor Bob Bowdler – Lead Member for Children and Families
Councillor Bob Standley – Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability

Date for Decision	Decision Taker	Decision/Key Issue	Decision to be taken wholly or partly in private (P) or Key Decision (KD)	Consultation	List of Documents to be submitted to decision maker	Contact Officer
11 Jul 2023	Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change	Former Hindsland Playing Fields, Eastbourne Road, Polegate - Disposal of Freehold The land known as Former Hindsland Playing Fields was declared surplus in 1989. At the end of an appropriate marketing period, Officer recommendations for the preferred purchaser will be presented in a Lead Member report to formally declare the site to be surplus, approve the sale and to ask the Chief Operating Officer be granted authority to agree detailed terms with the preferred	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Rebecca Lewis 07955 312371

		purchaser and if they don't complete the purchase, to move the next prospective purchaser(s) if appropriate.				
11 Jul 2023	Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change	Uckfield Leisure Centre Public Consultation Outcome To note the outcome of the Uckfield Leisure Centre public consultation which concludes on 27 May 2023. To agree next steps for the future operation of Uckfield Leisure Centre. The County Council own the freehold of this asset.	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Nigel Brown, Pauline Young 07394 410630, 01273 481180
11 Jul 2023 Page 49	Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change	Corporate Office Estate New lease - revised lease terms following negotiation New Lease for St Marks House, Eastbourne.	P		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Rebecca Lewis 07955 312371
17 Jul 2023	Lead Member for Transport and Environment	Joint Waste Agreement (JWA) between East Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council The JWA is the agreement between the two councils on the administration and sharing of costs of the Integrated Waste Management Services Contract (IWMSC) with Veolia. It expires in 2033 when the IWMSC ends. The changes to the JWA reflect amendments to the IWMSC that have been negotiated with Veolia and were approved by Cabinet in 2019. Some other minor updates have also been made to the JWA.	P		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Justin Foster 01273 335805

17 Jul 2023	Lead Member for Transport and Environment	<p>Petition to increase the safety of the B2095 Lower Street, Ninfield and A259 Marsh Road</p> <p>To decide on the response to the petition calling on the County Council to increase the safety of the B2095, Lower Street, Ninfield to A259 Marsh Road, to take steps to reduce the speed and weight of vehicles and address the growing problem of dangerous and inconsiderate driving.</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Michael Higgs 01273 482106
18 Jul 2023	Cabinet	<p>External Audit Plan 2022/2023</p> <p>This report sets out in detail the work to be carried out by the Council's External Auditors on the Council's accounts for financial year 2021/22.</p>			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ian Gutsell 01273 481399
18 Jul 2023	Cabinet	<p>Ashdown Forest Trust Fund 2022/23</p> <p>To inform Cabinet of the movements on the Trust Fund during 2022/23 and the closing position as at 31 March 2023.</p>			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Andy Fowler 01273 481774
18 Jul 2023	Cabinet	<p>Exceat Bridge Compulsory Purchase Order, Bridge Order and Side Roads Order</p> <p>The Exceat Bridge project involves the realignment and replacement of the existing single lane bridge at the A259 over the river Cuckmere with a new two-lane bridge with a footway. The Project will deliver a major improvement in the highway connection between Eastbourne and Seaford. The Council needs to secure additional land for the Project. Whilst the Council is seeking to</p>	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Chris Marks 01273 335350

		negotiate acquisition of the land by voluntary agreement, it is proposed to make a Compulsory Order in case any negotiations prove unsuccessful. As the works will cross a river and involve diversion of footpaths, it is also proposed to make a Bridge Order under the Highways Act 1980 and Side Roads Order in order to deliver the Project.				
18 Jul 2023	Cabinet	Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion 2022/23 To consider the Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion 2022/23 including quarter 4.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Nigel Chilcott 01273 481992
18 Jul 2023	Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health	Homes for Ukraine - Extension of Support into Work Programme The Lead Member is asked to approve a 12 month extension to the Support into Work programme which is being delivered as part of the Homes for Ukraine Programme. Support into Work provides skills and employability training and language courses and supports access to local employment for Ukrainian guests and other migrant, refugee and asylum seeker groups living in East Sussex.	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Miranda Shawcross 01273 335338
24 Jul 2023	Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	Proposed reorganisation of Grove Park School To consider the outcome of a consultation to reorganise Grove Park School, and, if appropriate, to seek approval to publish a	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Gary Langford 01273 481758

		statutory proposal.				
July 2023	Director of Communities, Economy and Transport	Transport for the South East technical call off contract The Director will approve the contract award for the Transport for the South East technical call off contract, that will allow for the delivery of our technical programme.	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Jasmin Barnicoat 01273 481892
July 2023 Page 52	Director of Communities, Economy and Transport	Hastings Public Realm and Green Connections Consultation and Preliminary Design To consider direct award of the Consultation, Preliminary Design and relevant surveys for the Hastings Public Realm and Green Connections project to Arup. Arup worked on previous design work for this project, led and managed by Hastings Borough Council. This project has £9.834m of funding from Hastings Town Deal and £400k from the Local Growth Fund. This commission is valued at £700k.	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ellie McDaniel 01273 335464
July 2023	Chief Operating Officer	Award of contract for IT device supply and associated services To approve the award of contract to the recommended supplier for the supply of end-user IT devices (laptops, & desktops) and associated services. The contract will be used to refresh the existing corporate estate, and for any other business as usual or project device needs.	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Matt Scott 07552 286752

July 2023	Chief Operating Officer	<p>Award of Contract for Sorrel Drive Capital Project</p> <p>A decision is required to enter into a building contract with an ESCC Framework Contractor. The capital project seeks to extend the Sorrel Drive Children's Resource Centre and carry out further internal alterations in support of children's day and residential respite care facilities.</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Nigel Brown 07394 410630
July 2023	Chief Operating Officer	<p>Award of Pre-Contract Services Agreement (PSCA) for the ESCC youth centres for The Joff, Peacehaven and Heathfield Youth Centre, Heathfield to appoint a contractor</p> <p>This is for pre contract services to enable a tender package to be prepared for works to The Joff Youth Centre, Peacehaven and Heathfield Youth Centre. The works will increase the number of regular positive activities and clubs available to young people aged 11 to 19 (up to 25 for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) in the areas.</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Nigel Brown 07394 410630
31 Aug 2023	Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health	<p>Commissioning East Sussex Community Network (ESCN)</p> <p>To agree the East Sussex Joint Community Mental Health Commissioning of core services known as the East Sussex Community Network (ESCN).</p> <p>This project is to recommission all community provision in scope (£4,500,000), aligning support with emerging mental health transformation, and Emotional</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Kenny Mackay 01323 463946

		<p>Wellbeing Services (EWS) in Primary Care, ensuring compatibility and interoperability through co-design and development.</p> <p>This is driven by local place-based priorities, including service users and their carers, NHS Sussex, East Sussex Local Authority, Primary Care Networks (PCN) and EWS workstreams. It will ensure that future services maximise the offers of support for people in their local communities.</p>				
11 Sep 2023 Page 54	Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	<p>Holy Cross CE Primary School</p> <p>To update the Lead Member following the consultation on the proposed closure of Holy Cross CE Primary School and to seek approval for next steps.</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Gary Langford 01273 481758
11 Sep 2023	Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	<p>Household Support Fund Round 4</p> <p>Approval of the proposed use of the Household Support Fund Round 4 for the period 1 October – 31 March 2024 for the spend on children and families. A report is also being considered by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health for the spend of this fund on adults.</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Jessica Stubbings 01323 463537
15 Sep 2023	Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health	<p>Household Support Fund Round 4 (HSF4)</p> <p>Approval of the proposed use of the Household Support Fund Round 4 for the period (1 October – 31 March 2024) for the</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Paul Bolton 01273 336353

		<p>spend allocations managed by adult Social care and Health (ASC&H) which include District and Borough allocations, Voluntary and Community Social Enterprise organisations (VCSE) allocations, allocations to Warmer Homes and allocations to Food Banks/Food Partnerships.</p> <p>A report is also being considered by the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability (EISEND) for the spend of the Household Support Fund on children and families.</p>				
18 Sep 2023	Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change	<p>Exeat Bridge Improvement Scheme land acquisition and compensation</p> <p>Various parcels of land subject to acquisition and/or compensation in connection with the Exeat Bridge Improvement scheme. Scheme reported to Cabinet in 2017 and approved as part of the capital programme. Planning permission for the scheme was secured in December 2022.</p>	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Zoe Tweed 07701 021868
25 Sep 2023	Lead Member for Transport and Environment	<p>Petition to 'introduce a lorry route network similar to the one in West Sussex, so that HGVs are redirected away from narrow local roads in our villages'</p> <p>To consider whether the existing approach to freight movements in East Sussex, as set out in LTP3, needs updating and to consider HGV movements through Ringmer</p>	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Lisa Simmonds, Tessa Sweet-Escott 03456 080190, 03456 080190

		in order to respond to the petition calling on the County Council to introduce a lorry route network similar to the one in West Sussex.				
25 Sep 2023	Lead Member for Transport and Environment	Eastbourne Town Centre Movement and Access Package Phase 2b & Victoria Place Levelling Up Fund (Seaside Road to Grand Parade) Public Consultation Results To approve the East Sussex County Council response and report on the Eastbourne Town Centre Movement and Access Package Phase 2b public consultation, moving to complete the detailed design and construction of the Victoria Place section of the Terminus Road scheme.	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Isobel Kellett 07513 833903
28 Sep 2023	Cabinet	East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and the South Downs NPA Waste and Minerals Plan Review To recommend to Full Council that; the modifications proposed to the Submission version of the Waste and Minerals Plan Review are published for statutory public consultation. These modifications are deemed necessary in order for the Plan to be found 'sound' and are in response to feedback received from the Planning Inspectorate following the Public Examination into the Plan in November 2022.	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ed Sheath 01273 481632

28 Sep 2023	Cabinet	Report on the County Council's progress in becoming a carbon neutral council The agreed Notice of Motion covering ESCC's declaration of a climate emergency committed the County Council to: report annually on its progress towards the target of achieving carbon neutrality from its activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Andy Arnold 01273 481606
September 2023	Director of Adult Social Care and Health	Sexual Health Services Procurement Approve the award of the Specialist Sexual Health Contract that has been subject to competitive tender in line with the Lead Members decision to delegate the decision to the Director of Adult Social Care & Health on 20 April 2023.	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Tony Proom 01273 335252
17 Oct 2023	Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change	To approve the granting of a new Lease to the Trustees of the West Hills & District Community Centre The current Lease dated 12 March 2008 expires 11 March 2023 and it is proposed that ESCC grant the Trustees a new Lease for a period of 25 years which will allow the Trustees to be able to seek grant funding.	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Joanne Johnston, Zoe Tweed 01273 336621, 07701 021868
October 2023	Chief Operating Officer	Award of contract for Salary Sacrifice Lease Car scheme (Electric Vehicles) East Sussex County Council wants to introduce a Salary Sacrifice Lease Car scheme for electric vehicles. This will allow employees to access electric vehicles at a saving compared to conventional purchase.	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Nicholas Earley 01273 335061

		<p>This will help employees to access greener transport and will therefore support the Council's climate emergency plans. It will also provide an attractive staff benefit, helping to aid recruitment and retention. The scheme will be run as a managed service by a private provider, in order to facilitate employee access to a range of good quality vehicles which represent good value for money. The managed service will also ensure the council is compliant with all relevant HMRC legislation, and that the administrative burden for the authority is minimal.</p>				
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Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 17 July 2023

By: Chief Executive

Title: Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)

Purpose: To begin the committee's input to the Council's business and financial planning process (Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources) for 2024/25.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The scrutiny committee is recommended to:

- (1) Consider information within the 2022/23 end of year Council monitoring report and State of the County 2023 report relevant to the remit of the committee;**
 - (2) Agree key areas of interest for scrutiny and to ensure these are reflected in the committee's future work programme, including any further information required for consideration by the committee at its autumn awayday; and**
 - (3) Establish a RPPR scrutiny board to consider the developing Portfolio Plans and financial plans and to submit scrutiny's final comments on them to Cabinet in January 2024.**
-

1. Background

1.1 On 27 June 2023 Cabinet considered two reports which form important annual milestones in the ongoing Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) cycle – the Council's integrated business and financial planning process.

1.2 The end of year performance monitoring report for 2022/23 set out the Council's position and year-end projections for the Council Plan targets, Revenue Budget and Capital Programme, together with Risks at the end of March 2023. The State of the County 2023 report set out the current operating context for the Council in preparation for more detailed planning for the 2024/25 financial year and beyond. The report provided an up to date understanding of how the Council will need to continue to respond to the wide range of policy, demographic and financial drivers which influence the outlook for the authority.

1.3 The State of the County report highlighted that uncertainty continues to define the context within which the Council is 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.

1.4 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. 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.

1.5 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. The report sets out that the Council's relatively stable financial position for 2023/24 presents an opportunity to intensify 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.

2. People scrutiny committee engagement in RPPR

2.1 This committee's contribution to the RPPR process is vitally important and is threaded through all scrutiny work. The insight and evidence gathered through previous and ongoing scrutiny work is drawn together and enhanced in specific RPPR sessions which will, ultimately, enable each scrutiny committee to provide commentary and recommendations to be taken into account by Cabinet and Council before a final decision is taken on the updated Council Plan, budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) early in 2024. The diagram attached at **Appendix 1** summarises scrutiny involvement throughout the annual RPPR cycle.

2.2 The **July scrutiny committees** have a particular focus on reviewing current service and financial performance information contained in the end of year monitoring report, as well as considering new developments which will impact on services as set out in the forward-looking demographic, policy and financial analysis in the State of the County report. This is to ensure the scrutiny committees have a full understanding of the current context and future pressures for the service areas within the remit of each committee.

2.3 The following attachments are provided to support the committee in these tasks:

- **Appendix 2** comprises extracts from the 2022/23 **end of year monitoring report** considered by Cabinet in June and County Council on 11 July – departmental appendices not relevant to this committee's remit have been removed. The Strategic Risk Register (Appendix 7 of the end of year monitoring report) is included for information, however the Audit Committee has a lead role in relation to oversight of risk management and the Strategic Risk Register.
- **Appendix 3** contains the full **State of the County report** as considered by Cabinet in June and County Council on 11 July. The committee is invited to focus on the elements relevant to services within its remit, particularly in Appendix 2 to the report – the national and local policy outlook.

2.4 Based on the information in the attached reports, and Members' wider accumulated knowledge and evidence, the committee is invited to identify any key areas of interest or lines of enquiry which it will pursue through subsequent RPPR discussions and/or its wider work programme. This includes any additional information required for the September meeting or autumn awayday to inform the committee's input to the RPPR process.

2.5 Areas of interest to be prioritised for scrutiny may arise from, for example, areas experiencing performance challenges, significant policy changes or new service developments. Careful selection of topics to focus on will enable the committee to be well positioned to comment on the impact of service changes, future service delivery and budget proposals as part of the ongoing RPPR process.

2.6 The **September 2023 and November 2023 scrutiny committee meetings** can consider any additional information which has been requested and any updated information reported to Cabinet during the autumn. Further refinements to the committees' ongoing work programmes can also be considered at each meeting. In addition, the committees' **autumn work planning awaydays** provide an opportunity to receive more detailed information on any specific areas of interest identified by Members, and to review the overall work programme to ensure it is aligned to strategic priorities for the Council and scrutiny.

2.7 The committee is also asked to agree the membership of its **RPPR board**, which will meet in **December 2023** to agree detailed comments and any recommendations on the emerging Portfolio Plans and financial plans to be put to Cabinet on behalf of the scrutiny committee.

2.8 The **March 2024 scrutiny committees** review the process and their input into the RPPR process and receive feedback on how scrutiny input has been reflected in final plans. Any issues arising can be reflected in the future work programme.

2.9 Running alongside the scrutiny process, whole-Council Member forums will ensure that Members can keep an overview of the emerging picture across all service areas including the impacts of national announcements on our plans. Chief Officers will also provide any briefings required by group spokespersons to assist them in contributing to the RPPR process.

BECKY SHAW
Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Rachel Sweeney, Senior Scrutiny/Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
Tel No. 07561 267461
Email: rachel.sweeney@eastsussex.gov.uk

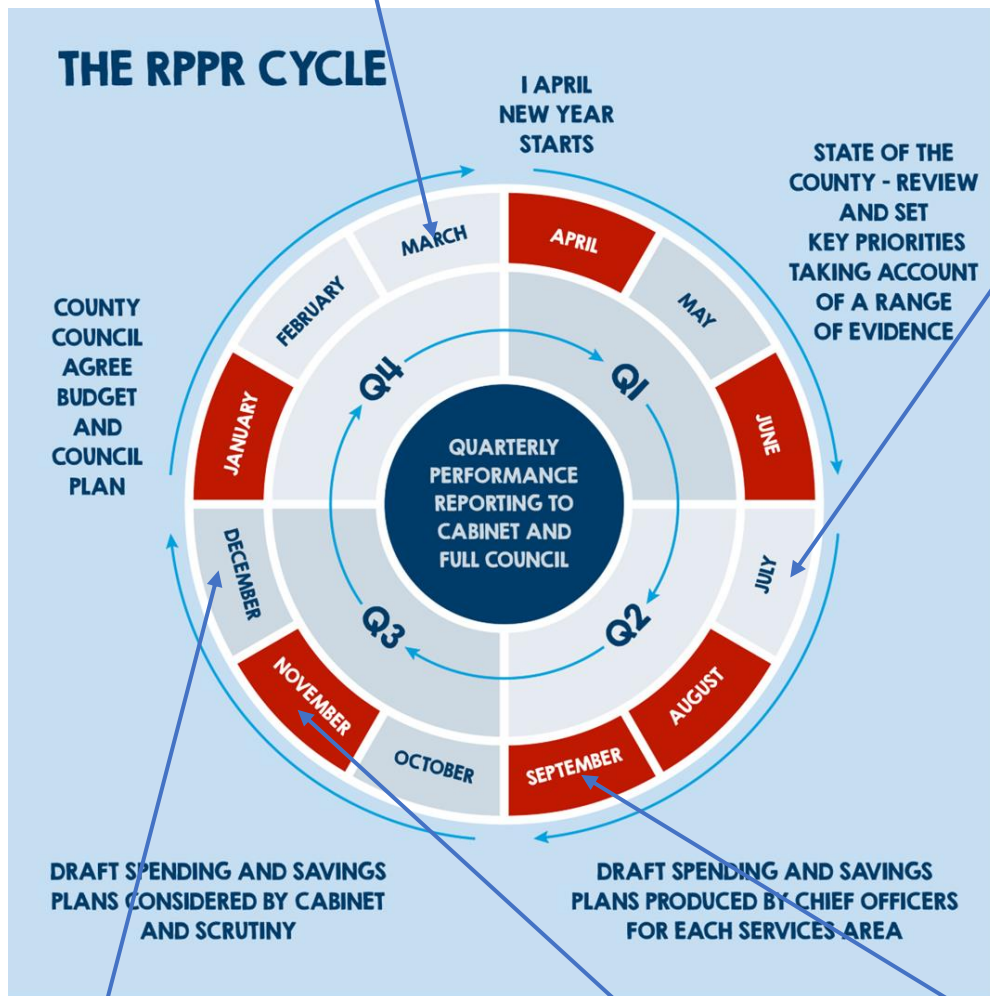
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5. March scrutiny committee meetings

Scrutiny committees review their input into the budget setting and business planning process, receive feedback on any specific recommendations and consider any potential improvement to the way they are involved in the process for the coming year, including the information they receive and the way they scrutinise the planning process.

1. July scrutiny committee meetings

Scrutiny committees review the Q4 Council Monitoring report (backward look) and the State of the County report (forward look) with a focus on services within their remit. The Q4 report enables committees to scrutinise performance in relation to the Council's targets, financial performance and risk issues over the previous year. The State of the County report enables scrutiny to consider the key issues in the policy, financial and operating environment for the relevant service areas in the coming planning period. The committees identify any aspects of performance, policy, budget or service issues that they would like to explore in more detail through their autumn business planning (RPPR) agenda items or via their broader work programme.



Scrutiny input is embedded throughout the annual budget setting and business planning (RPPR) cycle

4. December RPPR Boards

The committees' RPPR Boards scrutinise the latest information on the overall financial position, including the provisional settlement if available, relevant draft updated Portfolio Plans and savings plans. Scrutiny comments and recommendations on financial and service plans for the coming year are agreed and submitted for consideration by Cabinet in January.

3. November scrutiny meetings

The committees continue to consider the latest available information on the policy and financial context, review any additional information requested in September and agree any further information required for committees' RPPR Boards.

2. September scrutiny meetings

The committees consider the latest available information on the policy and financial context for the coming year and review any additional budget or service information requested in July. Further information or scrutiny work is agreed as required.

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Title: Council Monitoring Report – end of year 2022/23
Report to: Cabinet
Date: 27 June 2023
Report by: Chief Executive
Purpose: To report Council monitoring for the full year 2022/23

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) note the latest monitoring position for the Council;
- 2) note the changes to the Strategic Risk Register; and
- 3) agree to £5m additional provision being made to the Capital Programme in relation to Highways Maintenance for 2023/24.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out 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 4 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.

2. Overview of Council Plan outturns 2022/23

2.1 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.

2.2 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.

2.3 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.

3 Budget Outturn

3.1 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.

3.2 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.

- 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.

3.3 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

3.4 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 Road – 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.

4 Progress against Council Priorities

Driving sustainable economic growth

4.1 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).

4.2 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).

4.3 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). Cabinet will receive, at the same meeting as this report being considered, a report updating Cabinet on the condition of the highways and recommending Cabinet consider additional investment on highways maintenance in 2023/24 be increased by £15.7m. It is proposed that £5m of this increase be funded through additional provision being made to the Capital Programme. Such additional provision will be funded by borrowing which will have a revenue implication of £375k per annum.

4.4 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).

4.5 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).

4.6 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).

4.7 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).

4.8 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

4.9 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).

4.10 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).

4.11 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).

4.12 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

4.13 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).

4.14 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).

4.15 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).

4.16 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

4.17 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).

4.18 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).

4.19 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).

4.20 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).

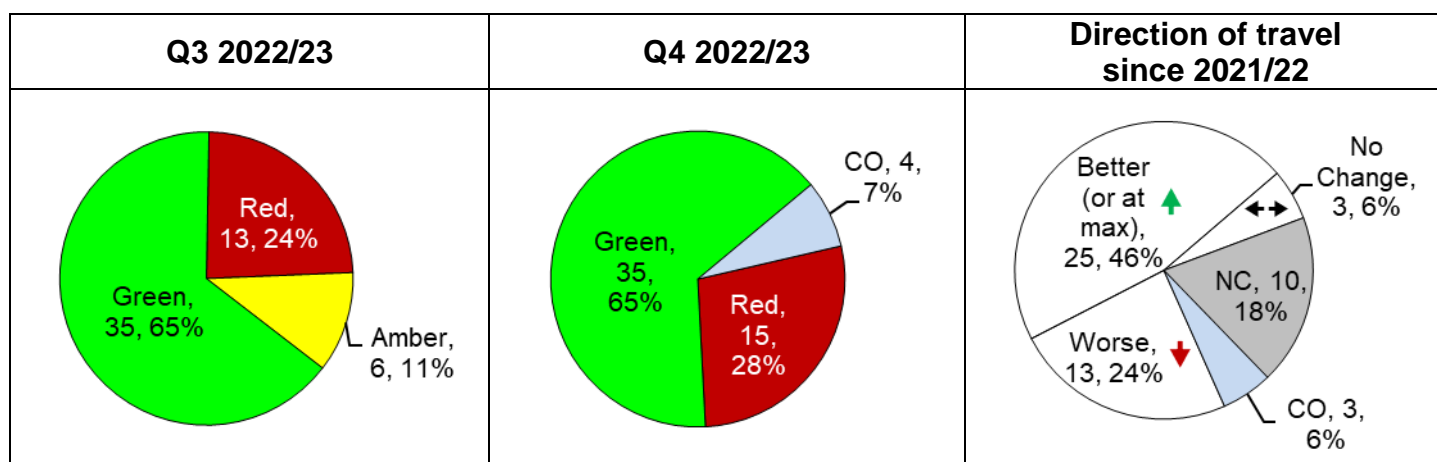
4.21 Throughout 2022/23 corporate lobbying work has focussed on using our partnerships and networks at the local, regional, and national level to influence policy development in a range of areas, including adult social care charging reforms, the future of children's social care and local authority funding. 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).

Becky Shaw, Chief Executive

Council Monitoring Corporate Summary – end of year 2022/23

Council Plan performance targets

Priority	Total	Red	Green	Carry Over
Driving sustainable economic growth	24	6	18	0
Keeping vulnerable people safe	9	3	4	2
Helping people help themselves	16	4	11	1
Making best use of resources now and for the future	5	2	2	1
Total	54	15	35	4



Direction of Travel key:

No Change: ↔, Not Comparable: **NC**, Carry Over: **CO**, Worse: ▼, Improved (or at maximum): ▲

Council Plan year end 2022/23 outturn summary all measures

54 Council Plan target outturns for the full year are reported below. Targets achieved are highlighted in green; targets not achieved are highlighted in red; and carry overs (CO) for reporting at Q1 2023/24 are highlighted in blue.

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

Where available, performance improvement relative to 2021/22 is given under Direction of Travel. Measures marked NC (not comparable) do not have 2022/23 outturns, which are comparable with 2021/22 outturns.

Driving sustainable economic growth – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
BS	The percentage of Council procurement spend with local suppliers	67.9%	60%	66%	↓
BS	Economic, social and environmental value committed through contracts, as a percentage of our spend with suppliers	11%	≥10%	57%	↑
BS	The Council's Apprenticeship Levy strategy supports the Council's workforce development and training plan	265 ESCC staff currently undertaking an apprenticeship. 129 staff enrolled on new apprenticeship in 2021/22 Apprenticeships range from entry level to Master's degree across 33 types of apprenticeship. £150K drawn down from Apprenticeship Incentive Scheme and Kickstart Scheme and passed onto hiring teams.	Where appropriate Standards exist, to ensure apprenticeship training is available and taken up (subject to the needs of the business), which addresses skills shortages in the Council.	270 staff within the Council and schools currently undertaking an apprenticeship. 115 staff enrolled on new apprenticeship in 2022/23. Apprenticeships range from entry level to Master's degree across 47 different types of apprenticeship. Apprenticeships continue to address skills shortages and offer existing staff a variety of progression routes.	↑
CET	Percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance	5%	4%	5%	↔
CET	Percentage of Non-Principal roads requiring maintenance	6%	4%	6%	↔
CET	Percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance	13%	14%	13%	↔
CET	The number of businesses and professionals receiving advice and support through training and bespoke advice provided by Trading Standards	126 individual delegates trained. 204 businesses received bespoke advice.	350	379 (107 individual delegates trained; 272 businesses received bespoke advice)	↑

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
CET	Deliver a range of Family Learning programmes across East Sussex to provide high quality learning opportunities for parents/carers and their children to develop English, maths and language skills and to support a culture of learning in the family (subject to external funding)	828 enrolments	500 enrolments across Family English, maths and Language (FEML) and Wider Family Learning (WFL) programmes.	1,166 enrolments	↑
CET	In partnership with funding organisations provide online learning (including skills for life and ICT courses) in libraries (subject to contract)	70 achievements	70 achievements	83 achievements	↑
CET	East Sussex Careers Hub	Secondary schools and colleges supported to achieve an average of 5.2 benchmarks. Online employability resources piloted and embedded by East Sussex Careers Hub.	East Sussex Careers Hub to support schools to achieve an average of 5 national benchmarks. Recruit a further 15 employers as Industry Champions to support all 40 schools and colleges in the county to make progress in giving young people encounters with employers and experiences of the workplace	Schools supported to achieve an average of 5.36 national benchmarks. 46 Industry Champions recruited to support schools and colleges.	↑
CET	Deliver East Sussex Skills priorities for 2021-2026	'Carbon zero' task group established. SES Task groups met and identified action plans to support the new SES priorities. Careers East Sussex website revised and relaunched.	Develop 6 action plans to address the 6 Skills East Sussex priorities.	6 action plans developed to address the 6 Skills East Sussex priorities.	↑
CET	Create a pan-Sussex visitor economy group to re-start the leisure, hospitality, culture, retail and tourism economy and enhance existing marketing vehicles	Research commissioned. Recommendations approved by Lead Member. 3 year growth budget secured.	Establish Sussex Tourism Leadership Group.	Sussex Tourism Leadership Group established.	↑

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
CET	Create a prioritised list of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k	Governance framework created and ready to be implemented. Board membership refresh will take place in 2022/23. Documentation for list of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k rolled out in 2022/23	Launch the list of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k.	List launched of cultural projects, ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k.	↑
CET	Job creation from East Sussex Programmes	193.5 jobs created or safeguarded.	140 jobs created or safeguarded.	195.45 full time equivalent jobs created.	↑
CS	The percentage of eligible 2 year olds who take up a place with an eligible early years provider	84% National Average: 62%	Equal to or above the national average	ESCC: 82% National Average: 72% (March 23)	↓
CS	The percentage of pupils achieving a "good level of development*" at the Early Years Foundation Stage *A pupil achieving at least the expected level in each Early Learning Goal (ELG) within the three prime areas of learning, and at least the expected level in each ELG within the literacy and numeracy specific areas of learning	Ac Year 20/21: Measure not monitored as assessment results not published	Ac Year 21/22: Equal to or above the national average	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: 69.0% National Average: 65.2%	NC
CS	Average Progress 8 score for state funded schools The average Progress 8 score shows how much progress pupils at this school made between the end of key stage 2 and the end of key stage 4, compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2	Ac Year 20/21: Measure not monitored as assessment results not published	Ac Year 21/22: ≥ -0.06 (ESCC outturn for academic year 18/19)	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: -0.11 National Average: -0.03	NC
CS	The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving at least the expected standard in each of reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	Ac Year 20/21: Measure not monitored as assessment results not published	Ac Year 21/22: $\geq 45.8\%$ (ESCC outturn for academic year 18/19)	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: 37.6% National Average: 42.7%	NC
CS	The average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils	Ac Year 20/21: Measure not monitored as assessment results not published	Ac Year 21/22: ≥ 33.6 (ESCC outturn for academic year 18/19)	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: 33.3 National Average: 37.7	NC

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
CS	The percentage of young people meeting the duty of RPA (Raising the Participation Age) by either participating in education, training or employment with training or undertaking re-engagement provision at academic age 16 (Year 12)	93%	93%	94.1%	↑
CS	The percentage of young people meeting the duty of RPA by either participating in education, training or employment with training or undertaking re-engagement provision at academic age 17 (Year 13)	85%	86%	86.1%	↑
CS	Average Progress 8 score for Looked After Children (LAC)	Ac Year 20/21: Measure not monitored as assessment results not published	Ac Year 21/22: No more than 0.5 points below the national average for looked after children	Ac Year 21/22: -1.17 National average: -1.3	NC
CS	The percentage of LAC participating in education, training or employment with training at academic age 16 (Year 12)	78%	80%	81% RPA (86% EET)	↑
CS	The percentage of LAC participating in education, training or employment with training at academic age 17 (Year 13)	82%	70%	67% RPA (80% EET)	↓

Keeping vulnerable people safe – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
ASC	Percentage of Health and Social Care Connect referrals triaged and progressed to required services within 24 hours	N/A	95%	87.34% (67,404/77,177)	NC
ASC	Percentage of Health and Social Care Connect contacts that are appropriate and effective (i.e. lead to the provision of necessary additional services)	98% (April 21 to January 22)	95%	99.27% (78,641/79,219)	↑
ASC	The % of people affected by domestic violence and abuse who have improved safety/support measures in place upon leaving the service	90% (420/467)	80%	CO	CO
ASC	When they leave the service the % of those affected by rape, sexual violence and abuse who have improved coping strategies	92% (473/514)	88%	CO	CO
CET	The number of positive interventions for vulnerable people who have been or may be the target of rogue trading or financial abuse	227 positive interventions.	200	530 positive interventions.	↑
CS	Rate of children with a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000 children)	50.3 (536 children)	50.3 (536 children)	64.8 (691 children)	↓

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
CS	Rate (of 0-17 population) of referrals to children's social care services (per 10,000 children)	Rate 392 (4,169)	≤ 489	Rate 377 (4,018)	↑
CS	Rate (of 0-17 population) of assessments completed by children's social care services (per 10,000 children)	Rate 330 (3,510 assessments initiated)	≤ 517	Rate 353 (3,764 assessments initiated)	↓
CS	Rate of Looked After Children (per 10,000 children) <i>*Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children</i>	58.9 (628 children) 54.5 (581 children excl. UASC*)	59.8 (637 children)	62.3 (664 children) 55.5 (591 children excl. UASC*)	↓

Helping people help themselves – outturn summary

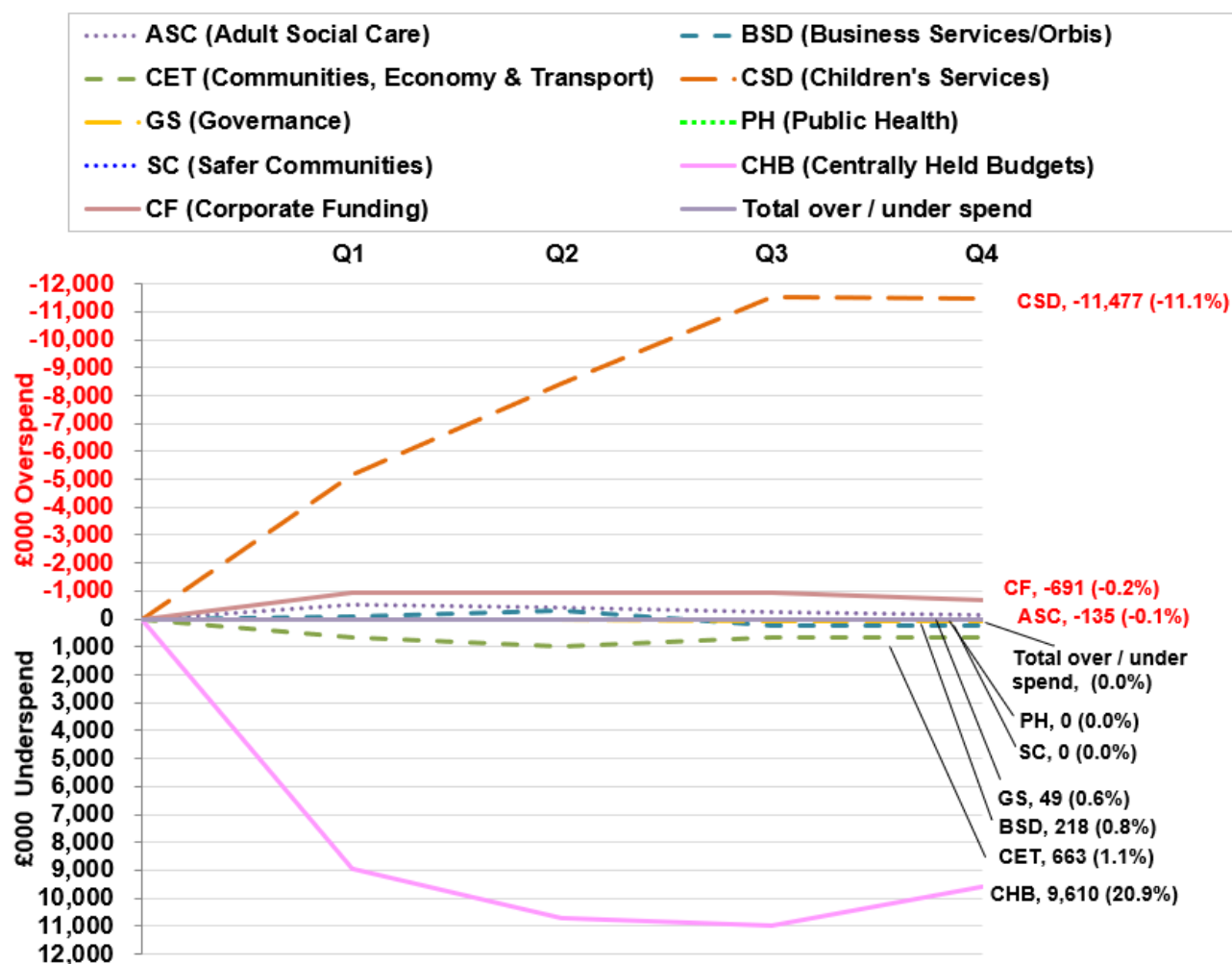
Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
ASC	National outcome measure: Proportion of working age adults and older people receiving self-directed support	100% (4,583 clients)	100%	100% (4,792 clients)	↑
ASC	National outcome measure: Proportion of working age adults and older people receiving direct payments	32.7% (1,488 people)	≥31.5%	31.9% (1,520 people)	↓
ASC	Number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention	474	390	494	↑
ASC	Number of people receiving support through housing related floating support	8,919	5,000	7,946	↓
ASC	National outcome measure: Achieve independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care	N/A	>90%	CO	NC
ASC	Number of providers registered with Support With Confidence	327	360 (10% increase on 2021/22 outturn)	346	↑
ASC	The proportion of people who received short-term services during the year, where no further request was made for ongoing support	93.7%	>90.5%	94.7% (1,292 / 1,364)	↑
ASC	Percentage of respondents who strongly agree or agree that the professionals who are involved in organising and providing their care communicate well with each other and share information to make sure their support is the best it can be (Listening To You)	N/A	>56%	58.5% Clients: 64% (60 / 94) Carers: 53% (47 / 89)	NC
ASC	Number of new service user interventions started through One You East Sussex as part of the Integrated Lifestyle Service	5,204	5,000	5,078 (Q1-Q3) (Reported a quarter in arrears)	↑

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
ASC	Improving targeting of NHS Health Checks	70% of GP practices (35/50) delivering NHS Health Checks	35% uptake rate by eligible patients from IMD1 (pandemic baseline 18%)	31.1% (5 year period 2018/19 to 2022/23 Q3) (Reported a quarter in arrears)	NC
ASC	Through the Drug and Alcohol Funding streams commission services that sustain the development of the recovery community in East Sussex	Services commissioned	Commission services	12 services commissioned	↑
CET	Road Safety: Deliver targeted cycle training activities to vulnerable road users	445 Bikeability courses delivered to 4,010 individuals. 160 Wheels for All sessions with 3,166 attendees.	Deliver Bikeability training to 4,000 individuals and complete 80 Wheels for All sessions.	555 Bikeability Courses delivered to 4,354 individuals. 252 Wheels for All Courses delivered to 3,649 individuals.	↑
CET	Road Safety: Implement infrastructure schemes on identified high risk sites/routes to improve road safety	24 Safety Schemes implemented.	Implement 22 Safety Schemes.	17 Safety Schemes implemented.	↓
CS	Percentage of EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plans) annual review meetings where the child gave their view and/or participated	94.5% (2,168/2,295)	85%	93.1% (2,271/2,439)	↓
CS	The proportion of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of getting targeted support from the 0 – 19 Early Help Service	Adult: 91% Young People: 95% Average: 93%	80%	Adult: 91% Young Person: 100% Average: 95.5%	↑
CS	Number of households eligible under the government's Supporting Families programme receiving a family support intervention	856	1,350	595	↓

Making best use of resources now and for the future

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
BSD	Number of working days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) employee due to sickness absence in non-school services	9.24	9.10	10.07	↓

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Direction of Travel
BSD	Review use of corporate buildings	'Together Again' strategy implemented move to hybrid working model. Online engagement sessions held with staff in Q4 on new working arrangements. New working model started 19/04/2022.	Implement workstyles adaptations in 3 office hubs and review the impact	Workstyles adaptations completed in 3 office hubs. Impact reviewed.	↑
BSD	Reduce the amount of CO2 arising from County Council operations	7.4% reduction (comparing emissions to the end of Q4 2021/22 against emissions for the same period in 2020/21).	34% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions (emissions not to exceed 8,206 CO2e).	CO	CO
BSD	Progress on implementation of Carbon reduction scheme	N/A	10 low energy lighting schemes, 10 solar PV schemes and 2 decarbonisation of heat schemes implemented	11 low energy lighting schemes completed; 8 solar PV schemes completed; 2 decarbonisation of heat schemes implemented.	NC
BSD	Deliver the Property Asset Investment Strategy	9 outline business cases completed.	Outline Business cases brought forward against at least 2 priority projects	6 business cases completed.	↓

Revenue budget outturn (net £000)**Revenue budget summary (£000) 2022/23****Services:**

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Adult Social Care	310,228	(106,492)	203,736	320,695	(116,824)	203,871	(10,467)	10,332	(135)
Safer Communities	2,021	(909)	1,112	1,918	(806)	1,112	103	(103)	-
Public Health	31,097	(31,097)	-	31,376	(31,376)	-	(279)	279	-
Business Services / Orbis	59,407	(32,466)	26,941	62,689	(35,966)	26,723	(3,282)	3,500	218
Children's Services	386,022	(282,479)	103,543	398,681	(283,661)	115,020	(12,659)	1,182	(11,477)
Communities, Economy & Transport	136,101	(73,535)	62,566	146,810	(84,907)	61,903	(10,709)	11,372	663
Governance Services	8,286	(640)	7,646	8,534	(937)	7,597	(248)	297	49
Total Services	933,162	(527,618)	405,544	970,703	(554,477)	416,226	(37,541)	26,859	(10,682)

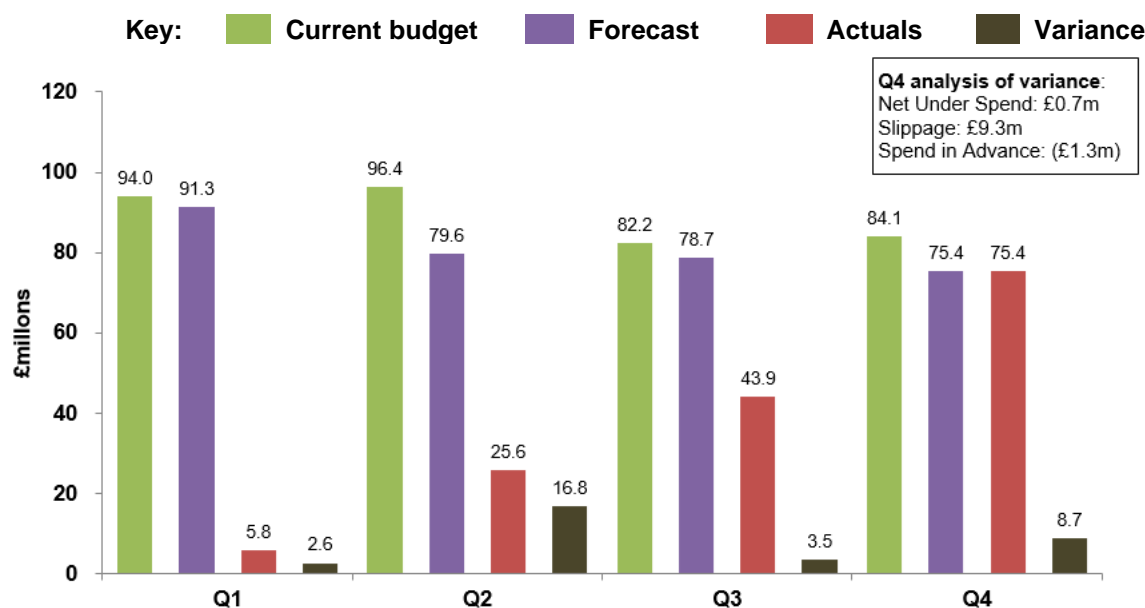
Centrally Held Budgets (CHB):

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Treasury Management	19,102	(1,700)	17,402	17,068	(5,888)	11,180	2,034	4,188	6,222
Capital Programme	3,356	-	3,356	3,361	-	3,361	(5)	-	(5)
Unfunded Pensions	8,023	-	8,023	8,015	-	8,015	8	-	8
General Contingency	4,330	-	4,330	-	-	-	4,330	-	4,330
Contrib. to Reserves	9,320	-	9,320	9,321	-	9,321	(1)	-	(1)
Apprenticeship Levy	600	-	600	716	-	716	(116)	-	(116)
Levies, Grants and Other	3,250	(192)	3,058	3,179	(308)	2,871	71	116	187
Debt Impairment	-	-	-	1,015	-	1,015	(1,015)	-	(1,015)
Total Centrally Held Budgets	47,981	(1,892)	46,089	42,675	(6,196)	36,479	5,306	4,304	9,610

Corporate Funding:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Business Rates	-	(86,199)	(86,199)	-	(86,154)	(86,154)	-	(45)	(45)
Revenue Support Grant	-	(3,687)	(3,687)	-	(3,687)	(3,687)	-	-	-
Service Grant	-	(5,175)	(5,175)	-	(5,175)	(5,175)	-	-	-
Council Tax	-	(332,082)	(332,082)	-	(331,436)	(331,436)	-	(646)	(646)
Social Care Grant	-	(23,674)	(23,674)	-	(23,674)	(23,674)	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	-	(816)	(816)	-	(816)	(816)	-	-	-
Total Corporate Funding	-	(451,633)	(451,633)	-	(450,942)	(450,942)	-	(691)	(691)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
TOTAL	981,143	(981,143)	0	1,013,378	(1,011,615)	1,763	(32,235)	30,472	(1,763)
Use of FM reserve to cover operational overspend	-	-	-	-	(748)	(748)	-	748	748
Use of FM reserve to cover debt impairment	-	-	-	-	(1,015)	(1,015)	-	1,015	1,015
FINAL TOTAL	981,143	(981,143)	0	1,013,378	(1,013,378)	0	(32,235)	32,235	0

Capital Programme (gross £ millions) – approved projects**Capital Programme Summary 2022/23 (£'000)**

	Budget 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	Variation (Over) / under 2022/23 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance
Adult Social Care	394	376	18	50	140	(172)
Business Services	26,018	22,177	3,841	978	3,301	(438)
Children's Services	2,355	2,327	28	13	15	-
Communities, Economy & Transport	55,331	50,528	4,803	(339)	5,846	(704)
Gross Expenditure (Planned Programme)	84,098	75,408	8,690	702	9,302	(1,314)
Section 106 and CIL	1,965	558	-	-	-	-
Other Specific Funding	10,082	7,699	-	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	9,591	9,591	-	-	-	-
Formula Grants	34,234	34,672	-	-	-	-
Reserves and Revenue Set Aside	20,572	17,076	-	-	-	-
Borrowing	7,654	5,812	-	-	-	-
Total Funding (Planned Programme)	84,098	75,408	-	-	-	-

Treasury Management

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

The average level of Council funds available for investment purposes during quarter 4 was £260m. The total amount received in short term interest for the quarter was £2.1m at an average rate of 3.30%, an increase from quarter 3, £1.7m at an average rate of 2.37%. The Bank of England Base Rate was increased twice; on the 2 February and 23 March to a rate of 4.25% by the end of quarter 4. The investment return outlook has improved due to anticipated increases in future interest rates, and we have been able to place a number of fixed term deposits with banks for periods up to 1 year at much improved rates. These investments have been 'laddered' and will mature at different intervals in the next 12 months. This will take advantage of a rising bank rate in future quarters.

In seeking investment opportunities, as defined by the TMS, an opportunity has been undertaken to reinvest a maturing Bank Deposit that aligns to the United Nations' Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs). In quarter 4, £18m of maturities was reinvested for a duration of three to six months, maintaining the £30m placed for investment in this deposit type. Deals were placed in March with other Local Authorities as the rates improved versus traditional bank deposits in the run up to year end. Bank deposits will be utilised into quarter 1 and beyond as Local Authority deposits are expected to be weaker.

No short or long term borrowing was required in quarter 4. The majority of the Council's external debt, totalling £217m at quarter 4, is held as long-term loans, and no cost-effective opportunities have arisen during quarter 4 to restructure the existing Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).

The Treasury Management budget underspent by £6.2m. This is based on the position on the capital programme removing the need to borrow externally in 2022/23, together with the financial information presented above.

Reserves and Balances 2022/23 (£000)

Reserve / Balance	Balance at 1 Apr 2022	Forecast net use at Q3	Outturn net use at Q4	Movt	Balance at 31 Mar 2023
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Statutorily ringfenced or held on behalf of others:

Balances held by schools	21,328	-	(1,246)	(1,246)	20,082
Public Health	6,857	550	955	405	7,812
Other	6,941	74	42	(32)	6,983
Subtotal	35,126	624	(249)	(873)	34,877

Service Reserves:

Capital Programme	17,013	1,788	2,870	1,082	19,883
Corporate Waste	18,942	(1,077)	(5,517)	(4,440)	13,425
Insurance	7,253	(78)	110	188	7,363
Adult Social Care	-	2,500	3,099	599	3,099
Subtotal	43,208	3,133	562	(2,571)	43,770

Strategic Reserves:

Priority / Transformation	17,285	(4,623)	113	4,736	17,398
Financial Management	47,303	(6,048)	(5,423)	625	41,880
Subtotal	64,588	(10,671)	(5,310)	5,361	59,278
Total Reserves	142,922	(6,914)	(4,997)	1,917	137,925
General Fund	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Total Reserves and Balances	152,922	(6,914)	(4,997)	1,917	147,925

Changes to Fees & Charges

Graduate Leader Fund: Training Courses

The number of courses is based on data around how many people in the sector need training or refresher training. The sector includes Nurseries, Pre-schools, Holiday Play Schemes, Out of School Clubs, Creches, Independent School Nurseries, Childminders and Nannies. The charges have been increased by £5 per course per person due to the increased costs of venues. Costs are kept low to account for the sector we deliver to and consideration is taken of the financial barriers that exist within the workforce. Prices have been checked with other providers and Local Authorities that have provided this training in previous years.

Description	Previous (£)	New (£)	Movt (£)	Movt (%)
Practitioner (we keep the practitioner training cost lower than the DSL to ensure wider level participation)	20.00	25.00	5.00	25.0%
Designated Safeguarding Lead – Initial training	60.00	65.00	5.00	8.3%
Designated Safeguarding Lead – refresher training	50.00	55.00	5.00	10.0%

Information Governance

Training and network events to support the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Information Governance traded service for schools. Costs were benchmarked (in discussion with the Children's Services Department Training team) against similar length courses within the ESCC training offer, and external providers with similar offers.

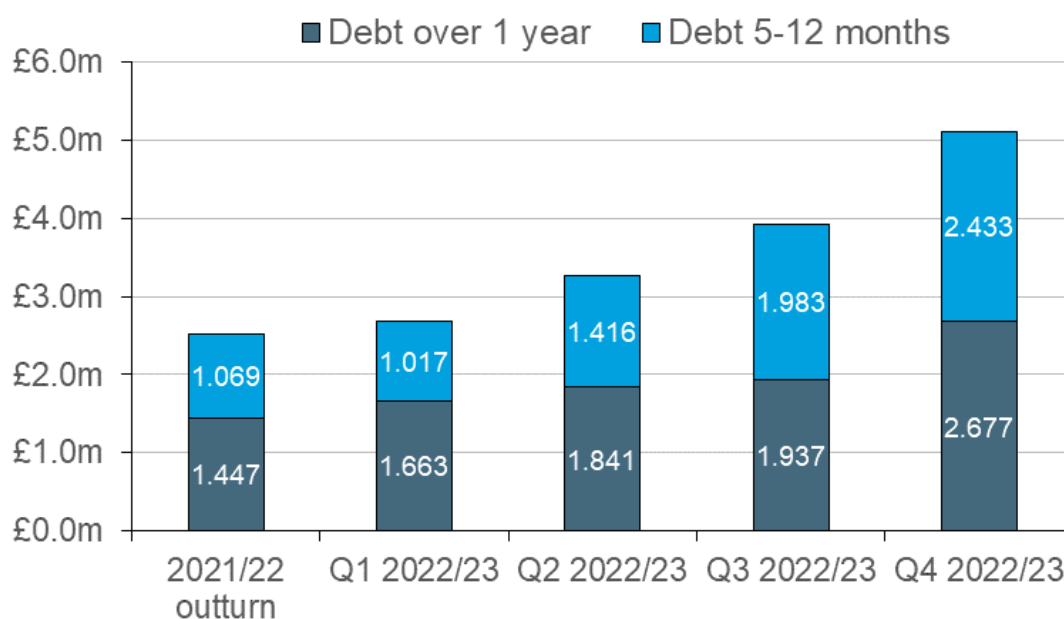
Description	Previous (£)	New (£)	Movt (£)	Movt (%)
Training and network events - £50 per delegate (unless signed up to the IG4 or IG5 DPO contract, then FREE for those schools attending).	45.00	50.00	5.00	11.1%

Trading Standards

East Sussex Trading Standards Business advice rates have been increased to reflect charges from other Local Authorities in the region offering the same service.

Description	Previous (£)	New (£)	Movt (£)	Movt (%)
Business Advice (outside a Primary Authority Arrangement) – including VAT	98.40	108.00	9.60	9.8%
Primary Authority Business Advice (VAT Exempt)	82.00	90.00	8.00	9.8%

Outstanding debt analysis (£ millions)



The value of debt aged over 5 months at quarter 4 has increased by £2.594m to £5.110m compared to the 2021/22 outturn position of £2.516m. The majority £4.215m (82.48%) of all debt over 5 months old relates to Adult Social Care (ASC).

The value of aged debt over 5 months as a proportion of debt raised has increased from 1.85% in 2021/22 to 3.22% in 2022/23.

Of the £2.594m increase in outstanding debt £1.892m relates to ASC client contributions and £0.594m relates to income due from other public sector organisations including Local Authorities and NHS.

The majority of the £1.892m increase in ASC debt is in two categories of debt as follows:

- Estate case waiting for executor information has increased by £0.831m, with several high value cases impacting on the level of debt.

- Non-payment and financial hardship referrals has seen an increase of £0.763m with client numbers more than double compared to the previous year at 329 which has been linked to the cost of living crisis.

Recovery of debt continues to be a high priority with continual review of systems and processes. Debt recovery related to ASC client contributions can often take a long time due to the circumstances of the client e.g. lack of capacity, delays with executors of estates. Regular ASC debt case review meetings ensure that the most appropriate steps are taken to recover debt with sensitivity and consideration of the clients or families concerned and in accordance with the Care Act.

Revenue Savings Summary 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target for 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
ASC	-	-	-	-	-
BSD/Orbis	-	-	-	-	-
CS	-	-	-	-	-
CET	1,257	1,257	452	745	60
GS	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	1,257	1,257	452	745	60
ASC			-	-	-
BSD / Orbis			-	-	-
CS			-	-	-
CET			-	-	-
GS			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings & Permanent Changes	1,257	1,257	452	745	60

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

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

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

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

Adult Social Care – Savings exceptions 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2022/23	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

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

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

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

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Business Services – Savings exceptions 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2022/23				-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

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

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

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

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Children's Services – Savings exceptions 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2022/23	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

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

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

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

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

Communities, Economy & Transport – Savings exceptions 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
Increase on-street parking charges where possible. Surpluses to be used for transport related funding.	1,000	1,000	255	745	-
We will further reduce the operating costs of our Library and Information Service by improving the cost efficiency of provision and/or relocating back office functions/libraries. In addition, we'll achieve further efficiencies in ICT through the implementation of a new contract for self-service facilities in libraries.	183	183	183	-	-
Income generation through traded services.	60	60	-	-	60
The Keep Sustainability Plan has been agreed and is a three-part savings and income plan to ensure the financial sustainability of The Keep. It would ensure that the partners still deliver our statutory and legal duties, and maintain a good degree of public access.	14	14	14	-	-
Total Savings	1,257	1,257	452	745	60
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	1,257	1,257	452	745	60

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
Parking - use of COVID-19 funding	745	-	745
Environmental Services	-	60	60
Total	745	60	805

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

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

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

Governance Services – Savings exceptions 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2022/23	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

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

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

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

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

Adult Social Care and Health – end of year 2022/23

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

Adult Social Care (ASC)

Health and social care integration

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. The national funding was used in the following ways:

- Increased Discharge to Assess (D2A) bed capacity across general beds.
- Increased provision of specialist beds.
- Supporting packages of care.
- Increased D2A homecare capacity.
- Provision of equipment to support discharge in Emergency Departments.
- Recruitment and retention incentives for the independent care sector.
- Enhancing a range of measures to support safe and effective discharge.

Although issues continued to need to be managed on a day-to-day basis, this had a positive effect on reducing the numbers of people waiting for the right support to be in place for discharge, and reducing the length of time people waited in hospital. This, and other winter rapid improvement work meant that the Council was part of a successful Sussex ICS 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.

A 5-year joint forward plan (known in Sussex as the Shared Delivery Plan or SDP) is being brought together to support the Sussex Integrated Care Strategy *Improving Lives Together* that was developed and agreed in December 2022. The Sussex Strategy builds on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and shared priorities for our East Sussex population set out in our [East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) (2022 – 2027) that was also fully refreshed in 2022. The initial year 1 (2023/24) delivery priorities have been finalised for the SDP. This included shared delivery priorities drawn from the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy for:

- Population health and reducing health inequalities.
- Children and young people.
- Mental health.
- Community.

Planning for years 2 to 5 of the SDP has also taken place and will be shared with the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board in June for endorsement. This will cover existing delivery priorities and high level milestones for ongoing work, as well as new priorities that have been shaped by our East Sussex Health and Care Partnership in the following areas:

- Accelerating health outcomes improvement, specifically focussed on cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, mental health and frailty/healthy ageing.
- Our model for delivering integrated health, care and wellbeing in communities.

Third Sector support

During Q4 activities have focused on agreeing the new Department for Work and Pensions Household Support Fund programme that will now run from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and be delivered through the district and borough councils, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector partners, and Food Banks and Food Partnerships.

Support for the Multi Agency Financial Inclusion Steering Group has also been a main focus to ensure partners from across sectors are involved in the various of work programmes emerging and existing across the county.

Our VCSE partners continue to play a valuable role in the support system for Homes for Ukraine guests and hosts.

2022/23 has been a year of developing and implementing new ways of working in partnership that aims to improve our connectedness and therefore the support available to people and communities.

Homes for Ukraine

As at 24 April 2023 1,013 guests were in East Sussex under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The guests were at 445 different properties across the county. More than 412 school places have been allocated to Ukrainian children. The majority (84%) of guests matched to hosts in East Sussex have now arrived. Some guests who were staying with hosts in East Sussex have now moved on, with a proportion moving into private sector accommodation or to other areas.

Percentage of Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC) referrals triaged and progressed to required services within 24 hours

Current performance is 87.3%. In 2021/22 HSCC saw a 22% increase in Health referrals and this upward trend continues into 2022/23. There is an increase in the volume of work across the whole of HSCC year-on-year. Alongside this increased demand, there had been a 25% vacancy rate in the service, exacerbated further by the impact of long-term sickness absence and an increase in short-term absence across the service. However, the workforce challenges are improving with a number of posts recruited to, and sickness absence has reduced with no staff now on long-term sick. The recruitment and training of new staff continues.

Adults are able to take control of the support they receive

- At the end of Q4, 31.9% of adults and older people were receiving Direct Payments. This equated to a total of 1,516 people.
- At the end of Q4, there were 346 Support With Confidence members against the target of 360. Due to the higher turnover of membership the scheme has experienced this year, the target has not been met. Maintaining scheme membership levels at a constant level is recognised as an achievement in itself, in the context of the wider ASC workforce challenges that are impacting on all areas of the social care market.

Adults are supported to find and keep safe and affordable accommodation

1,998 people were supported in Q4, bringing the total figure for the year to 7,946. In addition, the provider BHT Sussex have supported 68 families on the Homes for Ukraine programme since July 2022, providing support to sustain hosting arrangements and support Ukrainian guests moving into independent living. An additional 38 families are also being actively supported on the current caseload.

Reabling people to maximise their level of independence

Reablement services are provided to help people to regain mobility and daily living skills, especially after a hospital stay. A range of measures are used to look at how effective reablement services are:

- Between April and December 2022, 90.2% of older people discharged from hospital to reablement / rehabilitation services were at home 91 days after their discharge from hospital.
- During 2022/23 no further request was made for ongoing support for 94.7% people who received short-term services.

- In Q4, 63% of Reablement service users discharged from the Joint Community Rehabilitation Service did not require ongoing care.

Safer Communities (Safer East Sussex Team (SEST), Substance Misuse and Recovery Services and Domestic Violence and Abuse, Sexual Violence and Abuse Services)

Fraud and Scams

- During Q4, Get Safe Online (GSO) and the Council promoted campaigns around online shopping and vehicle fraud. The online shopping campaign highlighted the frequency of scams which involve consumers being asked to pay in advance for goods or services that are never received, with criminals creating fake websites, social media profiles and documents that appear genuine.

Preventing Violent Extremism

- During Q4, Prevent Awareness workshops and assemblies were delivered to a further eight schools and colleges and refresher training to five schools.
- During Q4 following the successful bid to the Preventing Radicalisation Fund, conferences coordinated by the SEST and the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership took place at the end of March and were attended by 80 participants.

Serious Violence

The Police, Crime, Sentencing, and Courts Act 2022 has legislated for a new Serious Violence Duty which will impact upon Council services and partnership arrangements. The Council will have an essential and leading role to play in both the partnership arrangements and the delivery of activity to prevent and address serious violence. The agreed governance mechanism for the duty is the pan-Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP). Crest Advisory UK Ltd (commissioned by the Home Office to support local areas to deliver on the duty) have assessed Sussex as a 'mature' partnership.

During Q4 the SEST worked with partners across Sussex to develop a Pan Sussex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of Serious Violence. A Senior Insights and Information Manager has been appointed who will produce a local needs assessment that will inform the development of an East Sussex Serious Violence Action Plan.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

- We continue to support contextual safeguarding work at an East Sussex train station, aiming to disrupt County Lines activity and the exploitation of vulnerable young people and adults.
- In Q4, the SEST supported a VSCE-led Modern Slavery conference which saw speakers from Project Discovery, Migrant Help and Bramber Bakehouse highlight the work they are doing in this area.
- During Q4, the SEST continued to support Sussex University in the development of an East Sussex Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking needs assessment by providing information on the risks in relation to county lines and drug dealing for children and adults, the support for refugees and asylum seekers, and the multi-agency partnership structures in place in East Sussex to tackle all forms of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

Domestic Violence and Abuse, Sexual Violence and Abuse Services

A Voices of Lived Experience Board has been expanded over the last year, following the appointment of a Community Development Worker in Q4 2021/22, to ensure that survivor's voices are represented and heard at the Pan Sussex Local Partnership Board. This supports the delivery of the strategy and local action plan.

In Q3, the Safer Communities team carried out a social media campaign to promote the 16 days of activism against gender based violence. This shared key messages, promoted events and signposted to services in co-ordination with specialist organisations.

The one year Multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) triage pilot introduced and co-ordinated by the East Sussex Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence and Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) team, within the Safer Communities Team, commenced in December 2022. The pilot was designed in collaboration with key agencies to safely manage some referrals outside the MARAC structure to address volume levels. Data from the pilot to date shows a reduction in the number of cases discussed at MARAC by around 55-60% and agencies have provided positive feedback about the effectiveness and safety of the triage process.

In Q4, the Council co-hosted a Domestic Abuse Conference with West Sussex County Council on 8 March to mark International Women's Day, with attendees from a variety of key stakeholders including survivors of domestic abuse in attendance and presenting on the day.

Public Health

The Health Checks target will not be achieved and so will not be carried over to Q1 (ref i). Cumulative uptake by eligible individuals from the top 20% most deprived areas in the county (quintile IMD1) is 31.1% for the five-year period 2018/19–2022/23 Q3. Delivery of NHS Health Checks by Hastings & St Leonards Primary Care Network started in February 2023 and they will be specifically targeting those living in the most deprived areas for NHS Health Checks.

Public Health organised the inaugural 'Southeast Regional Public Health conference: 'Opportunities for action on health inequalities' on 24 March 2023. The day commenced with a choice of fringe events including a seafront walk or run and for the brave few – a brief dip in the sea. The conference was attended by over 400 people from Local Authorities across the Southeast region. The Conference opened with welcoming speeches from Cllr Glazier and Dr Alison Barnett regional Director of Public Health and keynote speeches were provided by Sir Professor Chris Whitty and Dr Jessica Allen Deputy Director of the Institute for Health Equity.

A choice of nearly 40 facilitated and chaired workshops and four training and development workshops were on offer together with a poster presentation and competition. There were a number of presentations and posters from Council colleagues. Early feedback suggests the day was extremely well received and a full evaluation report will be released in due course.

Public Health supported the development of the Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report on health in an ageing society by hosting a visit and providing an opportunity to learn more about how East Sussex is responding to the health and care needs of an ageing population. On 23 March Sir Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer (CMO), visited Mid Downs Medical Centre, Robertsbridge Village Hall, and the De La Warr Pavilion. At these different sites colleagues and partners showcased the challenges, innovations, and programmes, including the [HAIRE project](#), related to health in an ageing society within East Sussex. The learning from the visit will be outlined the report building on the contribution made to the previous CMO report on [Health in Coastal Communities in which Hastings was a case study](#).

The [Wellbeing at Work](#) programme has granted a further 21 awards to East Sussex employers bringing the total number of awards granted to 28. This surge was prompted by the first [Wellbeing at Work Conference](#) held in February 2023, which welcomed 120 delegates from 59 organisations. The event recognised and celebrated employers who had achieved awards in a ceremony, as well as offering expert presentations on wellbeing topics; case studies from awarded employers; and hosted a marketplace hall of local wellbeing support services. The accreditation programme currently has 48 East Sussex businesses registered, who are working towards either Commitment, Bronze, Silver, or Gold level awards.

A Social Learning Event was held in February 2023 to support the development of Creating Healthier Lives: Arts in Public Health strategic plan. The event, at the Towner Eastbourne, was attended by over 45 people representing health, local authority, cultural, creative, voluntary and community sectors.

Revenue Budget Summary

Public Health

The Public Health (PH) Budget of £31.097m is comprised of the PH Grant allocation of £28.862m, Test Track and Contain Grant allocation £0.792m, ADDER Grant allocation £1.350m and £0.093m drawn from reserves to support in year spending. At 31st March 2023, the expenditure is less than planned with a final underspend of £0.957m. £0.439m relates to Health Visiting and the remaining £0.518m is due to COVID-19 recovery and renewal with additional support expenditure being allocated to the Test, Trace and Contain Grant.

The General Public Health reserve of £5.363m has increased to £5.881m and the Health Visiting reserve of £1.494m has increased to £1.933m.

ASC

The net Adult Social Care budget of £203.736m includes an inflationary uplift equal to 6% across all services to support the Independent Sector care market, the 1% council tax precept for ASC and the pay-award for 2022/23.

At 31 March 2023, the actual outturn is an overspend of £0.135m. This is comprised of an overspend of £1.734m in Independent Sector care, offset by an overspend of £1.599m in Directly Provided Services, with the latter being mainly due to staffing vacancies.

In addition to the core revenue budget, ASC continues to incur expenditure funded by a range of COVID-19 related funding streams. For the Contain Outbreak Management Funding and Test and Trace Grant, these will fund ongoing costs relating to schemes initiated during the national COVID-19 response. For other grants, expenditure relates to the repayment of unspent funding to the government:

Grant	Funding b/f £'000	Planned Usage £'000	Balance Remaining £'000
Contain Outbreak Management Funding	6,491	3,796	2,695
Test & Trace Grant	792	792	-
CEV Grant (support to CEV individuals)	1,539	-	1,539
Infection Control Fund 2	29	29	-
Rapid Test Fund 1	12	12	-
Infection Control Fund 4	53	53	-
Rapid Test Fund 3	46	46	-
Infection Control and Testing Fund - Round 3	140	140	-
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund	10	10	-
Omicron Support Fund	186	145	41
Practical Support Payments	1,044	1,044	-
Total	10,342	6,067	4,275

In December, the government updated the guidance on Homes For Ukraine (HFU) Grant funding and announced that the amount of HFU funding per guest would fall from £10,500 to £5,900 from 1 January 2023. Confirmed funding is £19.421m and relates to 1,500 guests that had arrived by end of December and the anticipated income relates to a further 73 guests. Total expenditure in 2022/23 is £4.463m leaving an unspent grant balance of £11.876m. This will be carried forward under the terms of the grant and used to continue support for the scheme in 2023/24. In addition, ESCC have passed through £3.158m of ring-fenced funding to Education and £1.769m for host payments to district and borough councils.

HFU Grant Funding	Funding Confirmed £'000	Further Funding Anticipated £'000	Total Funding £'000	Actual Expenditure £'000	Balance Remaining £'000
Funding at £10.5k per guest	15,770	569	16,339	4,463	11,876
Host Payments at £350 per week per host	493	1,276	1,769	1,769	-
Education funding for guests under 18	3,158	-	3,158	3,158	-
Total	19,421	1,845	21,266	9,390	11,876

Capital Programme Summary

The total ASC Capital programme budget for 2022/23 is £0.394m. Actual expenditure for the programme in 2022/23 is £0.376m which is an underspend of £0.018m. There has been slippage of £0.140m and £0.050m respectively against the Greenacres and House Adaptations projects which has been offset by £0.172m expenditure brought forward for the Supported Living projects.

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

Priority – Helping people to help themselves

Performance measure	Outturn 21/22	Target 22/23	RAG Q1 22/23	RAG Q2 22/23	RAG Q3 22/23	RAG Q4 22/23	2022/23 outturn	Note ref
Achieve independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care	N/A	>90%	G	G	G	CO	Q3 YTD: 90.2% (Reported a quarter in arrears)	
Improving targeting of NHS Health Checks	70%	35% uptake rate by eligible patients from IMD1 (pandemic baseline 18%)	G	G	A	R	Q3 3: 31.1% (Reported a quarter in arrears)	i

Priority – Keeping vulnerable people safe

Performance measure	Outturn 21/22	Target 22/23	RAG Q1 22/23	RAG Q2 22/23	RAG Q3 22/23	RAG Q4 22/23	2022/23 outturn	Note ref
The % of people affected by domestic violence and abuse who have improved safety/support measures in place upon leaving the service	90%	80%	G	G	G	CO	Q3 YTD: 90.9% (Reported a quarter in arrears)	
When they leave the service the % of those affected by rape, sexual violence and abuse who have improved coping strategies	92%	88%	G	G	G	CO	Q3 YTD: 92.6% (Reported a quarter in arrears)	

Savings exceptions 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0	

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

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

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

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

Revenue Budget 2022/23 (£'000)**Adult Social Care – Independent Sector:**

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
IS - Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support for Memory & Cognition	126,579	(45,840)	80,739	127,576	(47,003)	80,573	(997)	1,163	166	
IS - Learning Disability Support	71,161	(4,752)	66,409	74,694	(5,213)	69,481	(3,533)	461	(3,072)	
IS - Mental Health Support	20,734	(10,946)	9,788	23,873	(15,257)	8,616	(3,139)	4,311	1,172	
Subtotal	218,474	(61,538)	156,936	226,143	(67,473)	158,670	(7,669)	5,935	(1,734)	

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

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support for Memory & Cognition	16,277	(4,850)	11,427	14,949	(4,879)	10,070	1,328	29	1,357	
Learning Disability Support	8,165	(606)	7,559	7,785	(610)	7,175	380	4	384	
Mental Health Support	4,051	(3,929)	122	4,031	(3,929)	102	20	(0)	20	
Substance Misuse Support	477	-	477	476	(0)	476	1	-	1	
Equipment & Assistive Technology	6,804	(3,507)	3,297	7,184	(3,797)	3,387	(380)	290	(90)	
Other	130	-	130	110	-	110	20	-	20	
Supporting People	5,504	(310)	5,194	5,504	(309)	5,195	-	(1)	(1)	
Assessment and Care Management	27,839	(2,145)	25,694	30,343	(4,652)	25,691	(2,504)	2,507	3	
Carers	3,378	(2,679)	699	3,172	(2,473)	699	206	(206)	(0)	
Management and Support	18,496	(26,730)	(8,234)	19,353	(27,451)	(8,098)	(857)	721	(136)	
Service Strategy	633	(198)	435	1,645	(1,251)	394	(1,012)	1,053	41	
Subtotal	91,754	(44,954)	46,800	94,552	(49,351)	45,201	(2,798)	4,397	1,599	

APPENDIX 2

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Total Adult Social Care	310,228	(106,492)	203,736	320,695	(116,824)	203,871	(10,467)	10,332	(135)	

Safer Communities:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Safer Communities	2,021	(909)	1,112	1,918	(806)	1,112	103	(103)	-	
Total Safer Communities	2,021	(909)	1,112	1,918	(806)	1,112	103	(103)	0	

Public Health – Core Services:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Mental Health & Best Start	10,806	-	10,806	10,692	-	10,692	114	-	114	
Risky Behaviours and Threats to Health	12,187	-	12,187	11,882	-	11,882	305	-	305	
Health Systems	3,107	-	3,107	2,876	-	2,876	231	-	231	
Communities	959	-	959	1,092	-	1,092	(133)	-	(133)	
Central Support	3,061	-	3,061	3,086	-	3,086	(25)	-	(25)	
Test, Track and Contain	792	-	792	665	-	665	127	-	127	
Recovery & Renewal – Funded by Test & Trace	185	-	185	126	-	126	59	-	59	
Public Health Grant income	-	(28,862)	(28,862)	-	(28,862)	(28,862)	-	-	-	
Test, Track and Contain Grant income	-	(792)	(792)	-	(792)	(792)	-	-	-	
ADDER Grant	-	(1,350)	(1,350)	-	(1,722)	(1,722)	-	372	372	
Contribution to General Reserves	-	-	-	518	-	518	(518)	-	(518)	
Contribution to Health Visiting Reserves	-	(93)	(93)	439	-	439	(439)	(93)	(532)	
Total Public Health	31,097	(31,097)	0	31,376	(31,376)	0	(279)	279	0	

Capital programme 2022/23 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	Variation (Over) / under 2022/23 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
Supported Living Projects	6,400	-	200	372	(172)	-	-	(172)	
Greenacres	2,598	2,598	144	4	140	-	140	-	
House Adaptations for People with Disabilities	2,719	2,719	50	-	50	50	-	-	
Total ASC Gross	11,717	5,317	394	376	18	50	140	(172)	

Children's Services – end of year 2022/23

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

Education

Early Years

East Sussex outcomes for the Early Years Foundation Stage were above the national average for academic year 2021/22. 69% of pupils achieved a good level of development compared to the national average of 65%. This is the first set of data since 2019. Changes in the new statutory framework mean that data cannot be compared to previous years. 98.6% of early years providers in East Sussex are rated as good or outstanding compared to 96% nationally.

Take up of funded 2 year places, for eligible 2 year olds in East Sussex for the spring 2023 funding period was 82%. East Sussex remains above the national average of 72%.

Childminder Conference

In March, the early years improvement team held their first conference specifically aimed at childminders. 52 childminders from across the county attended. The conference theme focussed on The Gift of Language. It included a variety of keynote speeches and the opportunity to network with colleagues. It included representatives from the Healthy Active Little Ones (HALO) team, the 50 Things to do Before You're 5 team, East Sussex Library Service, and The Curiosity Approach.

Hastings Priority Investment Area

In March 2023 Government Ministers agreed the delivery plan for the Hastings Priority Investment Area (PIA). The PIA is a three year programme up to August 2025 which will focus on three key priorities. The Hastings PIA will receive an additional investment of £800k to deliver on these priorities:

- Improving attendance.
- Improving key stage 2 maths outcomes.
- Improving key stage 4 outcomes through strong and stable leadership.

Mental Health Support Team

The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) launched a second Hastings team in September 2022. Four primary schools and one secondary school have been identified as placement schools. The remaining six primary schools will have newly qualified staff from last year's Hastings Team One cohort allocated to them. A Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) specialist has been recruited to the Hastings Two team to work with two of the Hastings special schools. The schools are engaging well with the service and are welcoming the additional mental health resource provided. 71 schools are now part of the MHST programme in East Sussex.

Work Experience Placements

Our Work Experience team continue to see an increase in work experience placements booked, with record numbers of Year 10/Year 11 going out on placement in the academic year 2021/22 – 3,767. So far in this academic year, 2022/23, we are on course to reach over 4,200 placements.

The Local Agreed Religious Education (RE) Syllabus

The new agreed syllabus for RE, Faith and Belief in the 21st Century, is the statutory curriculum for all maintained schools in the county. It was rolled out in September 2022. It was developed with external advice from RE Today and significant consultation with school and subject leaders, children, young people, and their families. The new agreed syllabus focuses on the major world religions whilst allowing for wider world views and thematic, moral, and ethical questions. Two free launch events were provided covering the new agreed syllabus. 89% of all primary schools and 87% of all secondary schools including academies engaged with the training offer.

iCan Careers Event

On Wednesday 8 March 2023, 25 schools from across East Sussex attended the annual iCan Careers Event at the Towner Gallery in Eastbourne. iCan is a free bespoke careers event arranged by the Careers Hub. It is mainly for young people aged 14-16 who experience barriers to accessing mainstream careers events, such as those with SEND and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

iCan brought together 63 professionals from 36 education, training and employment providers from across East Sussex and the surrounding counties. 259 students attended iCan this year, more than doubling from last year. 95 teachers/school staff also attended. It gave them the opportunity to meet and learn about education and training providers in and around the area.

Allocation of primary and secondary school places for 2023/24

The Admissions and Transport team completed the allocation for secondary schools in March 2023 and for primary schools in April 2023.

- 96.7% of East Sussex residents who applied on time for a secondary school place have been allocated a place at one of their preferred schools. 87.8% were offered their first preference.
- 92.9% of East Sussex residents who applied on time for a primary school place were offered their first preference, and 98.5% were offered one of their preferences.

Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) annual review meetings where the child gave their view and/or participated

93.1% (2,271 out of 2,439) children and young people gave their views and/or participated in their EHCP annual review.

Proportion of new EHCPs issued within 20 weeks

656 EHCPs were issued in 2022/23. This is 46.8% more than the 447 issued during 2021/22. Of the new EHCPs issued, 85.9% (519 out of 604) including exceptions and 87.6% (518 out of 591) excluding exceptions were issued within statutory timescales. This is above the targets of 65% and 70% respectively for 2022/23.

Phase transfer of EHCPs

The SEND Assessment and Planning team met two key statutory deadlines in Q4 related to children with EHCPs who are moving into a different phase of education in the coming September. Phase transfer EHCPs supported by our 0-13 team must be finalised by 15 February, and phase transfer EHCPs supported by our 14-25 team must be finalised by 31 March. Both teams finalised 100% of plans by the statutory deadlines. The two teams finalised a total of 983 plans between them.

Young SEND Ambassadors

In February, four of our Young SEND Ambassadors represented the Council at the Children's Disability Council's, Youth Voice Matters Conference in Manchester. The conference was addressed by the Minister for children, Claire Coutinho. The ambassadors took part in workshops focusing on co-production and mental health. It was a great opportunity for them to interact with young people from across the country and have their voices heard at a national level.

SEND strategy

In November 2022 we launched the new [East Sussex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Strategy 2022-25](#) after a 10-month consultation period with key partners across the East Sussex SEND community. The Strategy outlines a joint approach to service provision and commissioning. It puts children and young people, and their families at the centre of decision-making. The strategy sets out the shared ambitions we aim to achieve across Education, Health and Social Care over the next three years for children and young people with SEND.

New SEND Provision

All Saints CE Primary School, Bexhill opened a new specialist facility on 1 September 2022. The facility will accommodate 12 children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and associated Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

Summerdown School is a new free special school which is part of The Southfield Trust. The school will educate up to 84 learners between the ages of 5 and 16 who have a diagnosis of autism. It will also include a separate centre called The Southfield Centre. This will educate up to 51 learners with complex learning and medical needs. Pupils may be accommodated in other schools within the trust while the building of the school is completed. Further information about Summerdown School is on [The Southfield Trust website](#). The Council has worked closely with the Trust to open the new school, which is part of our strategy to ensure that children and young people with SEND are able to access the right provision.

Service user feedback surveys

- 76.5% of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Services.
- 95.5 % of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of 0 – 19 Early Help Service.

The percentage of young people meeting the duty of RPA (Raising the Participation Age) by either participating in education, training or employment with training or undertaking re-engagement provision at academic age 16 (Year 12) and academic age 17 (year 13)

94% (ref i) of academic age 16 (year 12) met the duty to participate in education, training or employment with training in Quarter 4, meeting our target of 93%. 86% (ref ii) of academic age 17 (year 13) met the duty meeting our target of 86%.

Early Help and Social Care

The Household Support Fund

Funding from the government's Household Support Fund was used over the February half term and the Easter holidays to provide food vouchers to 2-19 year olds who are eligible for free school meals. Vouchers are provided directly to families by schools, settings and colleges. Vouchers can be used in all major supermarkets. The scheme has been extended for another year up to the end of March 2024. Food vouchers will be provided to eligible pupils over the school holidays.

Delivery of Safeguarding Reviews

East Sussex schools are committed to the welfare and safety of all children and to developing their safeguarding practice. This is evidenced through 100% of state funded schools returning their annual safeguarding audit to the Council. There was also a significant rise in referrals to the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) and Early Help Services over the past year.

In September 2022 all maintained schools made a new agreement to participate in a safeguarding review as part of a 2-year cycle. A new quality assurance review process with independent non-maintained special schools has also been implemented. More comprehensive monitoring of standards of safeguarding in all types of schools and colleges will allow the Education Safeguarding team to work with the East Sussex Safeguarding Children's Partnership to tailor training according to needs.

Connected Families Service

The new Connected Families Service launched in September 2022 for families with children aged 11-17 who are on the edge of care. The service aims to enable children to live safely at home, or where care is necessary, to maintain relationships and work to support children to return home when appropriate. Connected Families brings together Intensive Support Practitioners, coaches and a Multisystemic Therapy Team to provide proactive, tailored support for families at their point

of need. Staff work flexibly across evenings and weekends to support relationships, build resilience and encourage ambition. We have built relationships with partner agencies to enable us to smooth pathways and ensure that children are accessing health and education. We have partnered with East Sussex College to base our services in one of their buildings which opens opportunities for young people to access college facilities. There are currently 55 open cases and we have worked on and closed 16 cases. Q1 2023/24 will provide the first set of performance data for this service.

Lifelong Links

In October 2021 East Sussex, along with three other local authorities, were successful in a bid through the South East Regional Recovery Fund to explore options to deliver the Lifelong Links programme for children in our care. Lifelong Links aims to ensure that children in care have a positive support network around them during their time in care, and into adulthood; this may include relatives, friends, previous carers or professionals. A trained, independent Lifelong Links coordinator works with the child to find out who is important to them, who they would like to be back in touch with and who they would like to know more about.

All Lifelong Links Coordinators within the Family and Friends Service are now working with one or more children to develop Lifelong Links and the service has a waiting list. The offer has been extended out across all Looked after Children (LAC) and ThroughCare Teams.

The Digital in Care programme

The Digital in Care Programme is working to ensure children and young people in care have the same opportunities as their peers to reap the benefits of the online world, by ensuring carers and practitioners are equipped and able to support them.

The programme launched its training in online safety and digital resilience in 2022. It is innovative because it combines both carers and practitioners in the same training. This is working well, and they are able to learn from each other. Feedback so far is very positive with 92% feeling more confident to support young people and 100% knowing where to go to get help. Our Digital Hive website launched in August 2022. It is our one stop shop for carers and practitioners to access training, resources, advice and support.

The percentage of Care Leavers undertaking a Level 4 – 6 qualification

12% of care leavers aged 18-25 are undertaking level 4 – 6 qualifications. Eleven care leavers gained university places for the 2022/23 academic year and nine have taken up the place.

Social Care Quality Assurance Framework

Following the appointment of a Quality Assurance (QA) Operational Manager there has been further enhancement to our QA activity in Early Help and Children's Social Care. This has resulted in focussed attention and improvements made to a number of performance indicators.

December 2022 Annual Health Survey Early Help and Social Workers

The 2022 Children's Services Social Care Health Check was carried out between 7 December 2022 and 30 January 2023. All Council Children's Services Social and Early Help Workers were sent an online survey to provide feedback on several key areas of working life which impact their health and wellbeing. There were 281 responses to the survey, from these 99% of the Social Workers said they would recommend working for the Council (up from 95% in 2019 and 92% in 2018).

The National Referral Mechanism National Pilot

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM), as set out by the Home Office, is the UK's framework for identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery. East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council are taking part in a national pilot to develop approaches on decision-making for children who have been identified as victims of modern slavery and exploitation. Multi-agency

decision-making panels, which include representatives from Sussex Police, Children's Services, Health and the Youth Justice Service, have been established in both local authorities and now consider all NRM referrals for children under 18 allocated to East Sussex or Brighton and Hove. The East Sussex panel has been operational since March 2023 and four of the five children referred have received positive conclusive grounds decisions within 45 days. This compares to pre-pilot decision making timescales which, in some cases, exceeded 12 months. Further information about the national pilot can be found here [Devolving child decision-making pilot programme: general guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/devolving-child-decision-making-pilot-programme-general-guidance)

Collaboration Against Child Exploitation (CACE)

CACE is a 7-week educative programme for parents/carers whose young people are either at risk of or are experiencing Child Criminal or Child Sexual Exploitation. CACE is run at various locations across East Sussex including Crowborough, Peacehaven, Eastbourne and Hastings. Session themes include, what is exploitation, knives and weapons, substances, emotional-wellbeing, adolescent to parent violence and strengthening relationships and social media and online presence. The final CACE session is co-facilitated by a parent mentor who provides invaluable 1:1 and group support with lived experiences of Child Exploitation.

Following the 7-week educative programme, parents/carers continue to meet on a monthly basis. At these support groups parents are able to request further information on topics they feel are relevant for example, education or the youth justice service. Parent mentors also run a telephone helpline as well as Facebook and Instagram pages. Since April 2022 CACE has delivered eight education groups and four support groups, reaching in excess of 125 parents.

The percentage of LAC participating in education, training or employment with training at academic age 16 (Year 12) and academic age 17 (year 13)

81% of LAC aged 16 (year 12) (**ref iii**) are participating in education, training or employment with training, above the target of 80%. 82% are participating in education, training or employment (without training). The percentage of LAC at academic age 17 (year 13) participating is 67% which is below our target of 70%. 80% are participating in education, training or employment (without training). The Virtual School, Through Care Team and Youth Employability Service continue to support those not in employment, education or training back into education. We have some young people in part time jobs who are looking at returning to further education in September 2023. We are also providing support through different agencies through re-engagement activities.

Average Progress 8 score for LAC

The national Department for Education data was released in March 2023. East Sussex LAC (**ref iv**) in academic year 2021/22 had a progress 8 score (overall) of -1.17. This is better than the national score of -1.3 for LAC. Results in English, Ebacc and other are also less than 0.5 points below national LAC results. The average progress score for Maths, -0.66, was better than the national LAC score of -0.83. Further actions we are taking for future cohorts include:

- Early identification of young people who are not making good progress.
- Promoting use of assistive technology for children with literacy difficulties.
- High quality academic intervention for LAC through development of Virtual School intervention teacher provision.
- Coaching intervention to support emotional resilience and development of positive study skills.
- The Youth Employment Service working with all LAC from year 10 and providing intensive input for young people unclear of future pathways.
- Further links with further education colleges and higher education providers to ensure high aspirations and support transitions.

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

Over the past two years we have seen sustained increases in demand:

- 37.29% increase in Single Point of Advice (SPOA) referrals seen in 2022/23 (17,409) compared with 2020/21 (12,680).
- 21.37% increase seen in Multi Agency Screening Hub (MASH) referrals 2022/23 (21,181) compared with 2020/21 (17,452).
- 5.40% increase seen in Referrals to the Duty and Assessment Team (DAT) 2022/23 (4,018) compared with 2020/21 (3,812).
- 18.25% increase in DAT assessments in 2022/23 (2,955) compared with 2020/21 (2,499).

The rate of children with a CP Plan at Q4 was 64.8 (691 children). This is 155 children above our target of 536 children (50.3 per 10,000). We continue to monitor this carefully. In addition to the robust management oversight of plans, a mid-way review by the Children Protection Advisor is being embedded into practice. The mid-way review provides additional scrutiny and identifies what factors/barriers there are to ending a plan and what actions need to take place for the plan to be safely ended at the next review.

The rate of LAC at Q4 was 62.3 per 10,000 children (664 children). Of the 664 children, 73 were 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.

Delays in court system are contributing to higher numbers of LAC, this has an impact on vulnerable children as it results in delays in moving children to more permanent arrangements e.g. Special Guardianship Order or for very young children to adoptive families. There continues to be an increase in the number of adolescents with complex needs entering care.

After reaching a high mark of 980 open Children in Need (CIN) at the end of Q2, we have managed to reduce this figure to 897 by the end of Q4. There continues to be a significant focus on ensuring pace and purpose in our work with CIN, and progressing to ending plans where it is safe to do so. A recent audit of children on a CIN plan for 9+ months did not highlight concerns regarding drift or delay. We are continuing to see increases in the demand for CIN plans to support adolescents with complex needs.

Participation and strategic partnerships

Children and Young People's Trust Annual Event

Children's Services held their first face to face Children and Young People's Trust Annual Event since COVID-19 on 3 May 2022. 168 delegates attended, including 42 young people, representing a variety of sectors and youth voice groups. The event focused on the refresh of our Children and Young People's Plan and provided the opportunity to discuss each of the Plan's five priority areas; Best Start in Life; Safeguarding; Education; Physical Health; and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing.

The East Sussex Youth Cabinet annual report for 2022-2023

The Youth Cabinet are the elected voice of children and young people aged 11-18. Members work with decision-makers and other youth voice groups to campaign on issues and work together to bring about change.

The annual report [Championing Youth Voice 2022-2023](#) highlights key activities and outcomes regarding the campaigns and activities of the Youth Cabinet across their key priorities, including work on:

- Environment and Climate Change Strategy.
- Jobs, Money, Opportunities and Skills.
- Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing.
- Engaging with key decision-makers through the Children and Young People's Trust Annual Event and Council business planning.

Holiday Activities

In 2022, the Council continued to successfully deliver the Department for Education (DfE) funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. Enriching activities were provided for free to eligible young people aged 5-16 during the Easter, summer and winter school holidays in 2022. All activities included the provision of a healthy meal. The DfE has confirmed funding for the HAF programme for at least 2023 and 2024.

Activities were spread across the whole county, with a focus in six target areas with higher need (Hastings, Eastbourne, Bexhill, Hailsham, Newhaven and Peacehaven). Provision was targeted at young people in receipt of benefits-related free school meals (FSM), but 15% of places across the programme were also available to other eligible groups. These included those with SEND, Looked After Children, a child protection plan, children in need and young carers.

- The Council funded 86 external HAF providers, many across all three holiday periods.
- More than 30,000 individual sessions took place, with over 6,000 different children and young people engaging with the programme over the course of 2022.

We received positive feedback from parents/carers, young people and providers. The DfE focus for the programme was to encourage young people to be more active and eat more healthily, but the feedback also demonstrates that positive activities have also had a positive impact on mental health too.

Revenue Budget Summary

The final outturn against the net budget of £103.543m is an overspend of £11.477m for the year **(ref v)**, a decrease of £0.073m since Q3. Within the forecast there are £3.663m of COVID-19 costs and lost income which has been offset with COVID-19 tranche funding.

Early Help and Social Care

The outturn overspend against budget relating to Early Help and Social Care **(ref vi)** has decreased since Q3 by £0.051m, to £10.328m.

Main variances from last quarter include in Looked After Children (LAC) position which has improved by £0.4m to an overspend against budget of £7.757m, this has been offset by increased overspend of £0.2m in Locality Social Work and Family assessment to £2.464m overspend, and £0.2m in Specialist Services taken the overspend against budget to £0.372m.

Communication, Planning and Performance

For Communication, Planning and Performance **(ref vii)** there has been no change from Q3 with the majority of the overspend of £2.422m within Home to School Transport (net of COVID-19 funding of £0.991m for ongoing related pressures) as growth in solo provisions for some children has slowed slightly.

Central Resources

Central Resources, where the department records any efficiencies and staff vacancies from across a number of areas in the department, is underspent by £1.217m **(ref viii)**.

Next steps

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.

Actions continue to include:

- Further engagement with regional local authority commissioning groups to drive down costs and increase purchasing power for commissioned placements.
- Head of Service and Assistant Director sign off required for all external placements, including continuing to seek contributions from health partners wherever possible.
- Monthly Head of Service and Assistant Director review of top 20 high-cost placements including scrutiny of move on/ exit plans.

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, LAC, Locality, New School attendance duties and Care leavers from 2023/24.

There are no planned savings for 2022/23.

Capital Programme Summary

The Capital Programme for Children's Services for 2022/23 is £2,327m which includes new investment of £193m of the Youth Investment Funds. **(ref ix)**.

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

Performance measure	Outturn 21/22	Target 22/23	RAG Q1 22/23	RAG Q2 22/23	RAG Q3 22/23	RAG Q4 22/23	2022/23 outturn	Note ref
% of young people meeting the duty of RPA by either participating in education, training or employment with training or undertaking re-engagement provision at academic age 16 (Year 12)	93%	93%	A	A	A	G	94%	i
% of young people meeting the duty of RPA by either participating in education, training or employment with training or undertaking re-engagement provision at academic age 17 (Year 13)	85%	86%	A	A	A	G	86%	ii
% of Looked After Children participating in education, training or employment with training at academic age 16 (Year 12)	76% RPA (78% EET)	80%	G	A	R	G	81% (86% EET)	iii
Average Progress 8 score for Looked after Children	N/A	Ac. Year 21/22 no more than 0.5 percentage points below the nat ave.	G	G	A	G	Ac. Year 21/22 -1.17 Nat. Ave -1.3	iv

Savings exceptions 2022/23 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2022/23	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0	

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

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

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

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

Revenue Budget 2022/23 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2022/23 Gross	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Central Resources	2,791	(1,448)	1,343	1,436	(1,310)	126	1,355	(138)	1,217	viii
Early Help and Social Care	90,084	(14,946)	75,138	104,990	(19,524)	85,466	(14,906)	4,578	(10,328)	vi
Education and ISEND	109,555	(14,260)	95,295	105,733	(10,494)	95,239	3,822	(3,766)	56	
Communication, Planning and Performance	27,514	(7,055)	20,459	30,444	(7,563)	22,881	(2,930)	508	(2,422)	vii
DSG non Schools	-	(88,692)	(88,692)	-	(88,692)	(88,692)	-	-	-	
Schools	156,078	(156,078)	-	156,078	(156,078)	-	-	-	-	
Total CSD	386,022	(282,479)	103,543	398,681	(283,661)	115,020	(12,659)	1,182	(11,477)	v

Capital programme 2022/23 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	Variation (Over) / under 2022/23 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
House Adaptations for Disabled Children's Carers	1,053	1,040	50	37	13	13	-	-	
Schools Delegated Capital	28,523	28,523	2,097	2,097	-	-	-	-	
Conquest Centre redevelopment	356	356	15	-	15	-	15	-	
Youth Investment Fund	193	193	193	193	-	-	-	-	
Total CS D	30,125	30,112	2,355	2,327	28	13	15	0	ix

Strategic Risk Register – Q4 2022/23

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
12	<p>CYBER ATTACK</p> <p>The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has highlighted the substantial risk to British web infrastructure, with elevated levels of Cyber Crime being reported against all areas of government, particularly in light of the current Ukrainian situation. Cyber attacks are growing more frequent, sophisticated, and damaging when they succeed. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need to carry out many additional functions virtually and remotely. Changes in working practice give rise to more requests to relax security controls, with services more likely to take risks on the technology they procure and how they use it. Controls have been enhanced to manage these requests.</p> <p>The impacts of a cyber attack are far-reaching and it is difficult to put a figure on the cost, but authorities that have been subject to major attacks have calculated the disruption to have cost between £10m and £12m.</p>	<p>Most attacks leverage software flaws and gaps in boundary defences. IT&D use modern security tools to assure our security posture: Monitoring network activity and identifying security threats; Keeping software up to date with regular patching regimes; Continually monitoring evolving threats and re-evaluating the ability of our toolset to provide adequate defence against them; Ongoing communication with the Security industry to find the most suitable tools and systems to secure our infrastructure. IT&D continues to invest in new tools, which use pre-emptive technology to identify threats and patterns of abnormal behaviour.</p> <p>Enhancing user awareness: Expanding E-Learning and policy delivery mechanisms to cover Cyber threat; educating staff around the techniques and methods used by active threats; and providing General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training and workshops to cascade vital skills and increase awareness of responsibilities under GDPR legislation. Business Continuity Scenario testing is currently being cascaded through Departmental Management Teams.</p> <p>Services hosted in ISO 27001 accredited Orbis Data Centres.</p>	Red
5	<p>RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE & RESOURCE</p> <p>There is ongoing uncertainty in relation to future funding levels, the longer-term local government funding regime and the impact of national reforms, particularly to Adult Social Care. Rising inflation and cost of living are likely to lead to higher demand for Council services and increase the direct cost of providing services. Together these create a risk of insufficient resources being available to sustain service delivery at the agreed Core Offer level to meet the changing needs of the local community.</p>	<p>We employ a robust Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process for business planning, which ensures a strategic corporate response to resource reductions, demographic change and regional and national economic challenges; and directs resources to priority areas. We take a commissioning approach to evaluating need and we consider all methods of service delivery. We work with partner organisations to deliver services and manage demand, making best use of our collective resources. We take a 'One Council' approach to delivering our priorities and set out our targets and objectives in the Council Plan. We monitor our progress and report it quarterly.</p> <p>Our plans take account of known risks and pressures, including social, economic, policy and demographic changes and financial risks. However, we continue to operate in changing and uncertain contexts. Current and forecast economic conditions continue to shape a very challenging financial outlook both for the Council itself and many of the county's residents and businesses. Alongside this we continue to face ongoing challenges as a result of the conflict in Ukraine, national service reforms and the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. We will continue to use the latest information available on these challenges to inform our business planning. We will also continually review our performance targets, priorities, service offers and financial plans, and will update these as required.</p> <p>We lobby, individually and in conjunction with our networks and partners, for a sustainable funding regime for local government in general and for children's social care and adult social care specifically, to meet the needs of the residents of East Sussex.</p>	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
Page 112	<p>WORKFORCE</p> <p>An inability to attract and retain the high calibre staff needed could lead to a reduction in the expertise and capacity required to deliver statutory services to our residents, including to prevent harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults at the required level and standards, impacting on the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives.</p>	<p>In September 2022 Cabinet agreed an investment of £270k across 2022/23 and 2023/24 to put in place a number of strategies to respond to the significant current recruitment and retention challenges. Current work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further work on the development of an employer brand and updated recruitment materials, such as recruitment videos and social media advertising, to identify the Council as an employer of choice. - Streamlined recruitment processes for identified roles e.g. removal of application form and replacement with CV and interview as soon as an application is received - Use of market supplements for specific posts. - On-going attendance at events such as careers fairs and shows to maximise our presence with job seekers. - Use of apprenticeships, traineeships, intern arrangements and more flexible work arrangements etc as a way of bringing in new talent to the Council. - Ensuring our workforce policies and approaches support individuals to remain in work, e.g. Wellbeing offer, occupational health, and absence management services. - Ensuring senior management oversight of caseloads, including mitigating actions to address high caseloads, along with the provision of high quality and regular managerial support and supervision of practitioners. - Completion of the workforce specific actions within the Corporate Equality action plan. - Implementation of mental health first aiders in the workplace. We now have a network of over 100 trained individuals. - Launch of a refreshed 'financial wellbeing' resource to support our staff, particularly given the rising cost of living pressures. - Clarity on professional development pathway for profession specific roles. - Pilot of equality and diversity pilot informing recruitment and retention policies tailored to increasing diversity of the workforce. <p>New approaches being developed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linking in with organisations that support people back into employment to extend our reach into sections of the labour market that are underrepresented or face significant barriers to employment. A new post of 'Pre-Employment Coordinator' has been established to lead on this work and will be recruited to early in the New Year. - Provision of a leadership development programme aimed at LMG3/4 managers, along with the continued delivery of our two leadership development programmes to support our talent management strategies: the 'Ladder to Leadership' programme and 'Head of Service Masterclasses'. - Development of career pathways for 'hard to recruit' posts including greater use of apprenticeships. - Forecasting of workforce 'gaps' and future need to enable bespoke approaches to be designed e.g. production of workforce development plan by CSD to support the Family Safeguarding initiative. 	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
New	PLACEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CARE Inability to secure sufficient high quality placements for children in our care, and, suitable accommodation for care experienced young people and respite provision, leading to significant financial pressure	Effective management of demand through early intervention and support to families, (delivery of supported families, early help services). Ensuring appropriate thresholds applied through Single Point of Advice (SPOA) and multi-agency safeguarding hub. Robust quality assurances and performance management across locality teams. Monitoring and evaluation of investment in Connected families and Family Safeguarding approach (to be launched January 2024), enabling more children to live safely with their families and supporting reunification. Ensuring Family Group Conferences in place and kinship care are considered for all children entering care. Placement sufficiency assessment and strategy refreshed to inform forecasting regarding number and type of placements required over the next three-five years. Fostering recruitment and retention strategy refreshed. Review of foster carers rates.	Red
Page 9 114	SCHOOLS AND ISEND For Children with Special Educational Needs. Inability to secure statutory provision.	Effective use of forecasting data to pre-empt issues. Work with statutory partners to develop contingency plans. Work with the market to increase provision where needed. Expanding internal interim offer for children.	Red
1	ROADS Extreme weather events over recent years have caused significant damage to many of the county's roads, adding to the backlog of maintenance in the County Council's Asset Plan: and increasing the risk to the Council's ability to stem the rate of deterioration and maintain road condition. Post pandemic and recent events in Ukraine, and the economic impact of these, have had some effects on service delivery during this year, particularly with increased costs, shortages of suitable contractors and materials.	While additional funding over the last few years has helped maintain road condition, the latest condition and funding modelling showed the potential for renewed deterioration over the next 10 years if further investment was not introduced into road maintenance. This reflects the changing climate with more extreme events such as warmer wetter winters, drier summers (drying and shrinking the substructure of roads) punctuated by unseasonal heavy downpours, all now influencing the rate of road deterioration. However, further investment was approved by Cabinet in November 2021 and through the Reconciling Policy, Performance & Resources (RPPR) process in February 2022 to maintain condition at current levels; and to help mitigate these factors over the next 10 years by increasing the capital budget for road maintenance by an additional £3.1m per year. In addition, a one-off investment of £5.8million to be spent on highway maintenance (roads, footways, lines and signs) in 2022/23 was also agreed. The wettest November on record, followed by one of the coldest starts to December and then further heavy rain, have led to a significant increase in the number of potholes appearing on our roads. This will also likely be reflected in a wider deterioration in road surfaces, which may manifest in our Road Condition Indicator (RCI) scores for this year, when survey works are undertaken later in the summer. We closely monitor the national economic situation; evaluate all options for service delivery; manage delays to materials with long lead in times; and allow for increased costs within the new Highways contract.	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
18	<p>DATA BREACH</p> <p>A breach of security/confidentiality leading to destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data. This includes breaches that are the result of both accidental and deliberate causes. A personal data breach is a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of personal data regardless of whether information has been accessed, altered, or disclosed via electronic or manual means.</p> <p>Risks to individuals, reputational damage, fines from the Information Commissioner's Officer (ICO), compensation claims.</p>	<p>Policy and guidance procedures in place to support practice.</p> <p>Data Protection Officer (DPO), Caldicott Guardians and Information Governance Officers monitor breach reporting and put in place mechanisms to minimise recurrence.</p> <p>Staff training to develop awareness.</p> <p>Technical security measures operated by Information Technology and Digital (IT&D), including access control.</p>	Amber
Page 115 8	<p>CAPITAL PROGRAMME</p> <p>There are risks and uncertainties regarding the capital programme over the current Medium Term Financial Plan period and beyond, which could impact on the ability to deliver the Council's priorities.</p> <p>The volatile national economic situation has increased uncertainties within the construction industry around supply chain issues and high-cost inflation, which are likely to impact project deliverability and affordability. This has been exacerbated by the invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the resultant global sanctions imposed on Russia.</p> <p>Additionally, there is a risk that, due to the complexity of factors and uncertainties impacting them, the level of government grants and other sources of capital programme funding such as developer contributions could be significantly reduced.</p>	<p>The Council reviews and updates its 20-year Capital Strategy annually as part of the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process, which sets the framework in which the capital programme is planned and allows the Council to prioritise investment to support its objectives. The development and delivery of the capital programme is overseen by a Capital Strategic Asset Board (CSAB), which is a cross departmental group, who also hear from Departmental Capital Board/Sub Boards who oversee priority areas.</p> <p>The capital programme includes an element of 'normal' level of inflation for ongoing target-based core programmes (as opposed to programmes that have cash limited envelopes). Additionally, a capital risk provision in the form of additional borrowing flexibility is in place to provide the ability to react to emerging risks such as supply chain issues and inflationary pressures. The level of provision is reviewed and approved on an annual basis as part of the RPPR process and is maintained by the CSAB in adherence to financial regulations.</p> <p>The CSAB have oversight of all sources of capital funding, including grants, capital receipts and developer contributions, to ensure that resources are used effectively and to minimise the need to borrow. Funding announcements are actively monitored, and funding targets reviewed to minimise the impact on delivery of the capital programme, ensuring that there is sufficient liquidity to meet funding requirements.</p>	Amber

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
<div>4</div> <div>Page 116</div>	<p>HEALTH</p> <p>Failure to secure maximum value from partnership working with the National Health Service (NHS). If not achieved, there will be impact on social care, public health and health outcomes and increased social care operational and cost pressures. This would add pressures on the Council's budget and/or risks to other Council objectives, as well as shared system objectives in the context of our Integrated Care System across workforce and patients who are medically ready for discharge (MRD) from hospital or community beds.</p>	<p>The additional £500 million Government Social Care Discharge Fund was used to increase capacity across Discharge to Assess (D2A) beds, specialist beds, packages of care, D2A homecare, and equipment provision to help patients be discharged safely from hospital and into onward care as fast as possible. A range of other measures, including recruitment and retention incentives for the independent care sector, were also enhanced to support safe and effective discharge. Working as part of the wider Sussex Integrated Care System (ICS) Winter Rapid Improvement Enhanced Workstream enabled our System to: maintain performance on Medically Ready for Discharge (MRD) at Q1 (2022/23) baseline levels over the winter period; improve the trend in weekend discharges being observed across a number of Sussex acute hospitals; and improve system visibility of data with the development of a system discharge dashboard covering a wide range of key performance indicators.</p> <p>The Sussex ICS has been selected as one of six areas in the country to be a 'Discharge Frontrunner' to find innovative ways to improve how people can be supported to leave hospital quicker and ease the current pressures on the National Health Service (NHS). East Sussex County Council is participating in the programme with NHS and Local Authority partners in the Sussex ICS, which will take the above work into a new phase to build on progress and enable the Sussex ICS to further reduce the length of time people wait to be discharged, positively impact on bed occupancy, and maximise reablement and independence after discharge. Delivery will include trialling a new business information tool which aims to give health and care teams full visibility of discharge systems, patient-level information required for effective discharge, and the ability for teams to share intelligence with each other, and creating an effective, empowered, and integrated workforce across health and care to support the discharge system effectively.</p> <p>The year 1 (2023/24) delivery priorities were finalised for the Sussex Integrated Care Strategy Shared Delivery Plan (SDP) and were submitted to NHS England (NHSE) by the NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB). This sets out shared delivery priorities drawn from the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) Strategy focussed on health outcomes improvement, children and young people, mental health and community health, care and wellbeing. Planning for years 2 – 5 of the SDP is currently taking place and will be shared with the East Sussex HWB in June for endorsement, prior to final approval and submission to NHSE.</p>	Amber
<div>6</div>	<p>LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p>Failure to deliver local economic growth, and failure to maximise opportunities afforded by Government proposal to allocate Local Growth Funding to South East Local Enterprise Partnership, creating adverse reputational and financial impacts.</p>	<p>East Sussex County Council (ESCC), working with partners, has been successful in securing significant amounts of growth funding totalling £129m, via both the South East and Coast 2 Capital Local Enterprise Partnerships, to deliver a wide range of infrastructure projects in East Sussex. We have worked with partners on complementary economic development programmes supporting businesses to grow, providing skills, creating employment, and improving our places with funds secured from various Government departments including the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), UK Community Renewal Fund, Getting Building Fund, Bus Service Improvement Plan, Local Skills Improvement Plan, Active Travel, Stronger Towns Fund and Future High Street Fund etc.</p> <p>The impacts and effects of Covid 19 led ESCC to officially launch in September 2020 the East Sussex Economy Recovery Plan, called 'East Sussex Reset'. The plan identifies deliverable actions in the</p>	Green

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
Page 117		<p>short term, alongside more aspirational asks, and has already aligned and secured new monies totalling £220m investment into East Sussex. The County Council is committed to now producing a longer term East Sussex Economic Growth Strategy and significant work will commence on this throughout 2023-24, with the plan to have the strategy approved in 2024.</p> <p>Specifically on the major LUF programme, ESCC submitted a transport package for Exceat Bridge of £8m, while four of the local Borough and District Councils (except Hastings) submitted in June 2021 major capital funding bids under this first round for town centre/regeneration and cultural investment. Outcomes were announced on 27 October 2021, with the following awarded monies: Exceat Bridge (£8m), Eastbourne (£19.8m) and Lewes (£12.6m) all to be delivered by March 2024. The other Borough and Districts were unsuccessful but applied under Round 2 in July 2022, with Rother's £19.2m bid awarded in January 2023.</p> <p>The main prospectus for the UKSPF (the successor to the outgoing EU funding) was released in April 2022 with the award of allocations known to each Borough and District Authority, who are now the responsible accountable bodies for the delivery of the programme. Investment plans were submitted to Government by 1 August 2022. ESCC has made the case with regards to pan East Sussex projects, which can continue to deliver against the main themes of the programmes and the Council's priorities. All 5 bids for circa £1m each over the period April 2022 to March 2025 were approved and allocated their monies in December 2022. In addition, as part of the UKSPF, the Multiply programme was announced in late March 2022 to help adults to improve their numeracy skills up to Level 2. The responsibility for managing this programme from 2022-2025 has been awarded directly to ESCC, with up to £2.5m available. We prepared an investment plan working with partners and submitted this by 30 June 2022 to the Department for Education and our plan has been approved for the full allocation. Contracts have now been awarded to providers and delivery is underway.</p> <p>The Government's recent Spring Budget announcements in March 2023 are in part intended to provide a stimulus to growing our businesses, increasing employment opportunities for our residents and improving our economy. The budget indicated the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) is proposed to end by April 2024; and that subject to consultation will lead to current LEP powers, responsibilities and functions coming down to local authority level to elected members. At this stage no decision has been made on whether this will come down to County or District/Borough level or a combination of both, and what functions would be undertaken. We will respond to the consultation and work with SELEP and partners on this matter. The Government also announced the rollout of new Levelling Up Partnerships to improve place based regeneration and address the biggest barriers to levelling up in the 20 areas most in need over the period 2023-2025. This included Hastings and Rother, enabling these areas to bid for a share of the new £400m funds.</p>	

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Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	27 June 2023
By:	Chief Executive
Title of report:	Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) – State of the County
Purpose of report:	To update Members on the issues which need to be taken into account in the priority and budget setting process for 2024/25 and beyond

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i note the evidence base on demographics (Appendix 1) and the national and local policy outlook (Appendix 2);**
- ii review the priority outcomes and delivery outcomes (Appendix 3) and agree these as the basis of the Council’s business and financial planning, subject to the proposed amendments set out in paragraph 4;**
- iii agree officers update the Medium Term Financial Plan as the basis for financial planning when more information is available, as set out in paragraph 5;**
- iv agree officers update the Capital Strategy and programme (Appendix 4) as set out in paragraph 6; and**
- v receive reports on more detailed plans for 2024/25 and beyond in the autumn when there is greater certainty about future resources.**

1. Background

1.1 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 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.

1.4 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.

1.5 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.

1.6 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.

2. Current Position

2.1 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.

2.2 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.

2.3 The local and national policy outlook at Appendix 2 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 5.

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.

3. Demographic and Demand Changes and Financial Background

3.1 Appendix 1 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.

4. Council Priority Outcomes

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 The current priority and delivery outcomes are attached at Appendix 3 (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 3 (section b).

4.5 Cabinet is asked to review the current priority and delivery outcomes and agree them as the basis for future business and financial planning, subject to the amendments outlined in paragraph 4.4 above.

5. Medium Term Financial Plan

5.1 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 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Annual Budget Deficit / (Surplus)	4.024	41.811	9.664
Total Budget Deficit / (Surplus)	4.024	45.835	55.499

5.2 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 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.

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

5.6 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.

6. Capital Programme

6.1 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 4, together with the revised programme.

6.2 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.

7. Lobbying and Communications

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

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

8. Next Steps

8.1 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.

8.2 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.

8.3 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.

BECKY SHAW
Chief Executive



State of the County 2023

Focus on East Sussex

Version number 1

Publication date August 2023

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Summary

Population - East Sussex has an older age profile than nationally, with a significantly higher proportion of the population aged 65+ than both England and the South East. Rother has the second highest percentage of the population aged 65 years and over in the country.

Housing - house prices in East Sussex remain higher than the national average. The ratio of median house prices to median earnings is also higher than the ratio in both the South East and England. Rented housing makes up a significant proportion of the housing sector in East Sussex, and there were significant rises in the cost of private rented housing between 2018 and 2022.

Cost of living - cost of living challenges are a significant concern to people, with nine out of ten adults nationally reporting an increase in their cost of living in April 2023. The level of concern is affected by the level of deprivation people experience, with those in the most deprived areas more concerned than those in the least deprived areas.

Refugees and asylum seekers - there has been a recent increase in the rate of people receiving asylum support within the county, particularly in our coastal communities. 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.

Environment - emissions of carbon dioxide have continued to fall in East Sussex over recent years. Although we had the lowest emissions of carbon dioxide per person of all the county council areas in England, further reductions will be needed.

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 and the unemployment rate in the county remains higher than the regional and national averages. Youth unemployment remains higher than the overall rate,

although this has also fallen over the last year.

Community safety - neighbourhood crime rates in East Sussex are lower than the national average in all categories. There was an increase in neighbourhood crime in 2022/23 compared to the previous year. There was also a slight increase in recorded Public Place Serious Violent Crimes in 2022/23, although rates of serious violence in the county remain low.

Schools - a higher proportion of 2 year olds take up a place at an eligible early years provider in East Sussex than nationally, and more children achieve a good level of development at the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the levels of attainment at Key Stage 2, Progress 8 and Attainment 8 are lower than nationally.

Children - 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 plans. The number of Looked After Children has also increased, 25% of those who became looked after last year were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. We have also continued to see increased demand for support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Health - East Sussex has a consistently higher life expectancy for both men and women than the national average. However, there is a gap in life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived areas in the county. There is a slightly higher percentage of people who are overweight or obese in East Sussex compared to nationally, and smoking levels are also higher in some parts of the county.

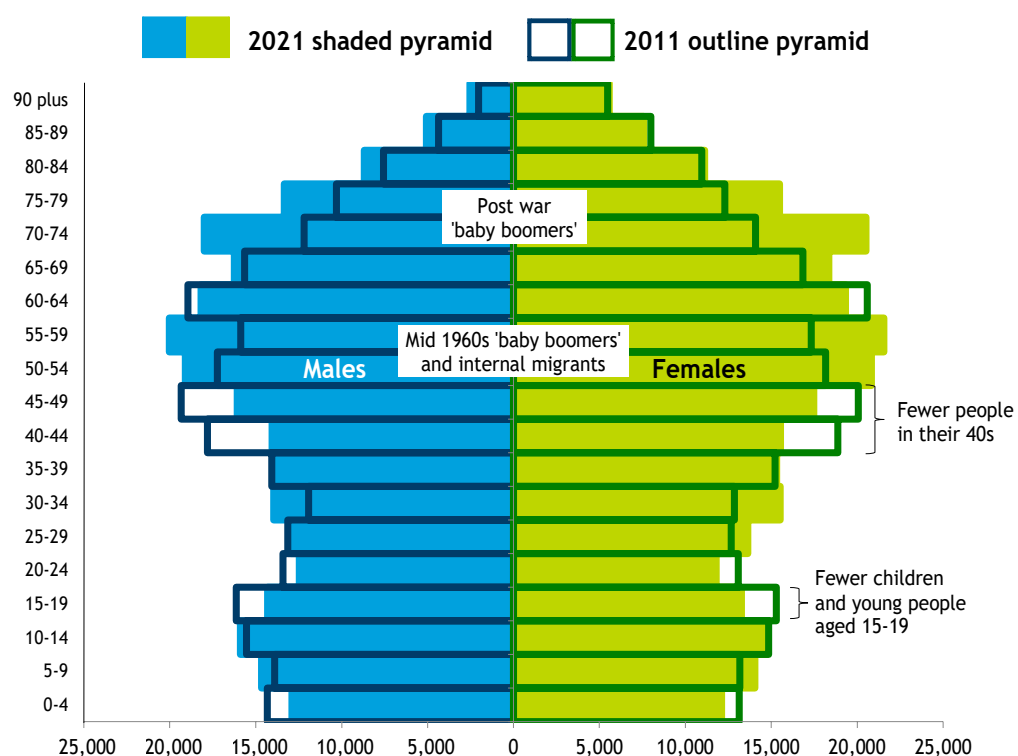
Adults - the number of clients receiving long term support reduced in 2022/23. However, projections indicate that the number of people with dementia, and those with two or more health conditions will continue to increase in the coming years. A higher percentage of the population were providing unpaid care in 2021 in East Sussex than nationally.

Population

Age and sex

Census 2021 data estimated the population of East Sussex to be 545,800.

Compared to England and the South East, East Sussex has a much older age profile. 26% of the population is comprised of people aged 65 or over, compared to 18% for England and 19% for the South East.

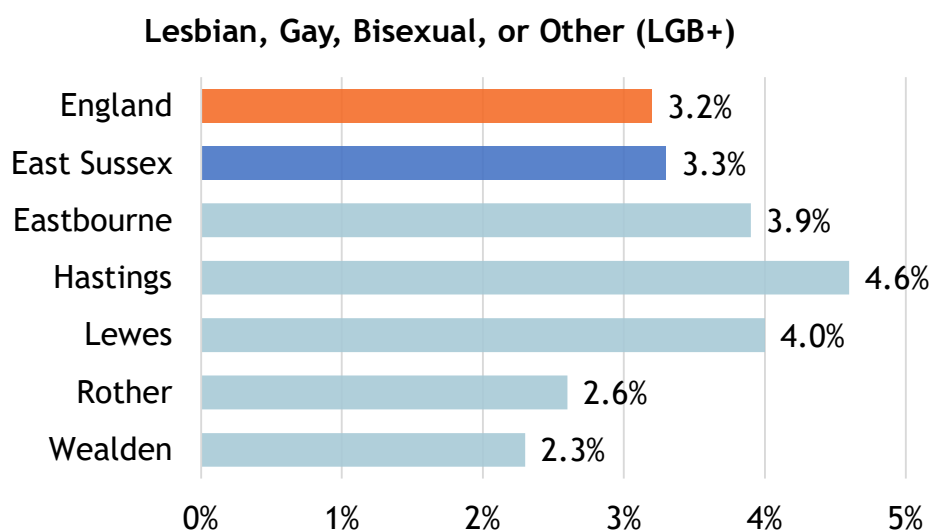


Source: Census 2021

52% of the county's population was estimated to be female and 48% male, similar to the national split. This ratio is the same as that seen in the 2011 Census, which estimated 48% of the population to be male and 52% to be female. For those aged 65 and above, it was estimated that 55% of the population was female and 45% male.

Sexual Orientation

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

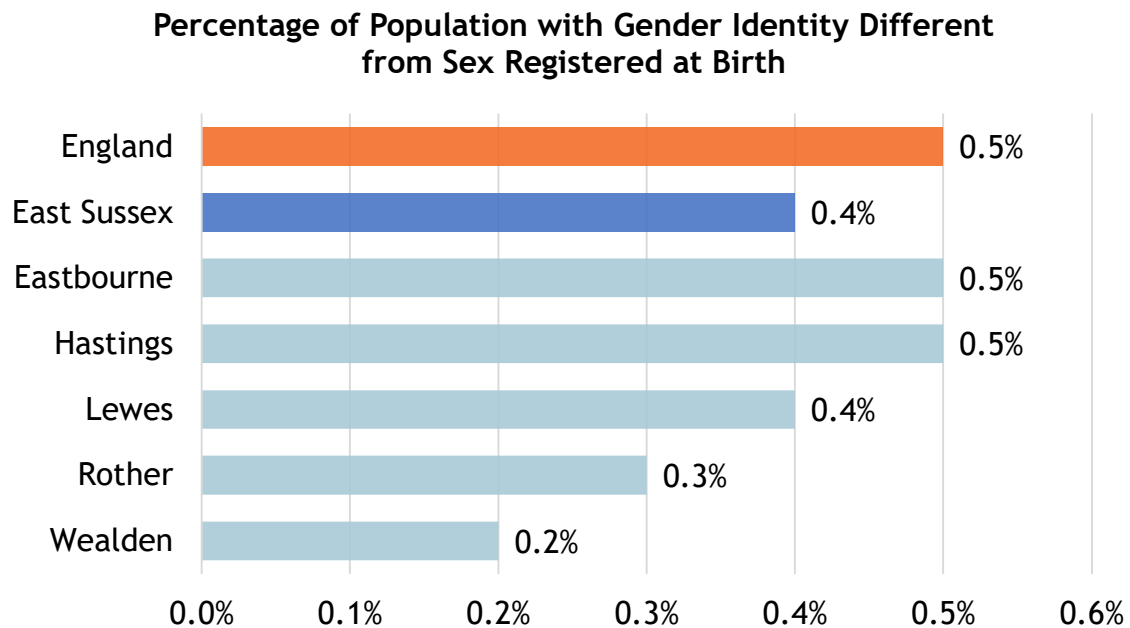


Note: A significant percentage of people across the county provided no response, therefore the percentage of people identifying as LBG+ could be either higher or lower than estimated.

Source: Census 2021

Gender identity

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



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

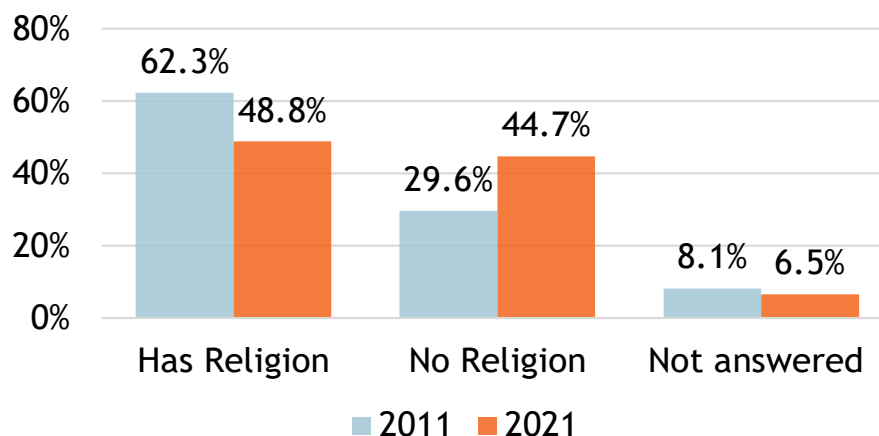
Source: Census 2021

Religion

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

The percentage of people of people with a religious belief fell between 2011 and 2021, while the number of people who stated they had no religious beliefs grew.

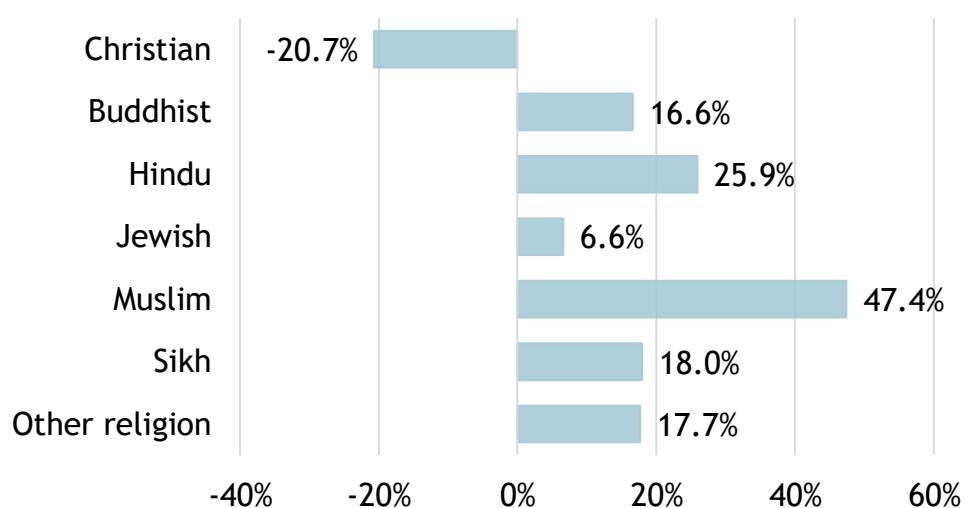
**Percentage Breakdown of Religious Beliefs:
2011 vs 2021**



Source: Census 2021

The percentage of the population in East Sussex who state their religion as Christian fell by 20.7% between 2011 and 2021, while the percentage for all other religious groups increased.

**Relative Percentage of Change in Religious
Communities within East Sussex between 2011 and
2021**



Source: Census 2021

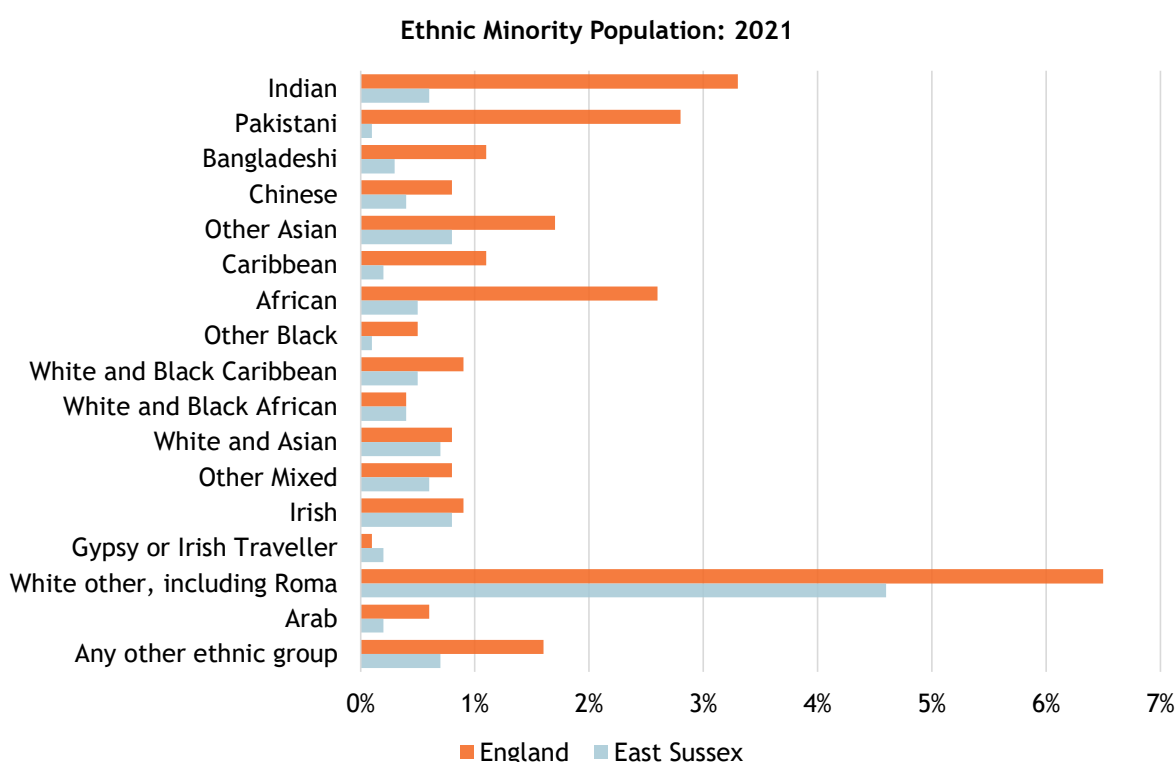
Marital status

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

Source: Census 2021

Ethnicity

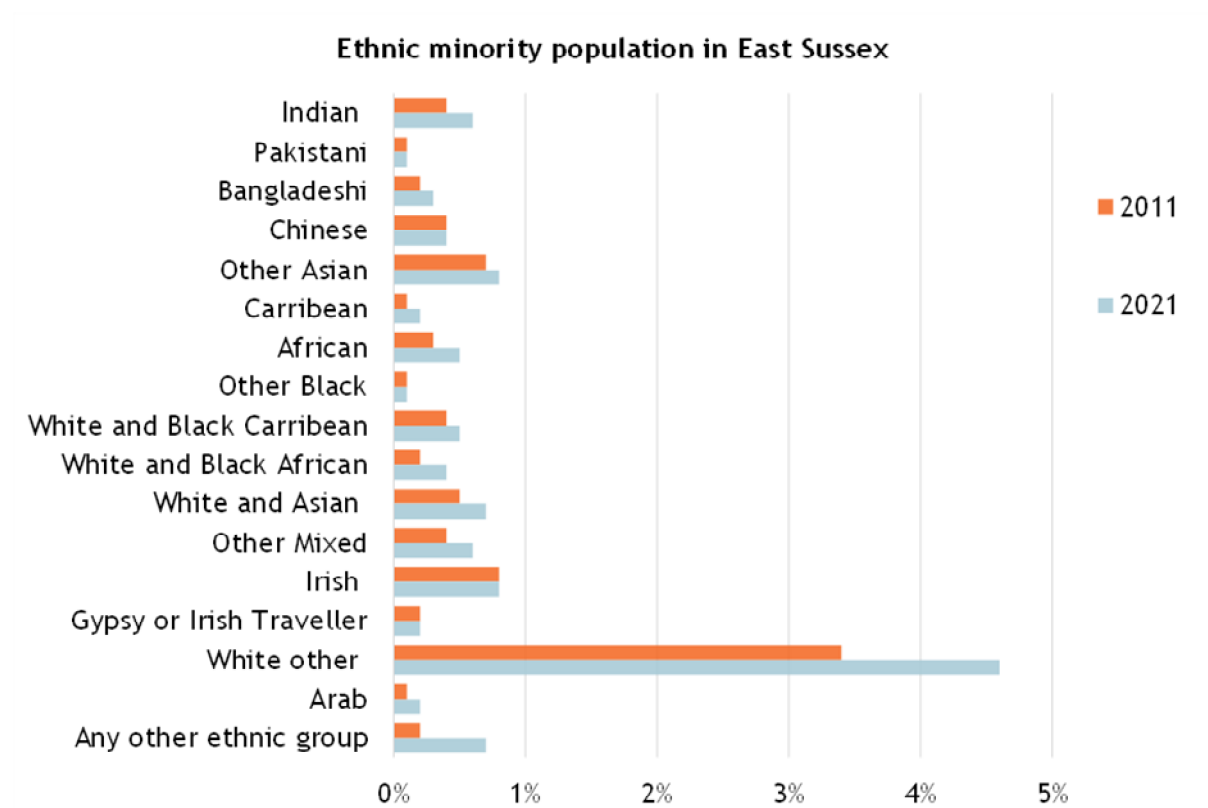
The latest ethnicity data for the county is from the 2021 census. 93.9% of the county's population identified as White British, compared to the regional average of 86.3% and the national average of 81.0%. A higher percentage of the population in East Sussex identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller than the national average (0.2% compared to 0.1%).



Source: Census 2021

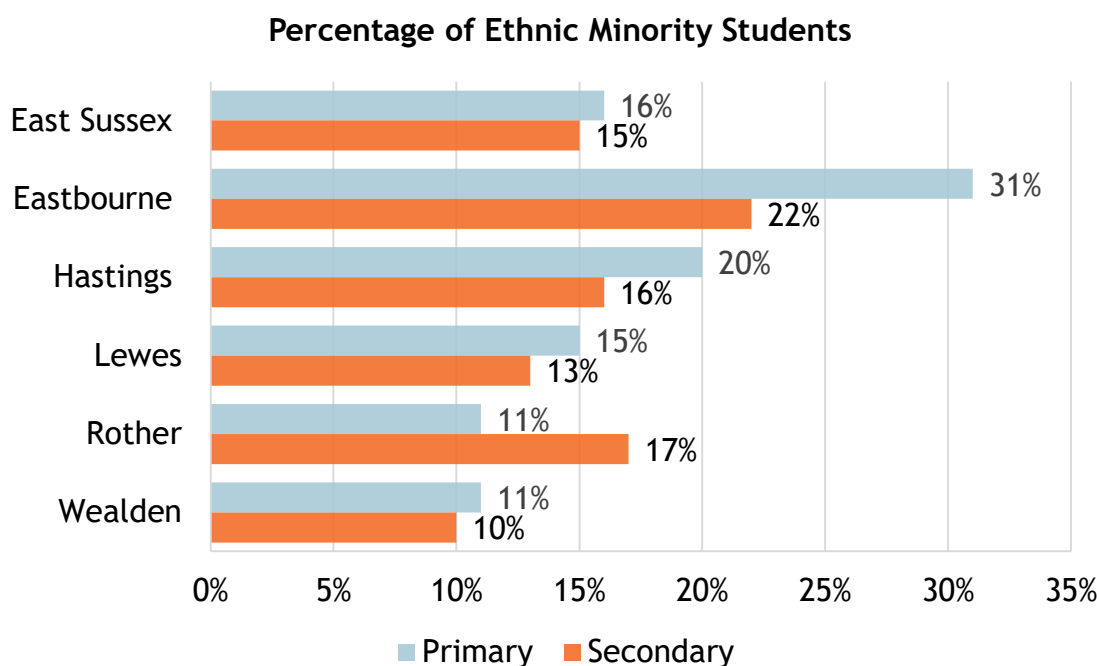
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Overall the percentage of the population in East Sussex in each ethnic minority group has either stayed the same or increased between 2011 and 2021.



Source: Census 2021

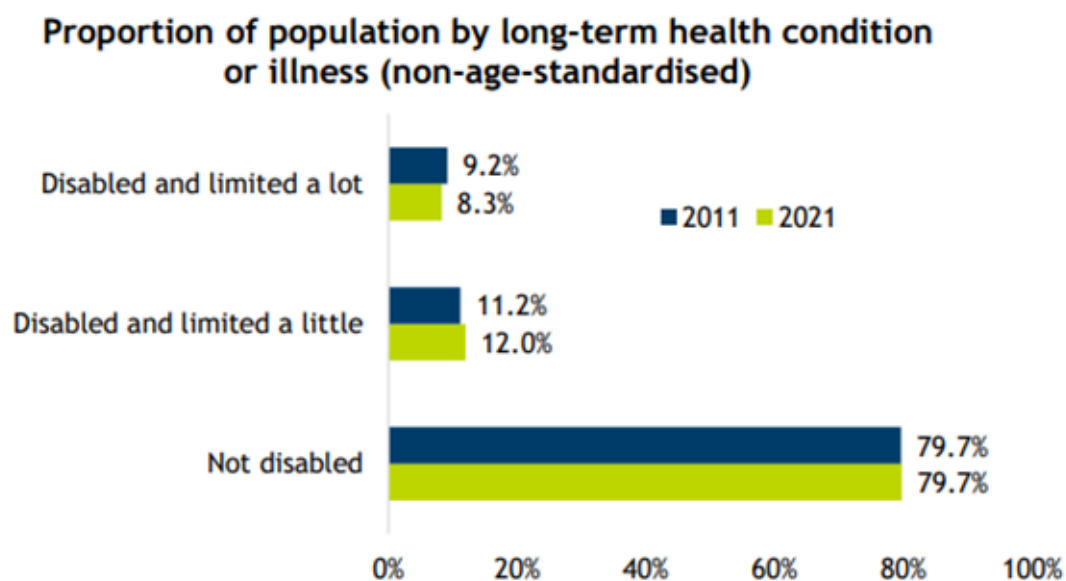
A higher percentage of pupils (15%) are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to the adult population. Overall, Eastbourne has the highest percentage of students from ethnic minority backgrounds for both primary (31%) and secondary (22%) schools.



Source: ESCC Schools Census January 2023

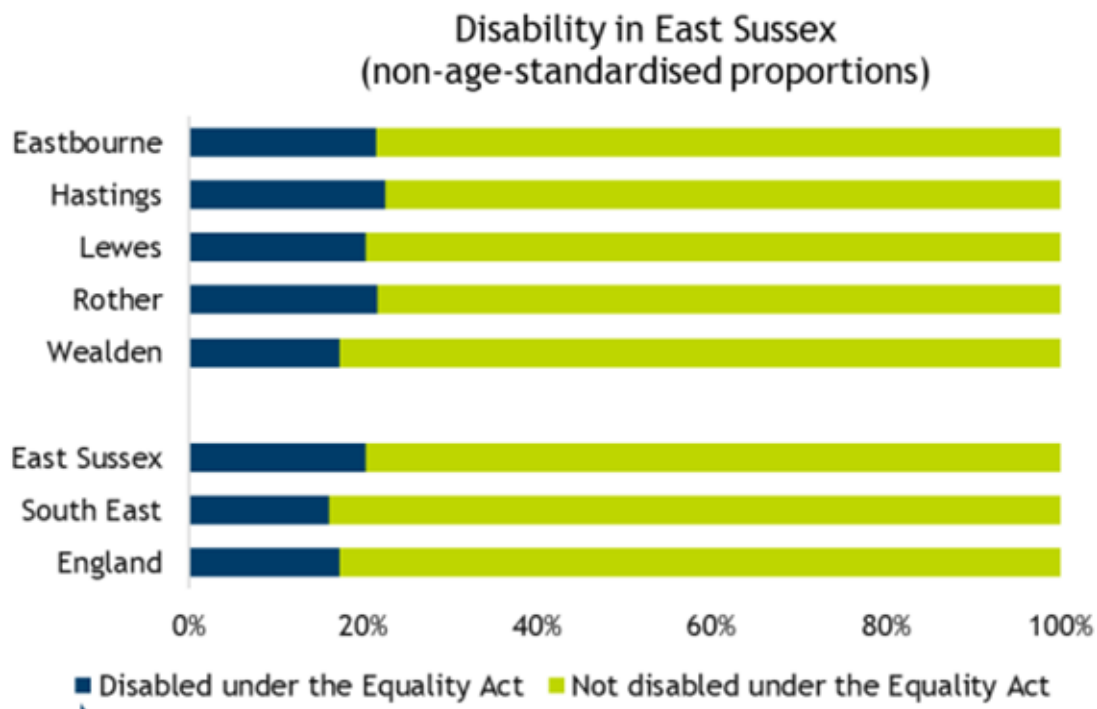
Disability

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



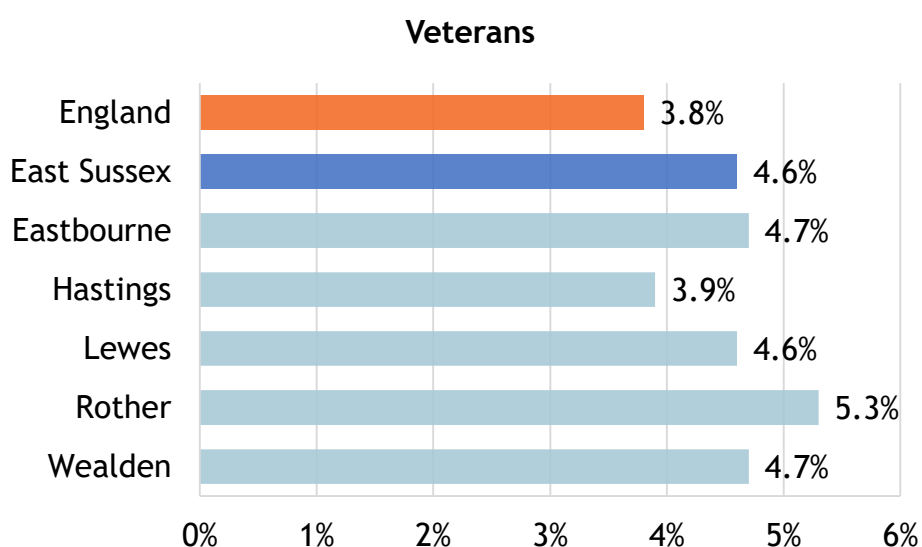
The percentage of people identifying themselves as disabled varied slightly across

the district and boroughs, but rates across the county were higher than the South East average.



Veterans

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



Pregnancy and maternity

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

Protected characteristic: Pregnancy and maternity	East Sussex	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden
Live births - 2021	4,549	883	909	781	634	1,342
Births per 1,000 females - 2020	15.7	16.8	19.6	15.0	13.2	14.6

Source: ONS

Population change

Based on the information currently available we estimate that around 550,400 people currently live in the county (ESCC 2023 interim projection). We expect that to increase to around 570,500 people in 2027, an increase of 3.6%.

We expect the increase in population to be driven by people moving into the county from elsewhere in the UK. Many of the people who choose to come to East Sussex are older adults, as a result the over 65 age group is growing faster than younger age groups. In 2027 we expect that just over half of our population will be aged 18-64 (53%), with over a quarter (29%) aged 65 and over.

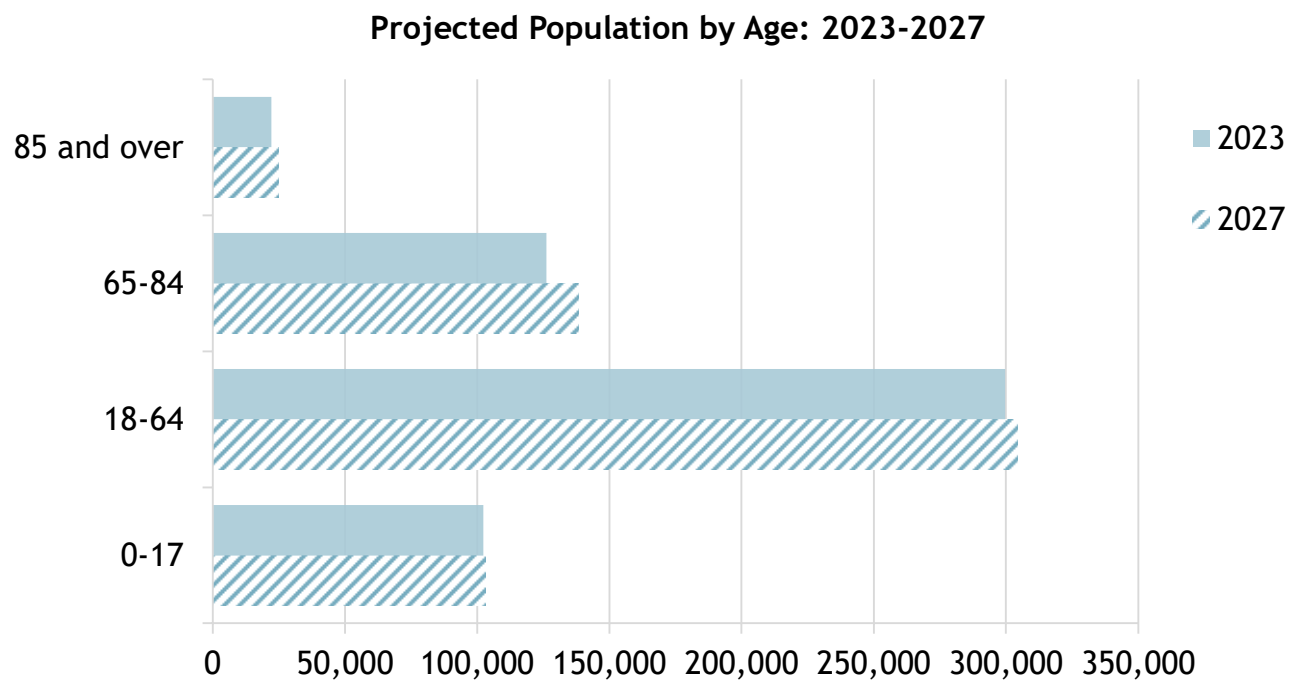
Between 2023 and 2027 we are expecting that there will be around 19,000 births in the county and around 26,000 deaths. This reflects the fact that we have a larger population of older adults in East Sussex. Over the same period, we are expecting around 136,900 people to move into the county, offset by around 111,900 people moving out of the county.

Overall, these changes mean that compared to 2023, we estimate that by 2027 there will be:

- An increase of 1.0% (1,000 people) in the number of children and young people.
- An increase of 1.5% (4,500 people) in the working age population.

- 9.8% more people aged 65-84 (11,900 people).

We also expect that 4.4% of people will be aged 85+, a proportion greater than the national average of 2.4% (Source: 2021 Census).



Note: Care should be taken when using the projected population figures. 2021 Census data indicates that the population of the county in March 2021 was considerably lower than the ONS' original mid-year estimate for June 2020. No re-based mid-year estimates for the period 2011-2020 have yet been released by the ONS, but we are expecting that the June 2020 population figure is likely to be substantially revised downwards. Therefore, the data above is based on Interim dwelling-led population projections which have been produced by ESCC using interim re-based mid-year estimates produced by the GLA's Demography Team, combined with the latest ONS 2021 mid-year estimate (which is based on Census 2021 population data). The interim projections will be revised when the official ONS revised mid-year estimates for 2011-2020 are released later this year.

Projected Population in 2027

Age Range	East Sussex	England
0-17	18.1%	20.7%
18-64	53.3%	58.9%
65-84	24.2%	17.6%
85+	4.4%	2.8%

Population Change: 2023-2027

Age Range	2023	2027	Actual change
0-17	102,300	103,300	+1,000
18-64	299,700	304,100	+4,500
65-84	126,200	138,200	+11,900
85+	22,200	24,900	+2,600
All people	550,400	570,500	+20,100

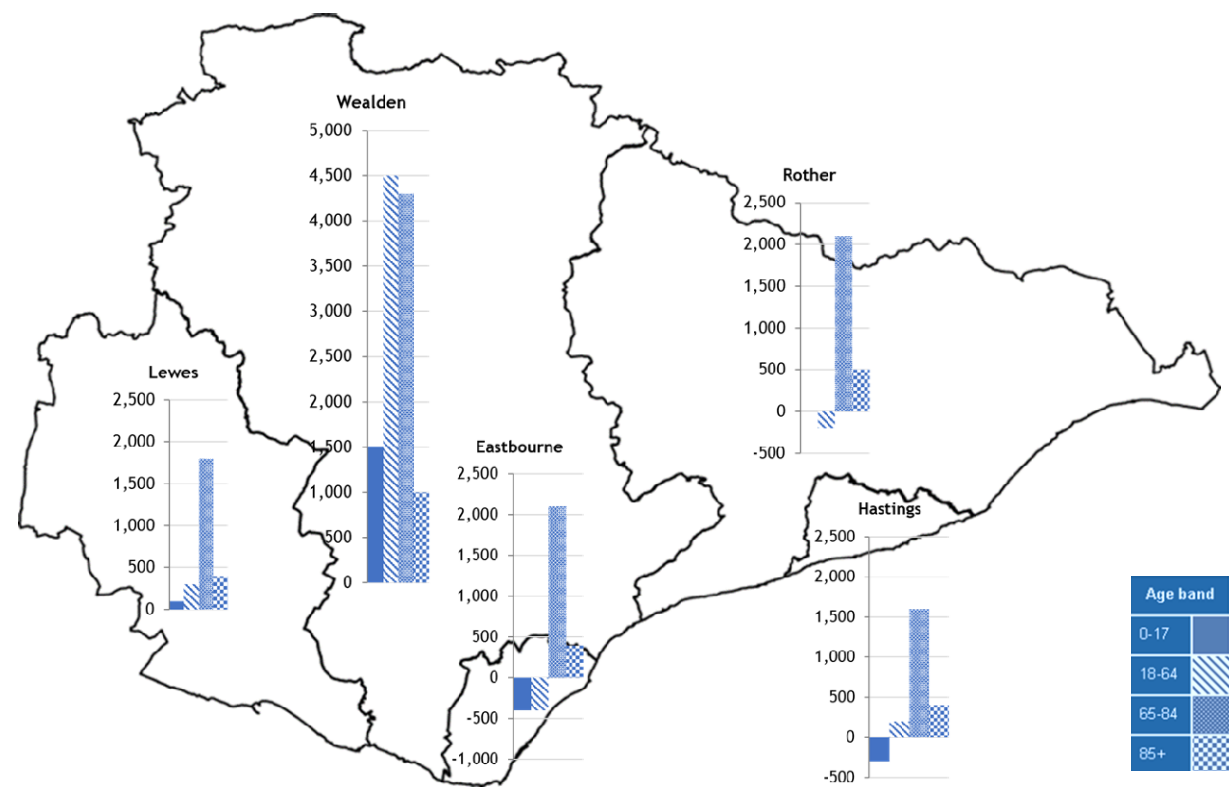
Source: ESCC data, ESCC interim population projections (dwelling led) April 2023. National Data, ONS trend-based projections, from 2020. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 100 and therefore may not sum.

District population change

We expect that how our population changes will be different in different parts of the county. By 2027 our interim projections suggest:

- An increase of 15% (1,000) more people aged 85+ in Wealden; the smallest increase will be in Eastbourne, 9% (400).
- 11% (4,300) more people aged 65-84 in Wealden, and 10% (2,100) more people in Eastbourne, Lewes will see an 8% (1,800) increase.
- Only Wealden is projected to see a significant increase in the working age population (18-64) of 5% (4,500).
- Eastbourne (down 0.7%, 400 people) and Rother (down 0.5%, 200) are projected to see falls in the working age population over this period.

District population change 2023 - 2027

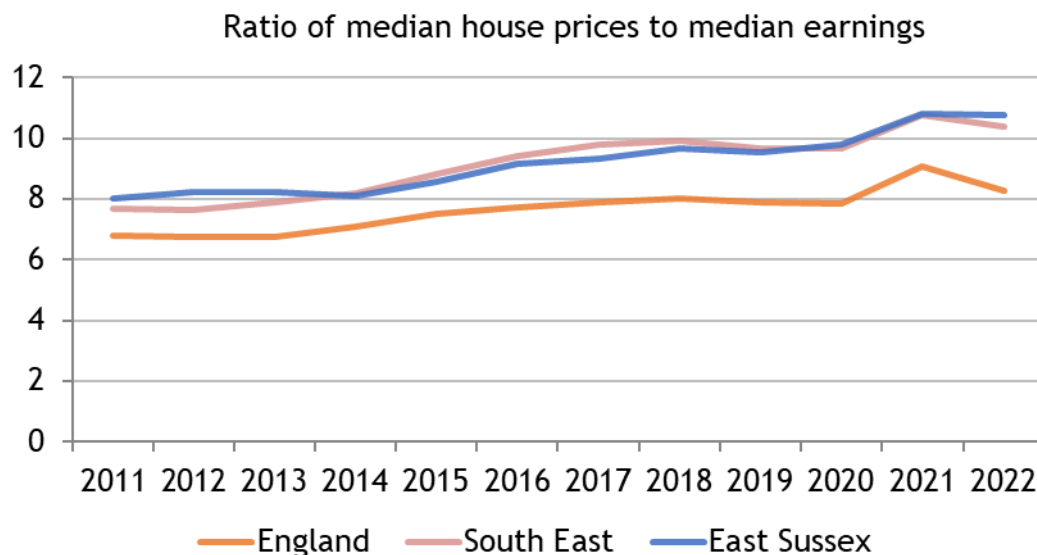


Housing

Housing affordability

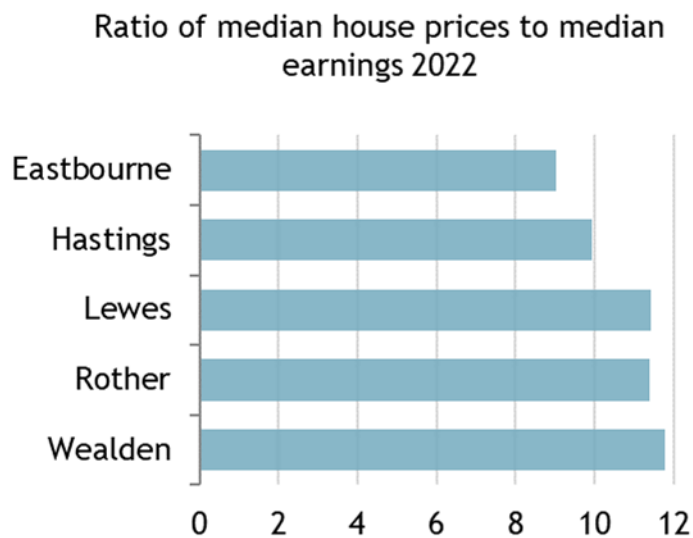
East Sussex is an attractive area to live, however this means that house prices are higher than the national average. In 2022 in East Sussex the average (median) house price was £335,000, 10.8 times the average annual earnings of residents, which were £31,145. In comparison the average house price in England was £275,000, 8.3 times average annual earnings, which were £33,208.

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



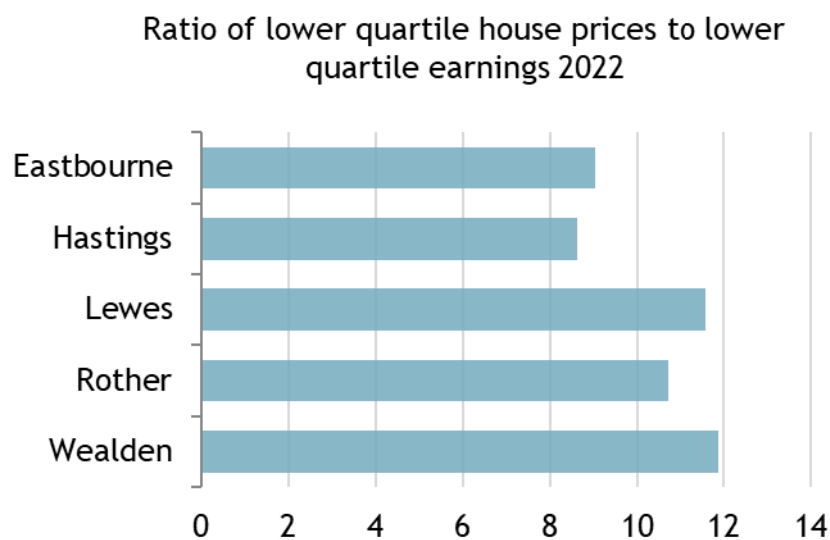
Source: ONS

The median average house prices were over 10 times the average annual earnings of residents in all East Sussex districts and boroughs except for Eastbourne and Hastings.



Source: ONS

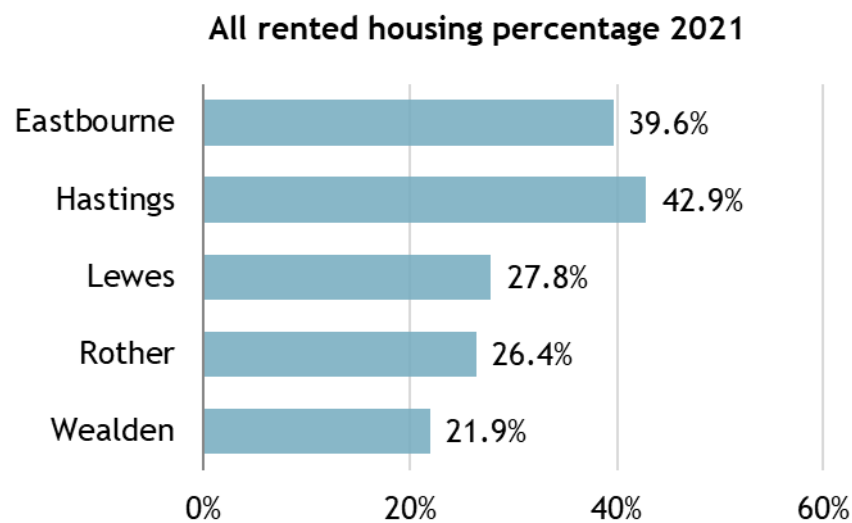
The same pattern can be seen when comparing the cost of some of the less expensive houses to the earnings of those on lower incomes. Lower quartile (25% least expensive) house prices were over 10 times lower quartile earnings in all districts and boroughs except Eastbourne and Hastings.



Source: ONS

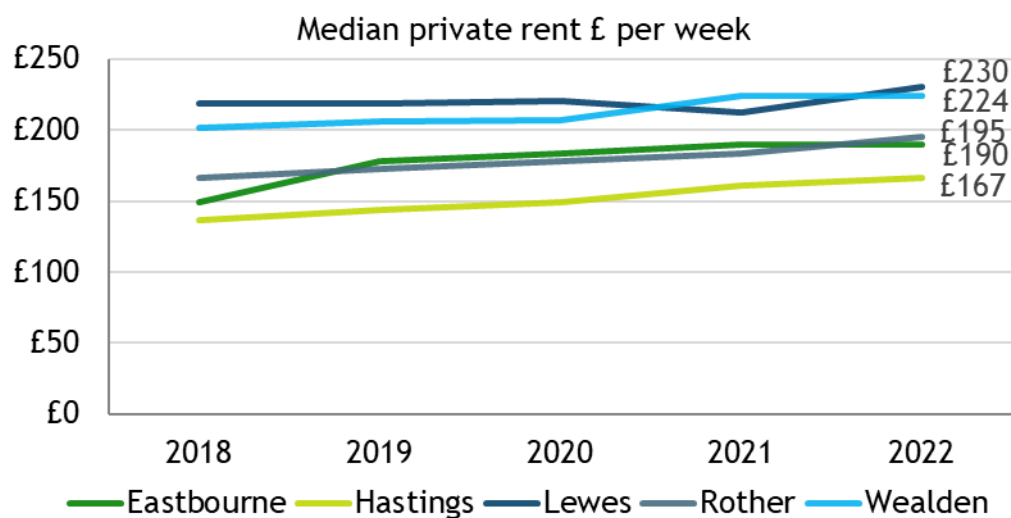
Rented housing is a significant sector in East Sussex, making up 21.9% of housing in

Wealden and 42.9% in Hastings.



Source: Census 2021.

The cost of private rented housing rose by up to 27% between 2018 and 2022. Average private rents range from £167 to £230 a week across districts.



Source: ONS/Valuation Office Agency

The Council's Children's Services Department have a duty to help children whose families face destitution. As some immigrant families with children have no recourse to public funds the Council provides assistance to prevent them from

becoming homeless. The total number of people assisted with accommodation over the last three years has fluctuated, but the number of households has been very consistent.

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

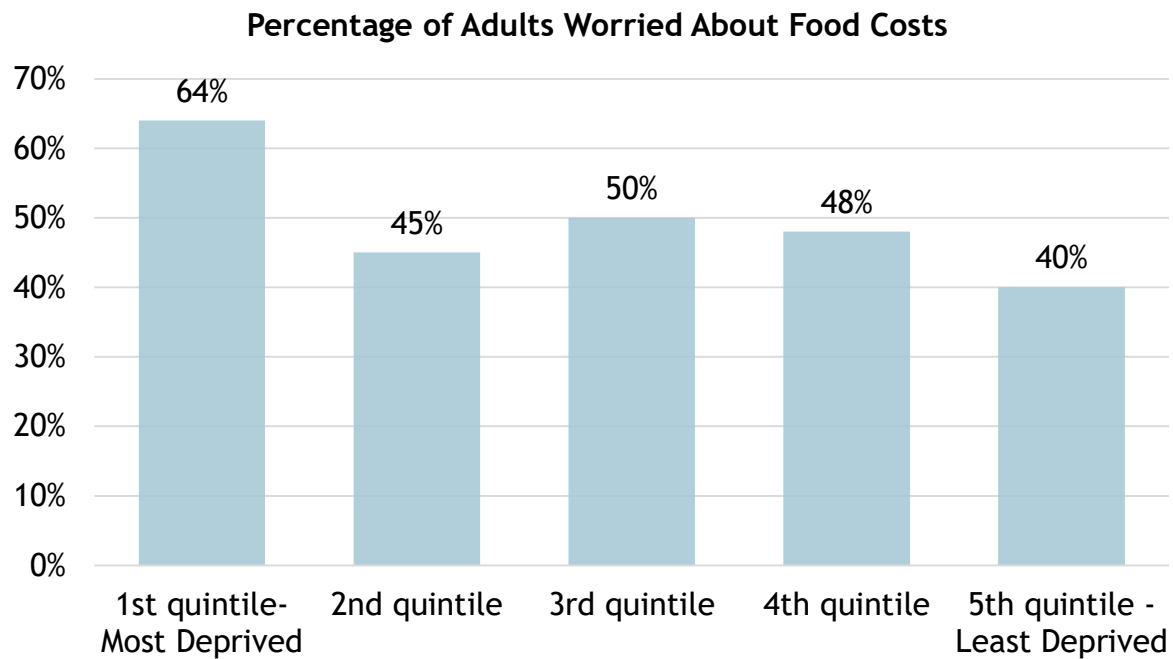
Source: ESCC Children's Services department

Cost of living

Nationally nine out of ten adults reported an increase in their cost of living in April 2023, with increases in the price of food, utility bills and fuel the most common reasons given (ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey).

Nationally people were most concerned about the cost of energy and the cost of food, with almost five out of ten people concerned about these in April 2023. The level of concern is affected by the level of deprivation people experience, with those living in the most deprived areas being more concerned about these factors than those living in the least deprived areas.

Proportion of all adults in England reporting that they were worried about the cost of food, by deprivation quintile.

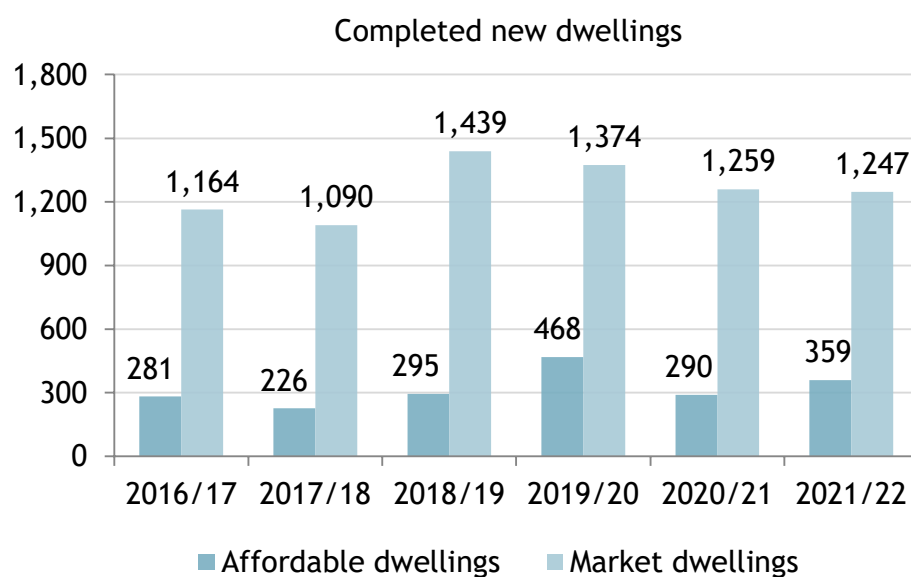


Note: Please note confidence intervals apply to this data, see Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, Office of National Statistics for further information.

Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, Office of National Statistics.

Households and housing delivery

In 2021/22 1,606 new dwellings were completed, of these 350 (22.4%) were classed as affordable.



Source: ESCC Housing Monitoring Database, Lewes District Council housing monitoring system.

Households in temporary accommodation

There has been an increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation. Hastings had the second highest rate of households in temporary accommodation in the South East, behind Brighton and Hove in September 2022.

District/Borough	Number of households in temporary accommodation (31 December 2022)
Eastbourne	351
Hastings	524
Lewes	93
Rother	128
Wealden	39

Refugees and asylum seekers

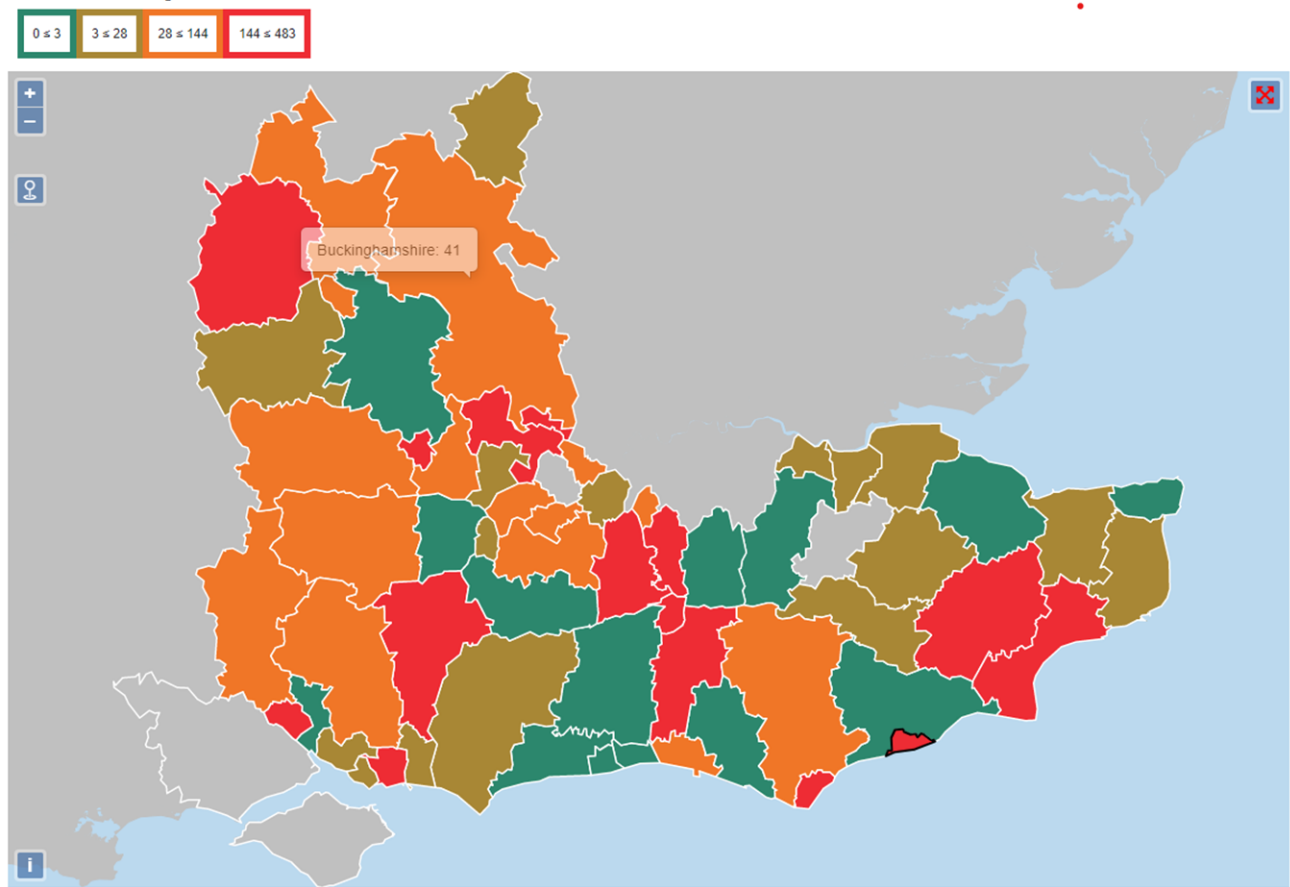
The number of people receiving asylum support from the Home Office across the South East increased last year. In East Sussex numbers increased in Eastbourne, Hastings and Wealden, however most of the people receiving asylum support in December 2022 were in Eastbourne and Hastings.

This has a greater impact on some of our communities due to the use of multiple sites in a small area to accommodate asylum seekers. The Government is currently exploring the use of larger sites to reduce the use of hotels and other private accommodation. As part of this there are Government proposals to house up to 1,200 asylum seekers at the Northeye site in Bexhill by December 2023.

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No. of people receiving local authority section 4, 95 or 98 support (per 100,000 people) (Q4 (Oct-Dec) 2022) for All single tier and district local authorities in South East

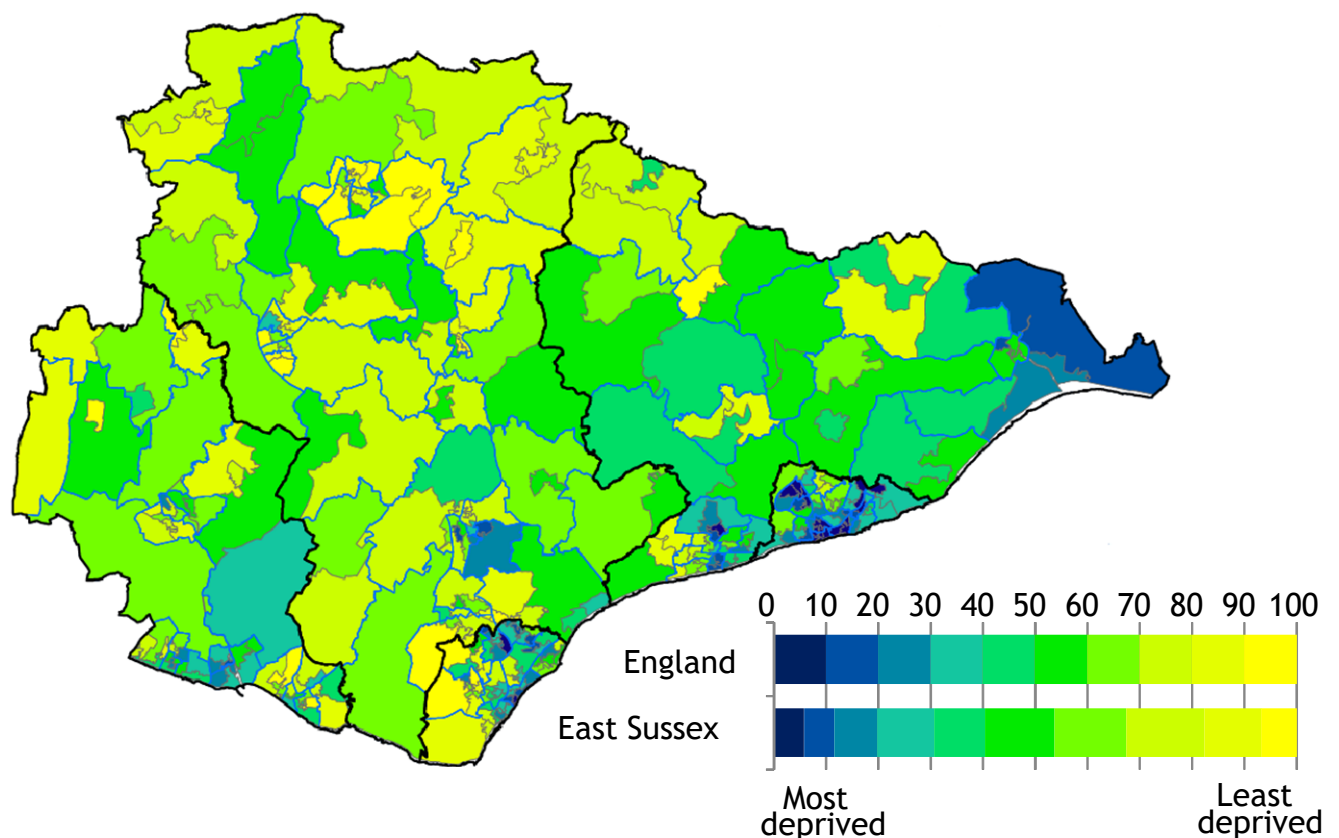
Quartiles for All single tier and district local authorities in South East



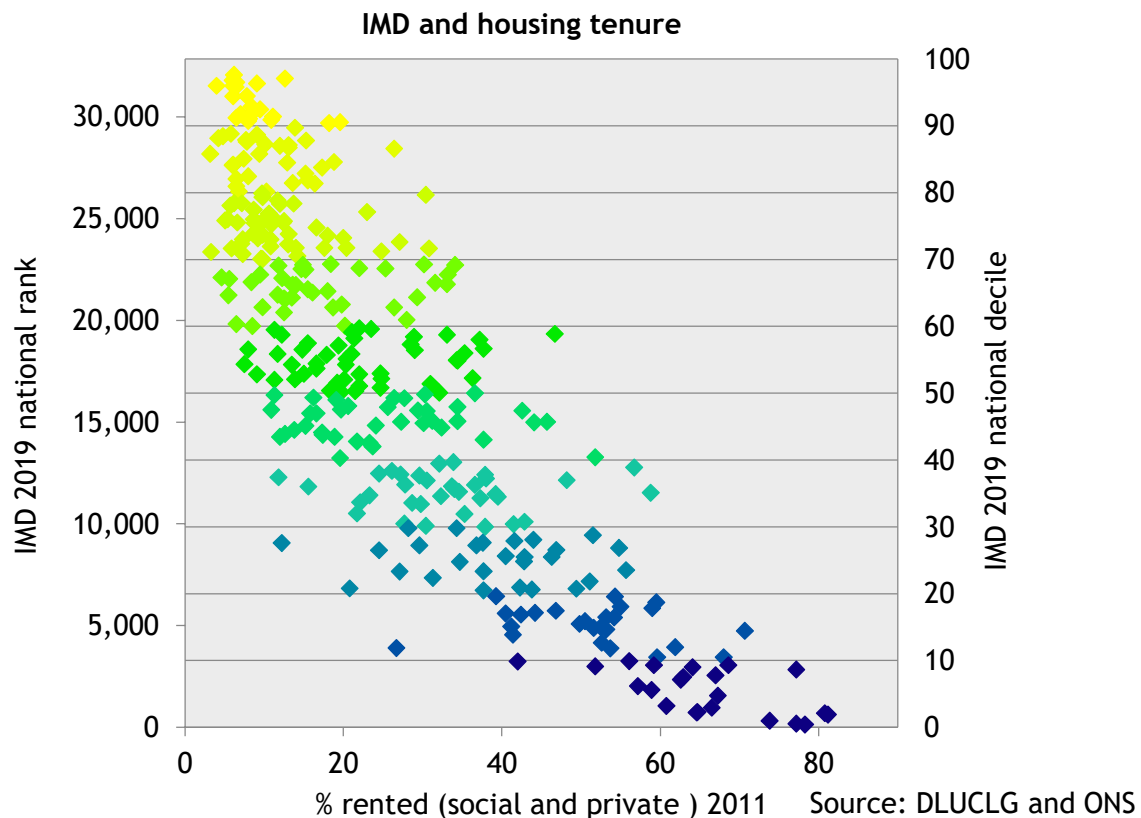
Source:
Calculated by LG Inform

Deprivation

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



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



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

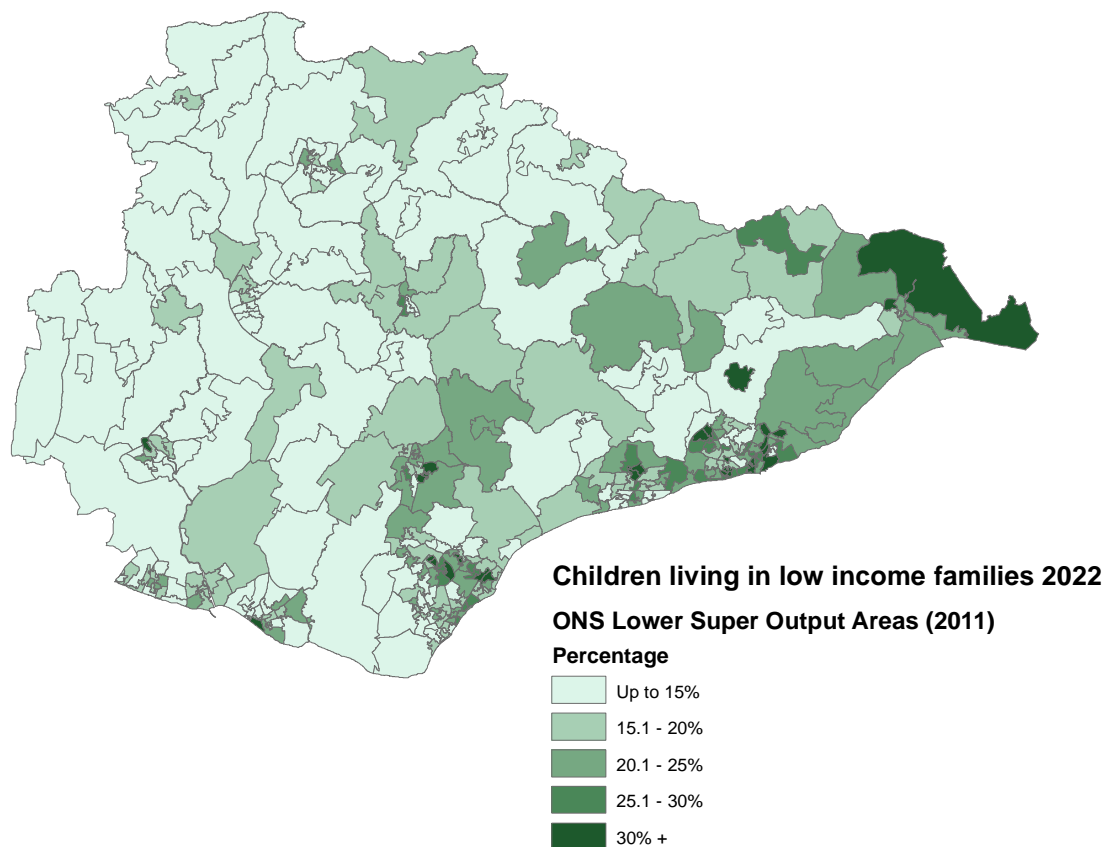
People living in more deprived areas are often facing multiple challenges and therefore may be more likely to access Council and other public services. However, it is important to note that the IMD is based on averages across an area, so it is possible to have people with low levels of deprivation in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

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

Some of the data that the IMD is based on is now several years old. However, the

latest child poverty data, relating to children living in families with relative low-income, shows a similar pattern in income deprivation across the county.

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



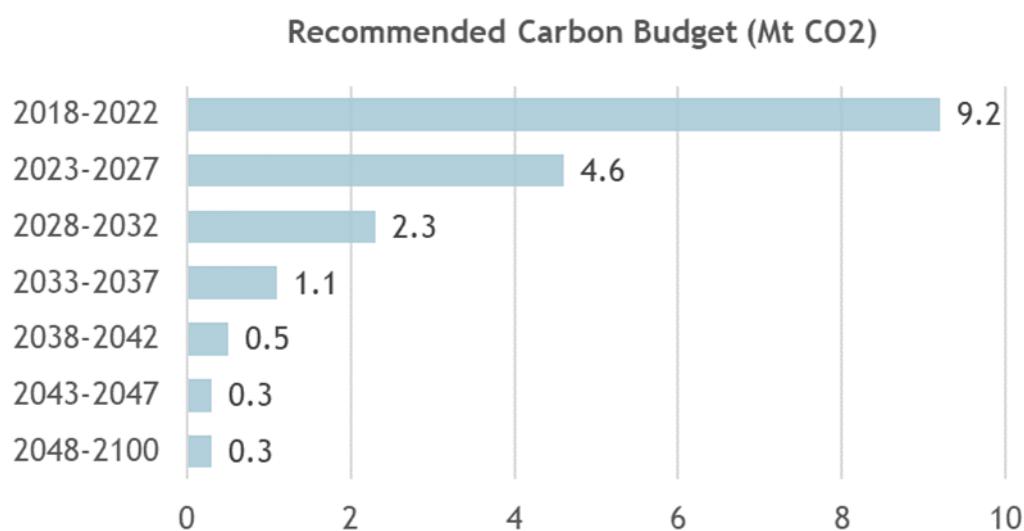
23.5% of East Sussex pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals (January 2023). The latest England figure is 22.5% (January 2022).

Environment

The Cumulative CO_{2e} emissions budget

Emissions of the main greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide (CO₂), in East Sussex fell by 45% between 2005 and 2020, while the population grew by about 8%. This excludes emissions that occur outside the area due to demand for goods and services that are consumed in the county. This reduction is similar to the decrease seen nationally and driven by the same changes (e.g. the switch from coal to gas and renewables to generate electricity).

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

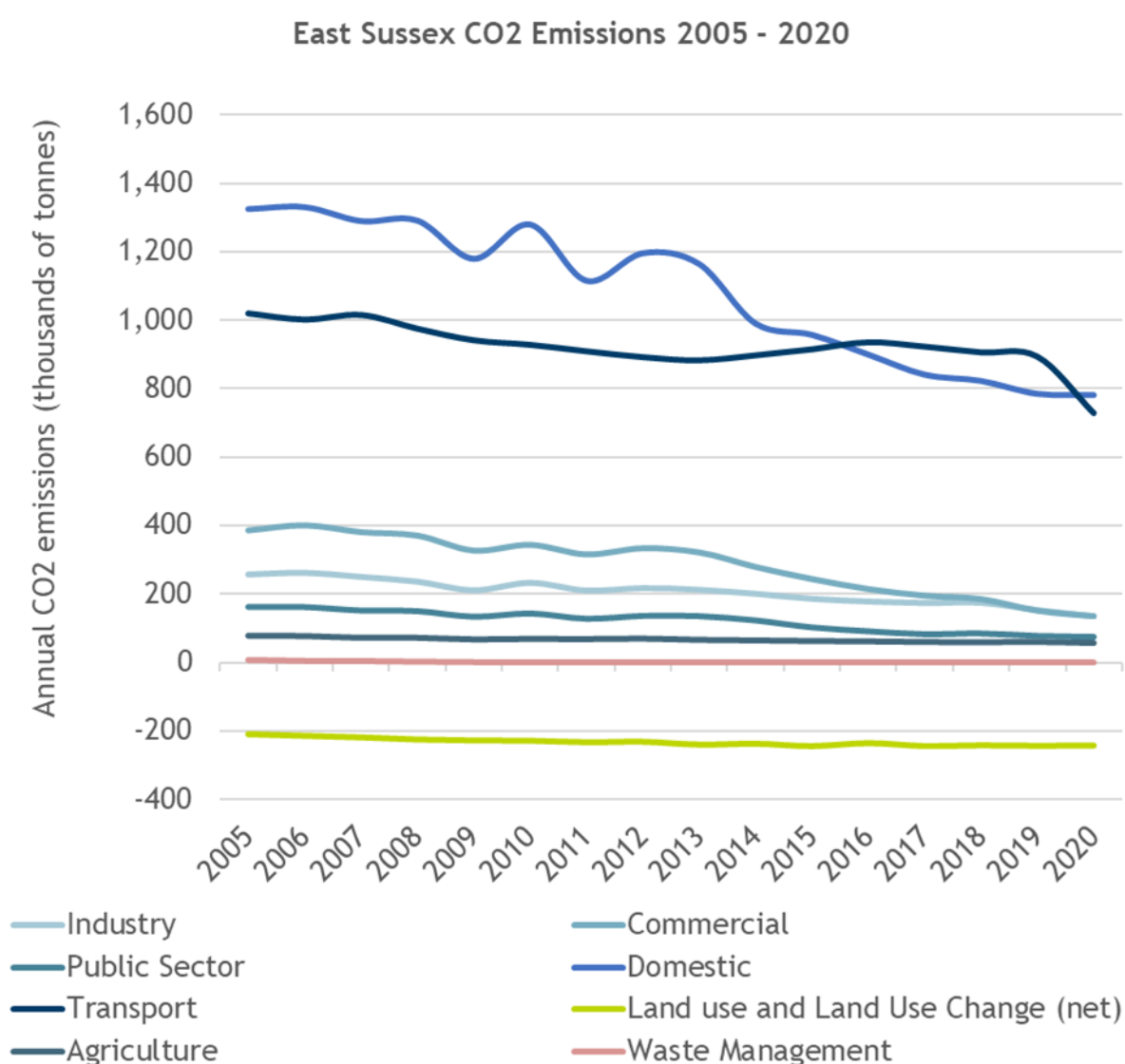


Source: Tyndall Centre for Climate Change, 2022.

Emissions from domestic properties and transport are the greatest contributors to overall emissions across the county. Domestic emissions fell by 41% between 2005 and 2020. Transport emissions fell at a slower pace, with a sharp fall seen in 2020

due to pandemic related travel restrictions.

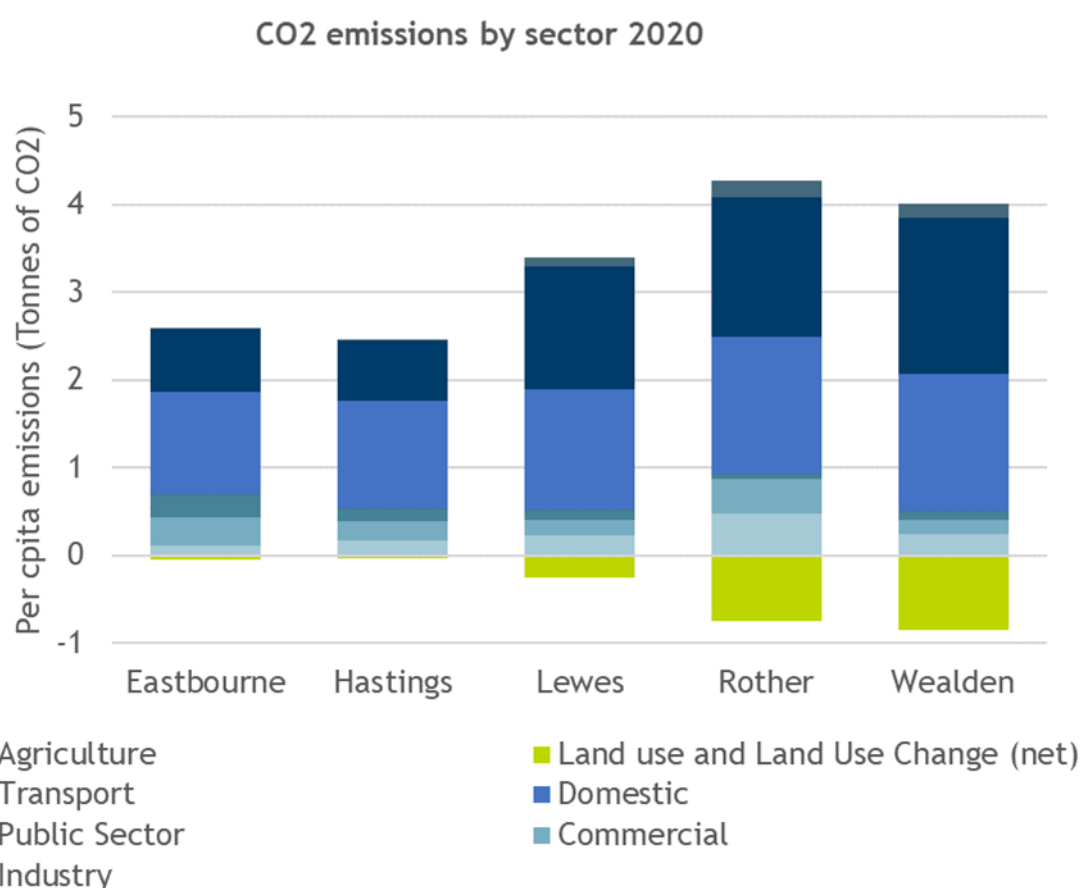
Land use (and land use changes) both absorb and emit carbon, however on an overall (net) basis carbon emissions from land use in East Sussex are negative. Carbon is absorbed by forests and grasslands, while carbon losses occur on existing cropland and when natural land (e.g. grassland) is converted to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



Source: BEIS

Domestic emissions make up a larger share of emissions in the county's two urban

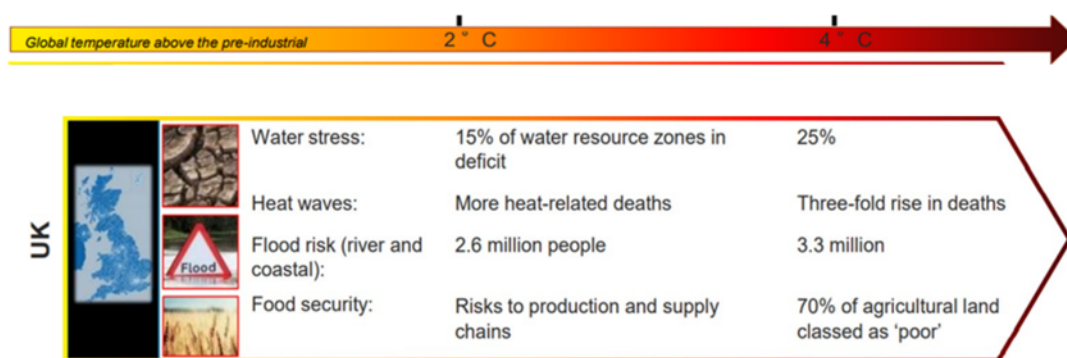
areas, Eastbourne and Hastings than the three more rural areas; whilst transport emissions are lower. This is due to the smaller road networks in the urban areas, and smaller, higher density housing. Per capita domestic emissions are higher in the rural areas, as houses tend to be larger, and many properties use higher carbon forms of heating such as oil and coal.



Source: BEIS

Climate adaptation

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

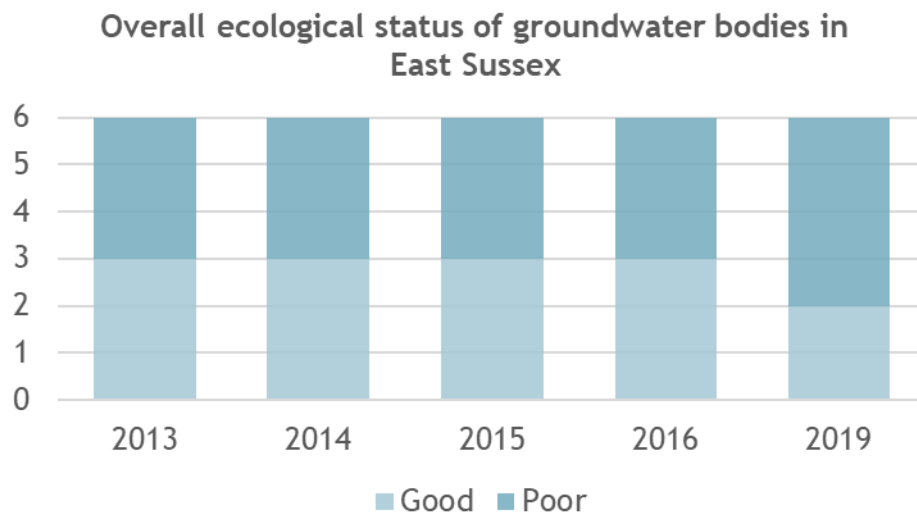


Source: Met Office

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

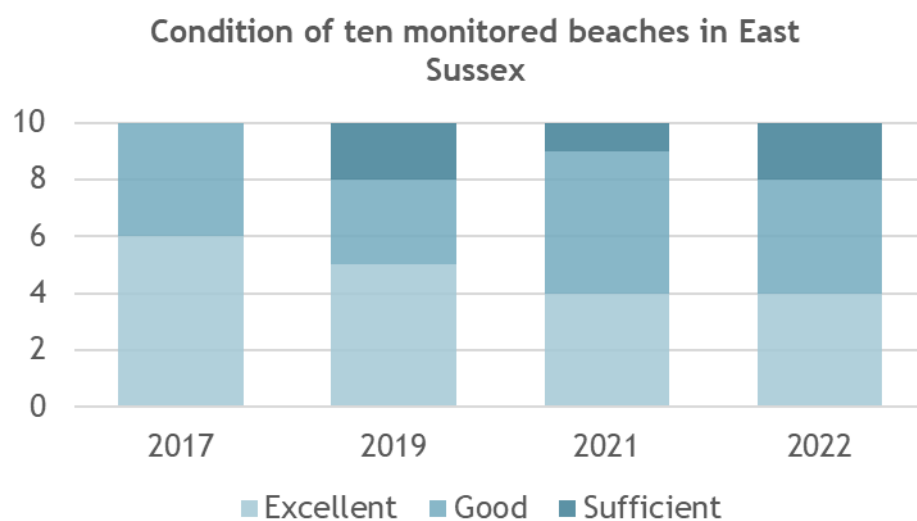
Water quality

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



Source: Environment Agency

The quality of bathing waters has also decreased in recent years. Between 2017 and 2022, the number of monitored beaches rated excellent fell from six to four, whilst the number rated sufficient grew from zero to two.



Source: Environment Agency

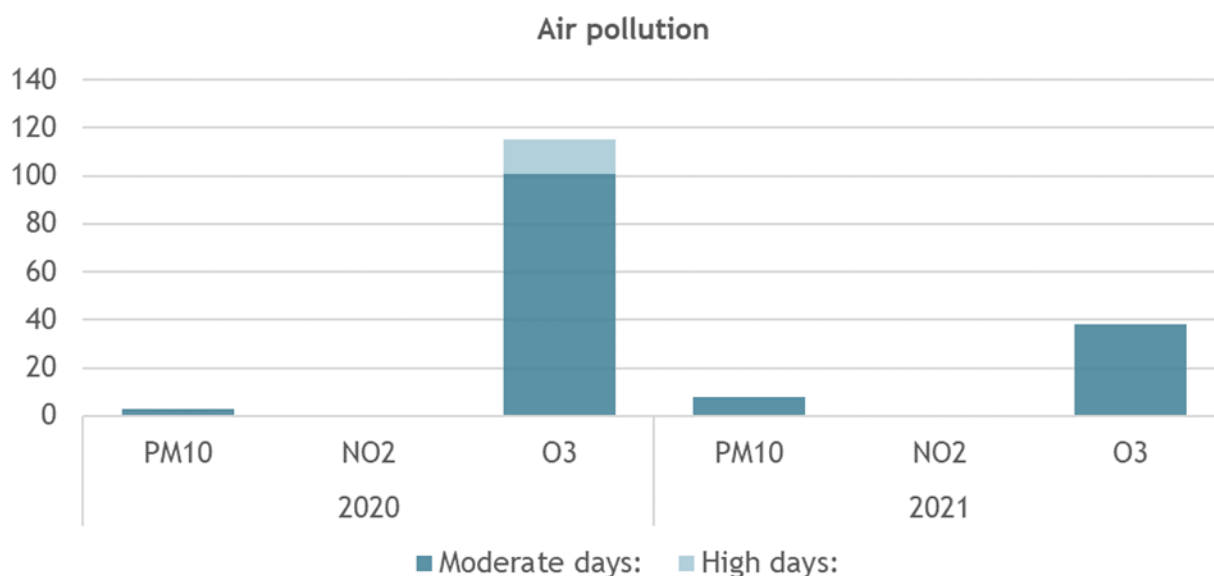
Air quality

Poor air quality has an impact on both human health and the natural environment. The concentration of pollutants in the air is affected by emissions, and also factors such as building layout and weather conditions. In East Sussex, there are three

main pollutants of concern:

- Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The main sources of NO₂ are road vehicles and domestic combustion.
- Particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). The main sources of particulates are road vehicles and solid fuel combustion.
- Ozone (O₃). Ozone is a secondary pollutant, created by other pollutant gases reacting in sunlight. It is a long-lived pollutant and tends to be a problem in urban background and rural locations, rather than at roadsides.

In Sussex, air quality is monitored by a small network of automatic monitoring stations. Ozone is the primary pollutant of concern in East Sussex, monitored at five sites. In 2020 there were 115 days where ozone was 'moderate' or 'high', falling to 38 in 2021 - this is for 'monitor days', e.g., if all five monitors recorded moderate ozone on the same calendar day, it would be counted as 5 days. The difference between the two years is largely due to weather conditions.



There are two Air Quality Management Areas in East Sussex. These have both been declared for nitrogen dioxide by Lewes District Council: one in Lewes town centre, and one in central Newhaven. These are areas where local monitoring suggests that legal air quality limits are unlikely to be achieved.

Designated sites and reserves

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

Designated sites and reserves		Area (ha)
International	Ramsar	6442.36
	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	7192.92
	Special Protection Area (SPA)	5546.39
National	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	87979.64
	National Nature Reserve (NNR)	320.86
	National Park	24364.93
	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	15379.81
Local	Country Park	692.27
	Local Geological Site (LGS)	765.52
	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1434.67
	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	9429.68
	Notable Road Verge	24.35
Reserve/ Property	Environmental Stewardship Agreement	31592.2
	National Trust	1839.31
	RSPB Reserve	276.12
	Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserve	1118.38
	Woodland Trust	483.53

Source: Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre

Habitats

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

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

Habitat	% of East Sussex
Woodland	19.9%
Other	4.8%

Ecology

Protected Areas

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

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

Condition

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

Assets at Risk

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

- a) Are not adequately protected under existing mechanisms.
- b) Are fragile or vulnerable and/or already highly fragmented.
- c) May be of particular significance in a Sussex context.

- d) Are irreplaceable or not easily recreated (either on-site or elsewhere) if destroyed.

The priority habitats are:

- Lowland heath - particularly significant in East Sussex, notably at Ashdown Forest, due to small amounts present in the south of England, the fragmentation of the habitat type (especially outside Ashdown Forest) and provides a range of benefits, notably clean water.
- Mudflats and saltmarsh - these habitats provide a range of benefits yet are under increasing pressure from climate change, development, and construction of hard sea defences. The national picture is one of medium risk, but the East Sussex context (with high levels of coastal squeeze) increases the risk to these habitats and the benefits they provide. There are small amounts at Newhaven Tide Mills, Cuckmere Estuary and Rye Harbour.
- Vegetated shingle - a globally restricted and internationally important habitat, for which East Sussex is a stronghold in the UK, mostly at Rye Harbour.
- Reedbed, fen and grazing marsh - small and highly fragmented areas remain in East Sussex, notably at Pevensey, yet they have the potential to provide a wide range of benefits, particularly flood risk mitigation in flood plains and provision of clean water.
- Floodplain woodlands - a fragmented habitat type which plays a very important role in floodplain function.
- Species rich grassland - highly fragmented and those areas outside formal designated areas have little/no protection from further loss. These areas are a priority for loss to development.

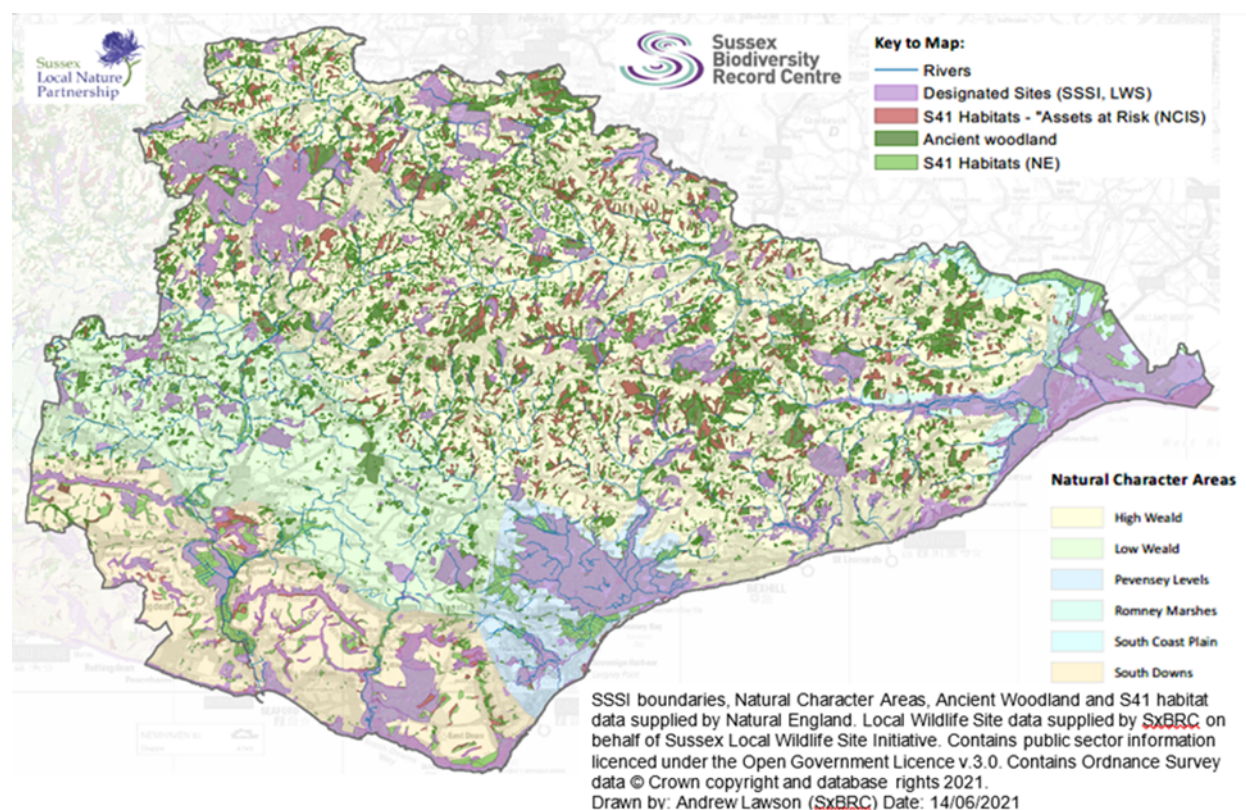
Marine Conservation Zones

There are two Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) off East Sussex, with two other offshore sites under consideration. Designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, MCZs protect areas that are important to conserve the diversity of national rare, threatened, and representative habitats and species. These are Beachy Head West which stretches along coastline from Brighton Marina to Beachy

Head, with a gap at Newhaven and Beachy Head East which contains two marine Sites of Nature Conservation Importance: the Royal Sovereign Shoals and the Horse of Willingdon Reef. This large inshore area runs to Hastings, out to just beyond six nautical miles from the coast at its furthest points.

Nature Recovery Network Mapping

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



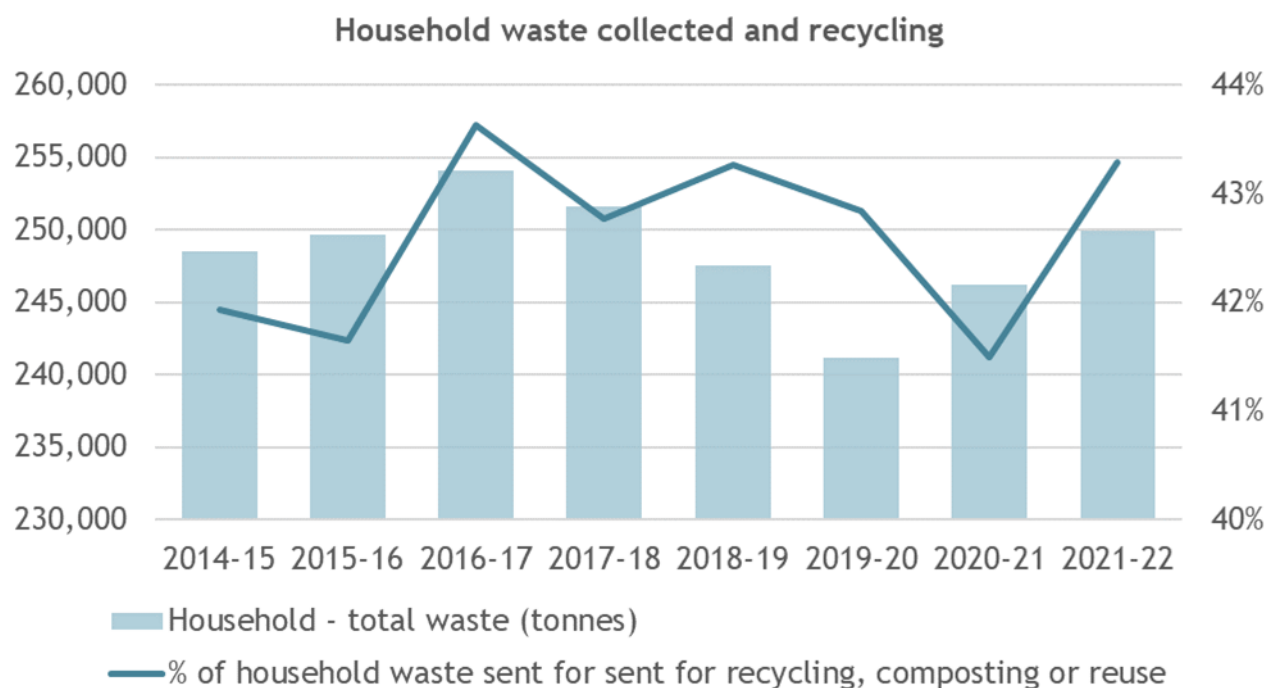
Local Nature Recovery Strategies

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

and enhance biodiversity, and will underpin a national Nature Recovery Network.

Waste

The overall quantity of household waste collected has risen since 2019/20. This is thought to be due to changes in working patterns, with more people working from home. The recycling rate fell slightly during the first year of the pandemic - mainly due to the impact on waste management procedures - but has now recovered.



Source: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

In 2021/22 East Sussex sent 0.6% of all waste collected to landfill. This was the third lowest amongst authorities who operate similar services to us, and the lowest of any county council. 43% of waste was recycled or reused, whilst 55% was sent for energy recovery. Note these figures differ slightly to the chart above due to additional waste collected (non-household waste) and stockpiling at waste management facilities. Our Energy Recovery Facility supplies power for over 25,000 homes.



Source: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Flooding

The tables below show the number of residential and non-residential properties identified as at risk of flooding between 2016 and 2026. The data shows that the majority of the flood risk is concentrated in the highly populated coastal towns, and in settlements situated in the flood plains of the rivers Ouse, Cuckmere and Rother.

Settlement	Residential Properties at Risk 2016-2026 Assessment
Eastbourne	Greater than 1,000
Seaford	500 to 1,000
Newhaven	50 to 150
Peacehaven	150 to 500
Lewes	50 to 150
Hailsham	150 to 500
Bexhill	500 to 1,000
Battle	50 to 150
Hastings	Greater than 1,000
Rye	Fewer than 50
Heathfield	50 to 150
Crowborough	50 to 150
Uckfield	Fewer than 50
Forest Row	Fewer that 50

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

Local Flood Risk. Source: ESCC Flood Risk Strategy

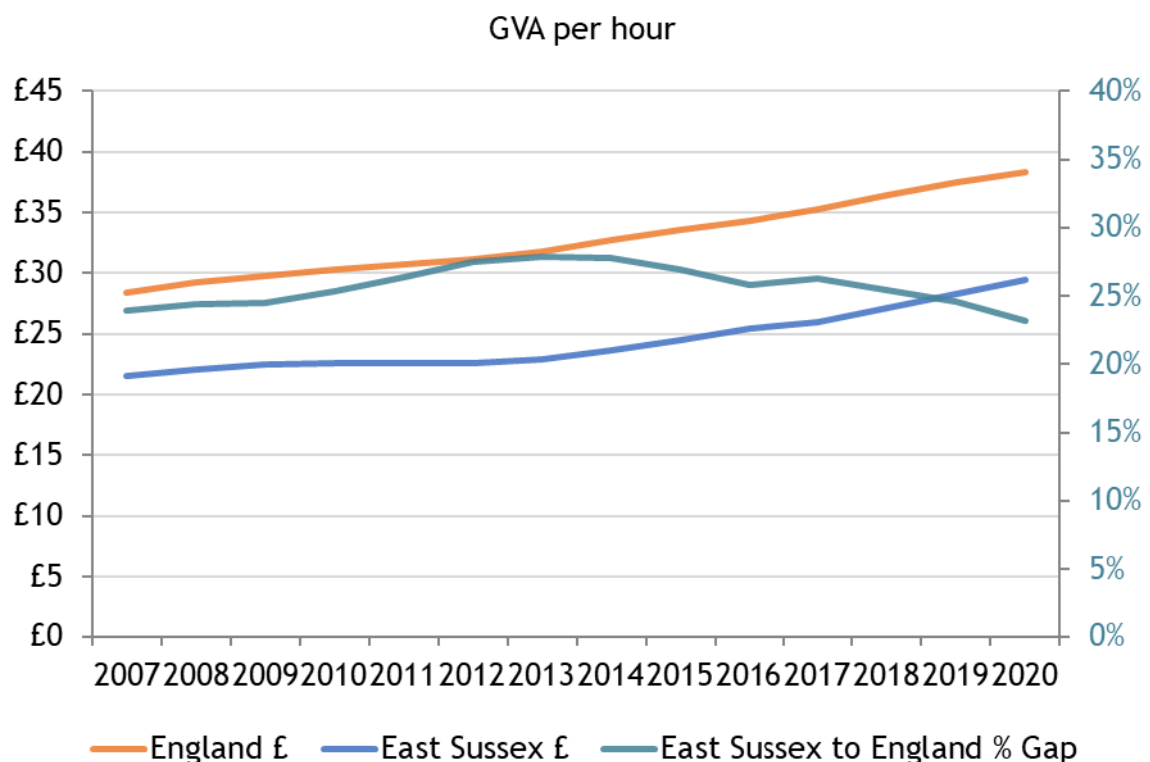
	Non-Residential Properties at Risk
Settlement	2016-2026 Assessment
Eastbourne	Greater than 200
Seaford	25 to 50
Newhaven	Fewer than 25
Peacehaven	Fewer than 25
Lewes	Fewer than 25
Hailsham	25 to 50
Bexhill	25 to 50
Battle	Fewer than 25
Hastings	Greater than 200
Rye	Fewer than 25
Heathfield	Fewer than 25
Crowborough	Fewer than 25
Uckfield	Fewer than 25
Forest Row	Fewer than 25

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

Economy

GVA per hour

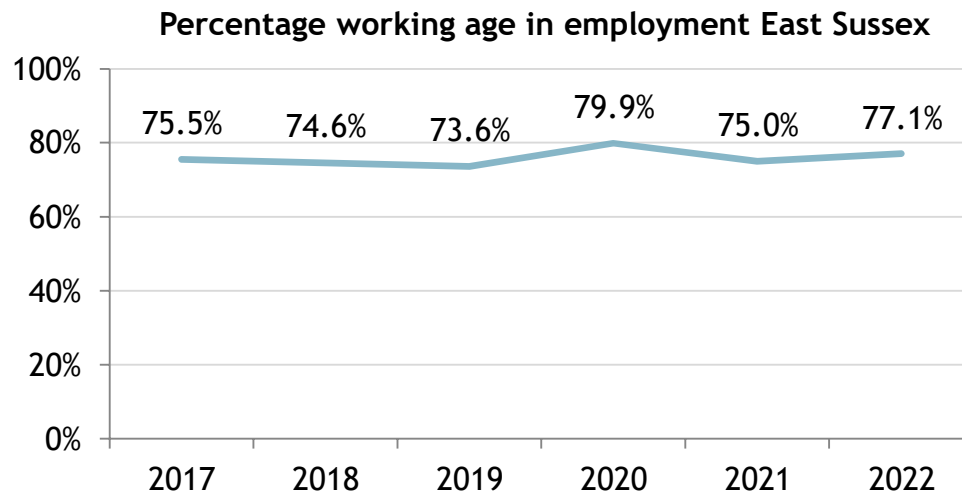
Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour is used to assess the productivity of an area. It measures the value of goods or services produced in an area per hour worked in that area. GVA per hour for East Sussex in 2020 was £29.41, 23.2% below the England level of £38.29.



Source: ONS

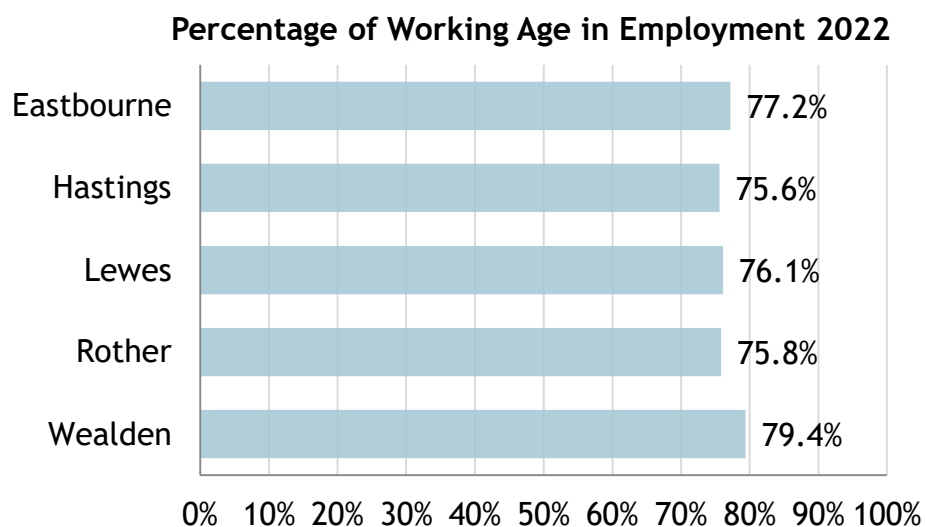
Employment

77.1% of the East Sussex working age population (age 16-64) were in employment between January - December 2022 (up from 75.0% in 2021). This was higher than the national average of 75.4% but below the average across the South East of 78.1%.



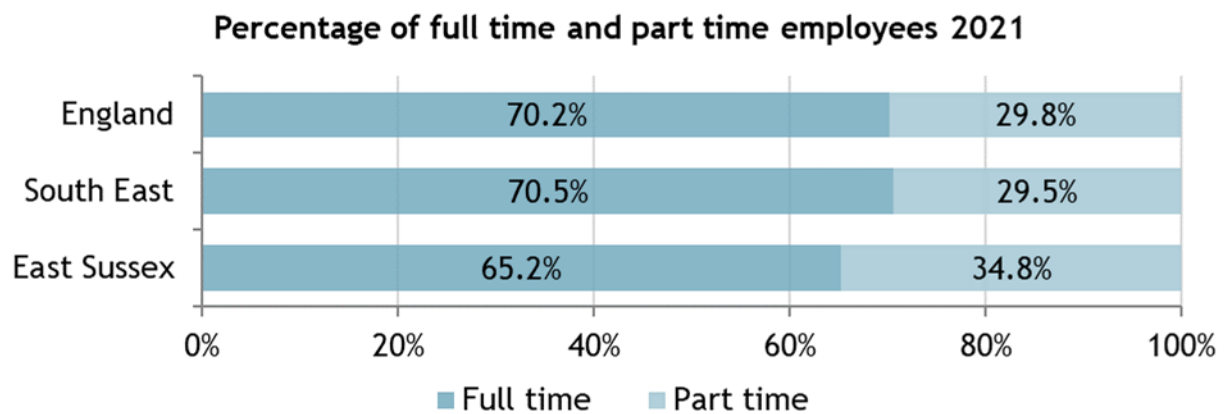
Sources: Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, NOMIS/ONS

Wealden experienced a surge of almost five percentage points since 2021, giving it the highest rate of employment at 79.4%. Meanwhile, Hastings had the lowest at 75.6% following a dip of four percentage points compared to the previous year.



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

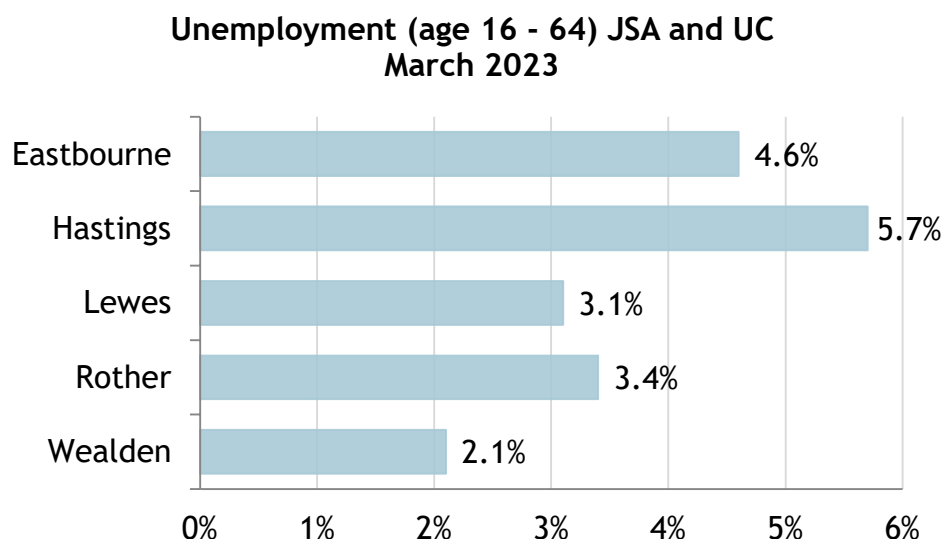
A higher proportion of people work part time in East Sussex (34.8%) than in the South East (29.5%) or England (29.8%).



Sources: Census 2021

Unemployment

The unemployment rate for March 2023 was 3.6% for East Sussex, slightly lower than the national average of 3.8%, but above the regional average of 2.9%. Hastings had the highest rate of the districts and boroughs at 5.7%.



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

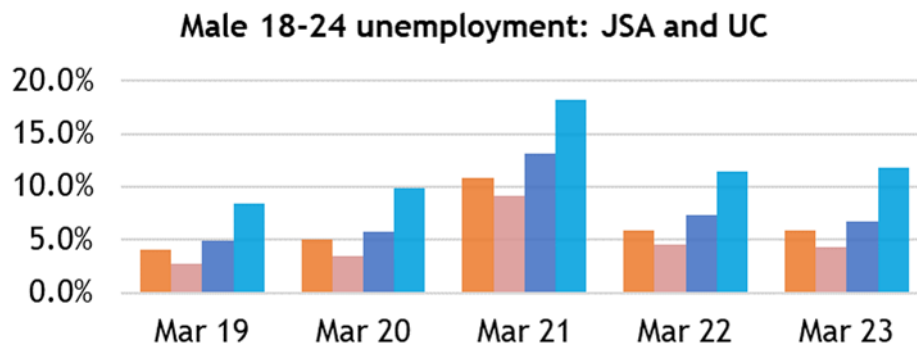
Youth unemployment (age 18-24) is normally higher than the overall rate and this trend is greater at time of economic stress. At March 2022 youth unemployment for East Sussex was 6.2%, whilst the England rate was 4.9%. Hastings had the highest district and borough rate at 9.2%. Rates in East Sussex fell for March 2023 to 5.8%, compared to 4.9% nationally. Youth unemployment in Hastings remained higher than the county average at 9.2%.



Within this female unemployment is usually lower than male unemployment. For example, in March 2023 female youth unemployment for Hastings was 6.8%, male 11.8%.



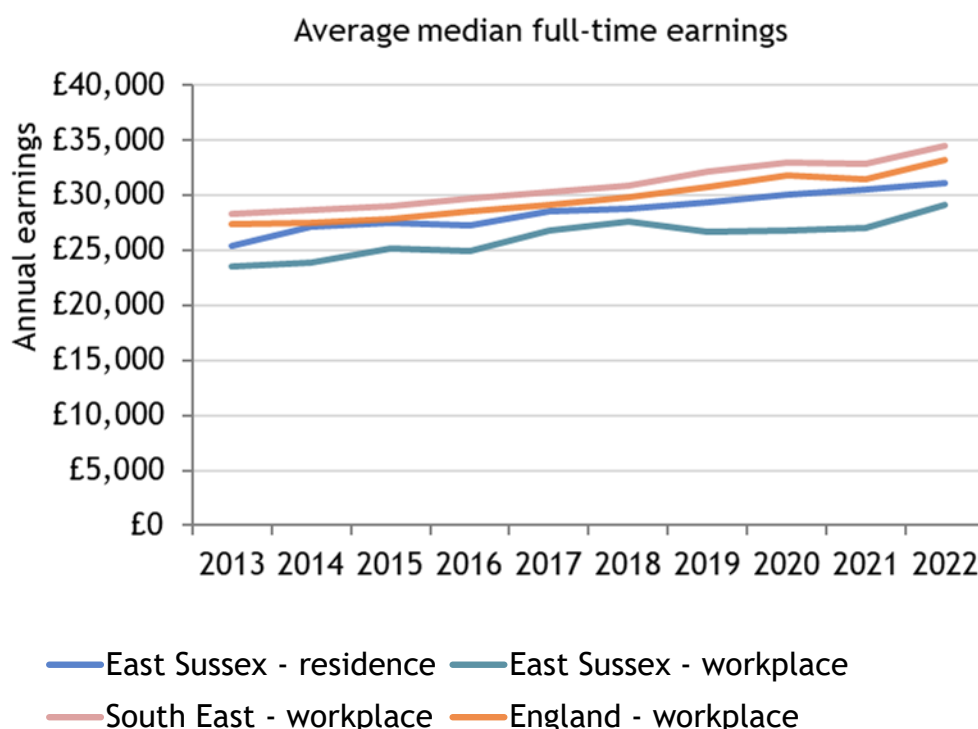
More males are usually economically active meaning the unemployment rate results in relatively more unemployed males than the same rate for females. 610 young people were unemployed in Hastings in March 2023, 215 were female and 395 were male.



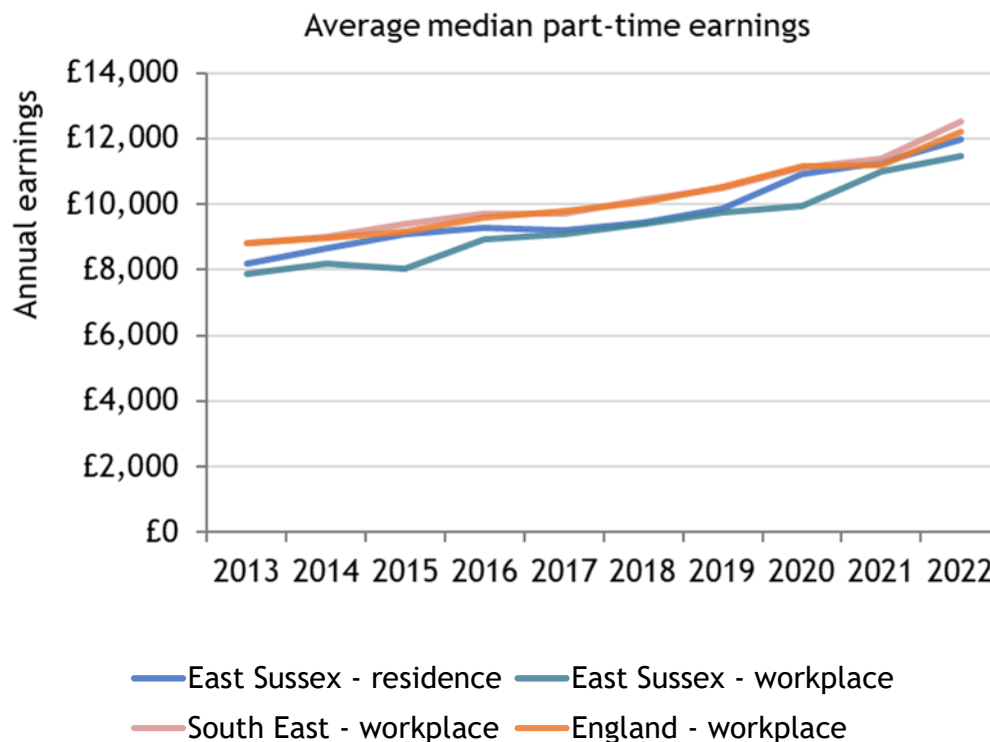
Source all: Office for National Statistics/NOMIS

Earnings

Residence based earnings are close to the England average workplace earnings for both full and part-time employees. However, for full-time employees in East Sussex, workplace earnings are lower than the rates in the South East and England. Residence based earnings are those of people living within East Sussex, some of whom have workplaces outside East Sussex; workplace earnings are those of people whose workplace is within East Sussex.



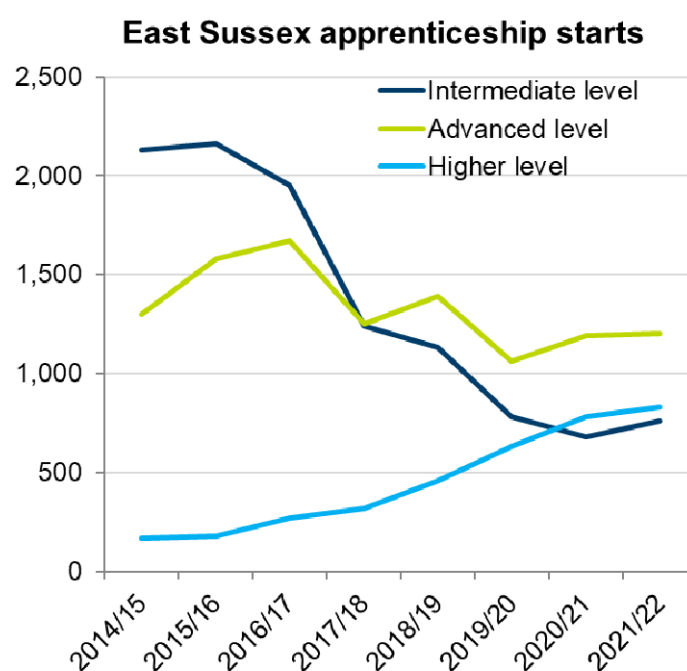
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Office for National Statistics



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

Skills

There were 13,780 apprenticeship starts in East Sussex between 2017 and 2022. Apprenticeship starts in East Sussex in 2021/22 were up 5% on the previous year. Higher level apprenticeship starts in 2021/22 rose by 6%



Source: Department for Education further education data library, apprenticeships

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

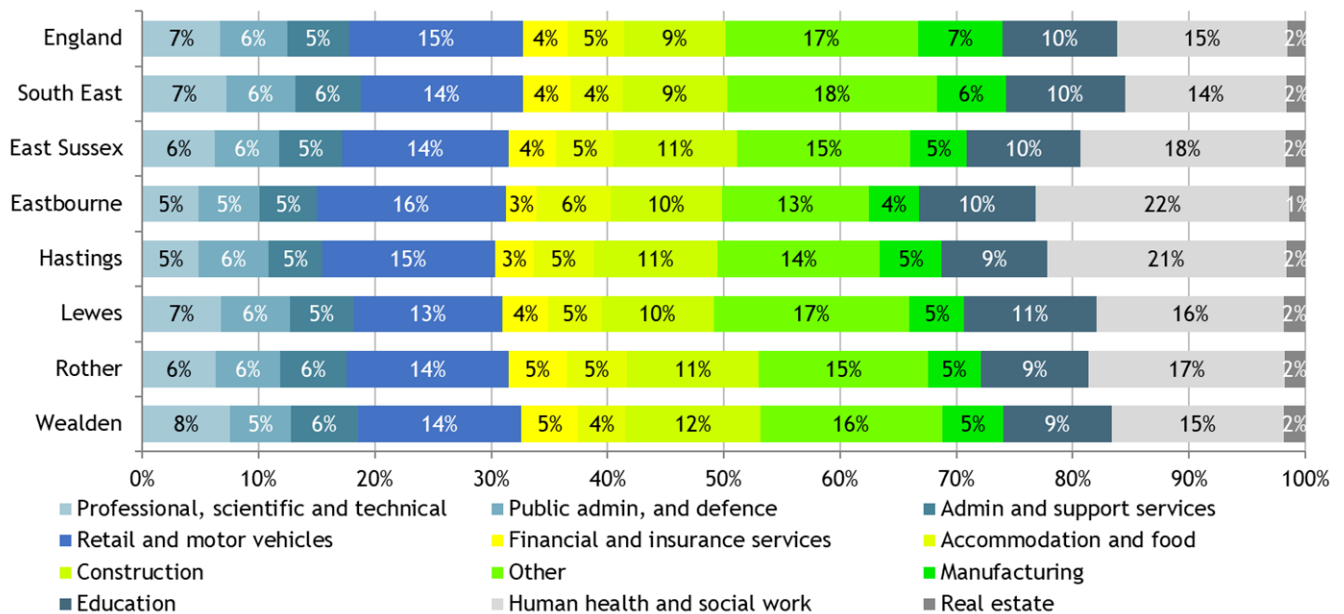
	Qualifications of working age population 2021 (16-64)					
	None	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4+	Other
Eastbourne	12.2%	11.6%	16.7%	20.6%	32.2%	6.7%
Hastings	14.1%	11.9%	17.4%	19.8%	30.6%	6.2%
Lewes	9.2%	10.7%	16.5%	20.4%	37.4%	5.7%
Rother	11.0%	11.7%	17.5%	21.1%	32.6%	6.1%
Wealden	8.1%	10.5%	17.9%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

Source: Census 2021

Employment by industry

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

State of the County 2023: Focus on East Sussex

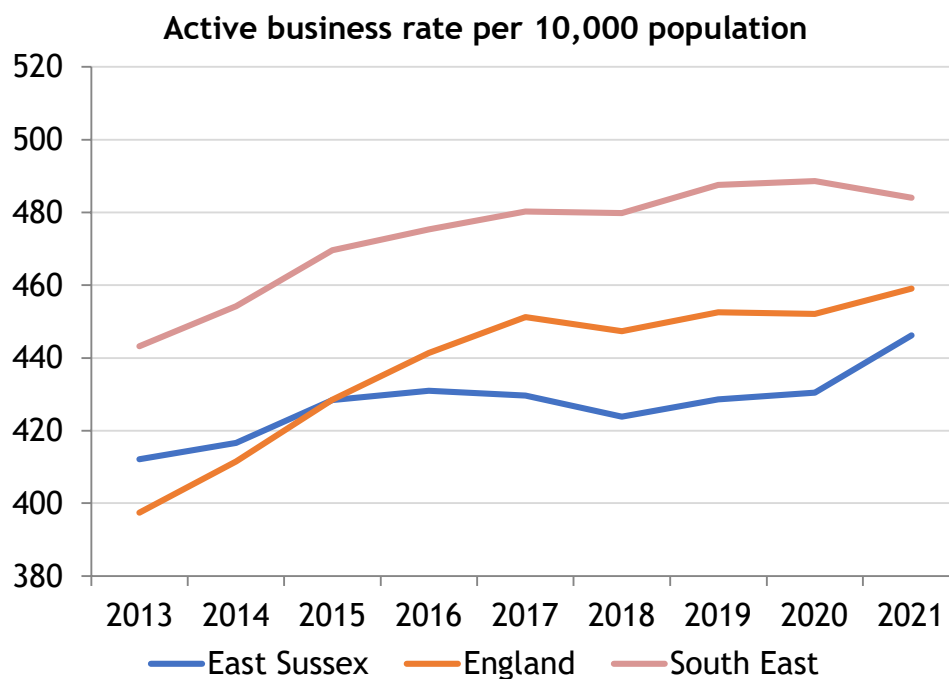
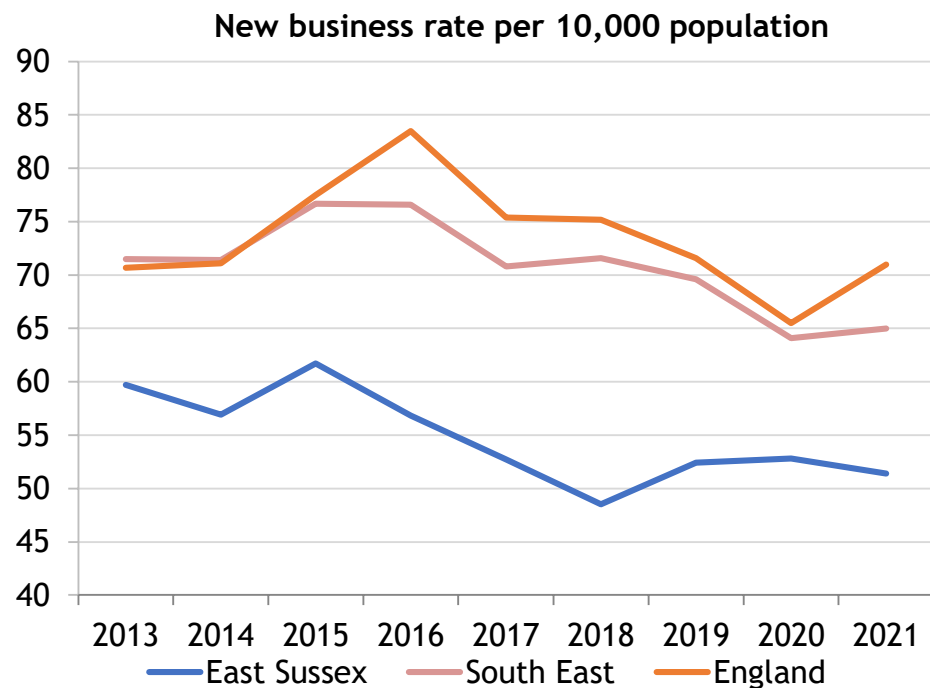


Other includes- Arts, Entertainment and other; Agriculture energy and water, Transportation and storage; and Information and communication.

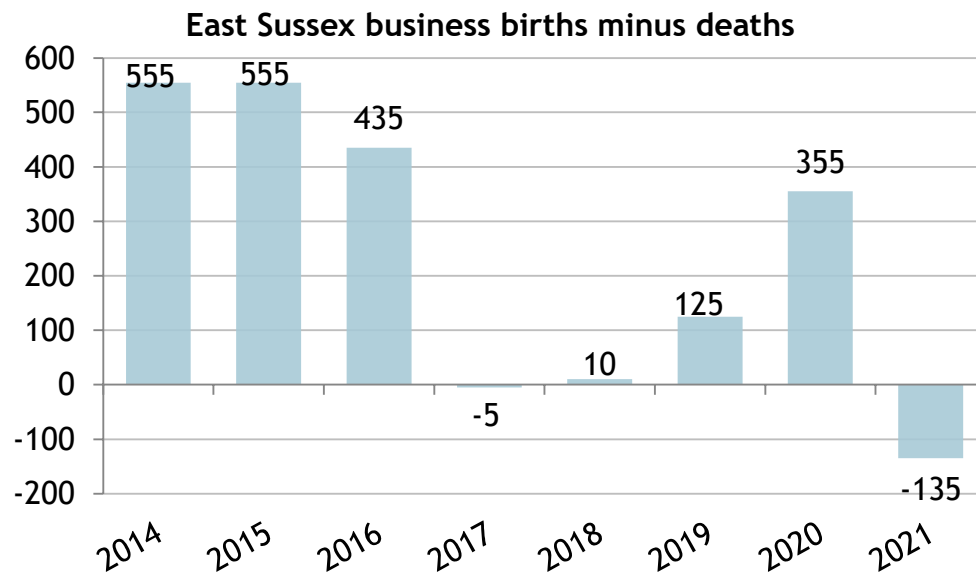
Source: Census 2021

Businesses

The information on business registrations and closures dates to the time of the pandemic. In 2021 there were 2,385 business starts and 2,520 business closures. The East Sussex new business registration rate per 10,000 people decreased between 2020 and 2021 to 51.4. The highest rate was in Wealden at 55.9, whilst the lowest was in Lewes at 47.1.



The data shows that there was a small net loss in businesses in 2021, which was a difficult year for businesses across the country due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

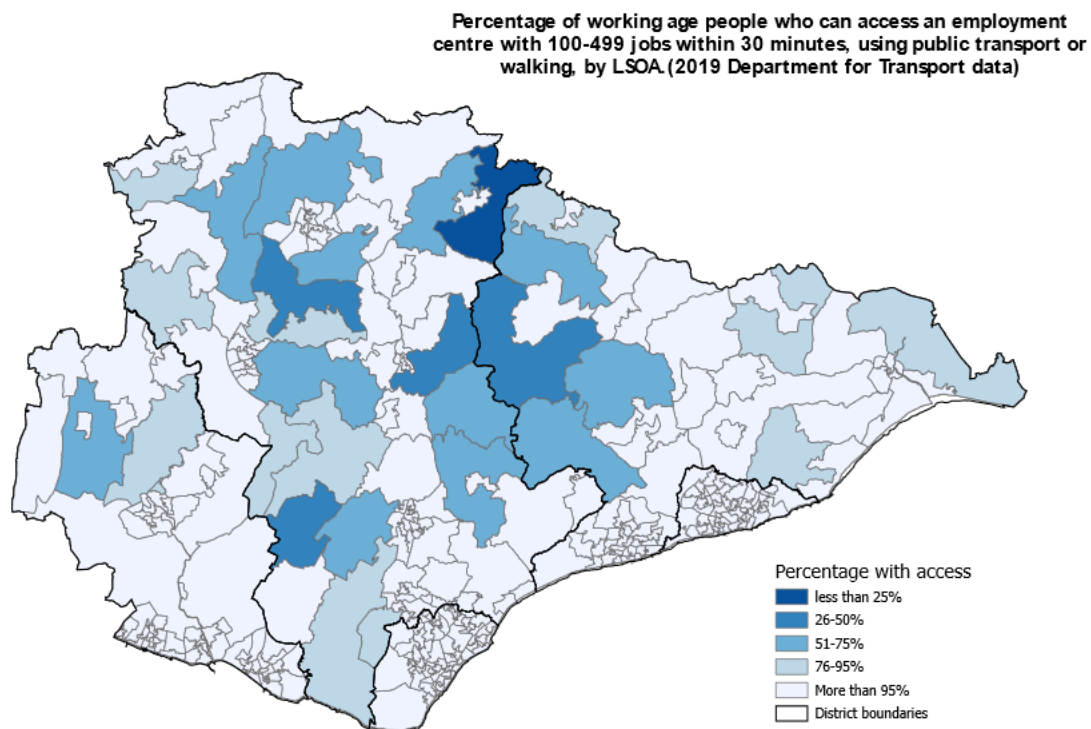


Source for all: ONS Business Demography

Infrastructure

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

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



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

Key		
Local Growth Fund		Other Funds
Area	Project	Value
Countywide	Infrastructure at business sites	£1.7m
Countywide	Walking and cycling improvements	£20.7m
Countywide	Developing EV infrastructure provision across the county	Awaiting Bid Outcome
Countywide	Broadband - Superfast coverage (>30 Mbps) 98% Ultrafast coverage (>100Mbps) 32%	£32m
Countywide	Bus priority measures	£18.5m
Countywide	Potential A259 Major Road Network Improvements	N/A
Countywide	Exceat Bridge Levelling Up Fund	£7.9m
Countywide	A27 improvements	£75.0m
Countywide	Potential A27 offline solution	N/A
Countywide	Lewes to Newhaven rail signalling improvements	£18.0m
Countywide	A22 junction improvement package	£46.5m
Countywide	Blackfriars road infrastructure	£8.7m

Key		
Local Growth Fund		Other Funds
Area	Project	Value
Countywide	Centres of Digital Excellence across Sussex	£2.3m
Countywide	Greener Sussex land management & Decarbonisation Academies	£7.2m
Countywide	Agri-Food Centre for training, education and skills development	£4.4m
Bexhill	North Bexhill Access Road	£18.6m
Bexhill	Bexhill Enterprise Park North	£1.9m
Bexhill	Bexhill Enterprise Park Development	£46.0m
Eastbourne	Eastbourne Town Centre Movement and Access Package (Terminus Road)	£11.3m
Eastbourne	Eastbourne and South Wealden walking and cycling package	£6.6m
Eastbourne	Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne Movement and Access Corridor	£2.1m
Eastbourne	Devonshire Park - redevelopment to maximise conference and tourist markets	£54.0m
Eastbourne	Bedfordwell Road - site preparation for housing development	£1.2m
Eastbourne	Levelling Up Fund	£19.9m
Hastings	Bexhill and Hastings Movement and Access Package	£9.0m
Hastings	Potential HS1 rail extension (also to Bexhill and Eastbourne)	N/A
Hastings	Town Deal	£24.3m
Hastings	The Observer Building, Hastings (Phase 2)	£2.2m
Lewes	North Street Quarter	N/A
Lewes	Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Infrastructure Uplift	£0.3m
Newhaven	Newhaven Flood Defences	£17.0m
Newhaven	Newhaven Port Access Road	£23.0m
Newhaven	Newhaven Port - new border infrastructure	£6.2m
Newhaven	Future High Streets	£5.0m
Newhaven	Town Deal	£19.3m
Newhaven	Levelling Up Fund	£12.7m
Newhaven	UTC Maritime & Sustainable Technology Hub	£1.3m

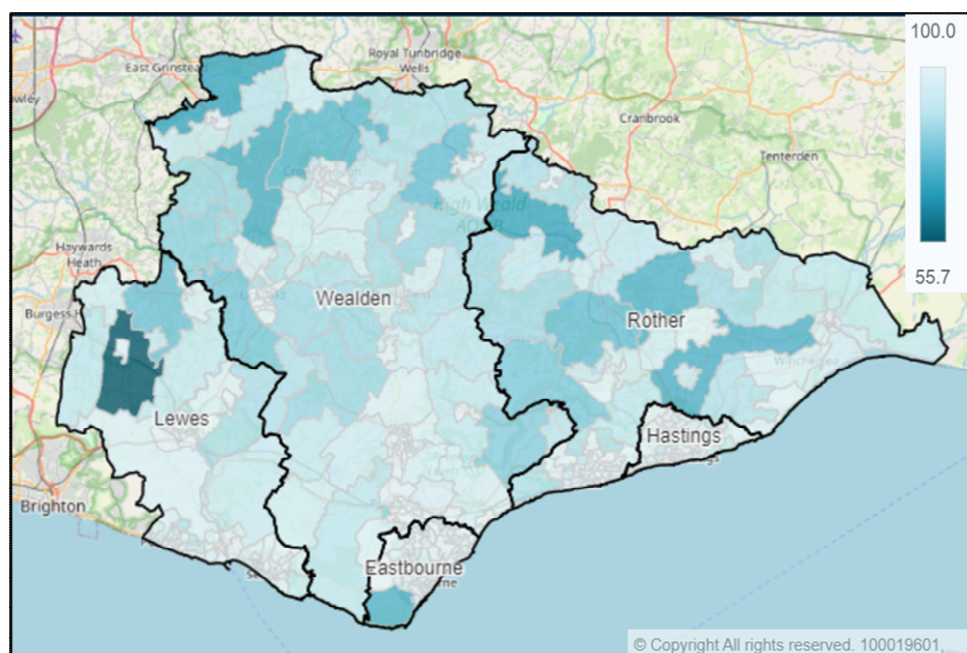
Key		
Local Growth Fund		Other Funds
Area	Project	Value
Rother	Levelling Up Fund	£19.2m
Rye	Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Discovery Centre	£0.9m
Uckfield	Bus station improvements	£0.5m
Uckfield	Potential Movement and Access Corridor improvements	£0.8m

N/A = Not Allocated at present

Demand for commercial units is strong, however, there is recognition that there is less new workspace being made available to meet that need across the county. As well as improvements in physical infrastructure there is also ongoing work to improve digital connectivity.

Broadband

Over 98% of East Sussex premises had access to superfast broadband in 2022, with 53% having access to Gigabit capable broadband. 0.45% of properties have less than the Legal Universal Service Obligation (at least 10Mbps).

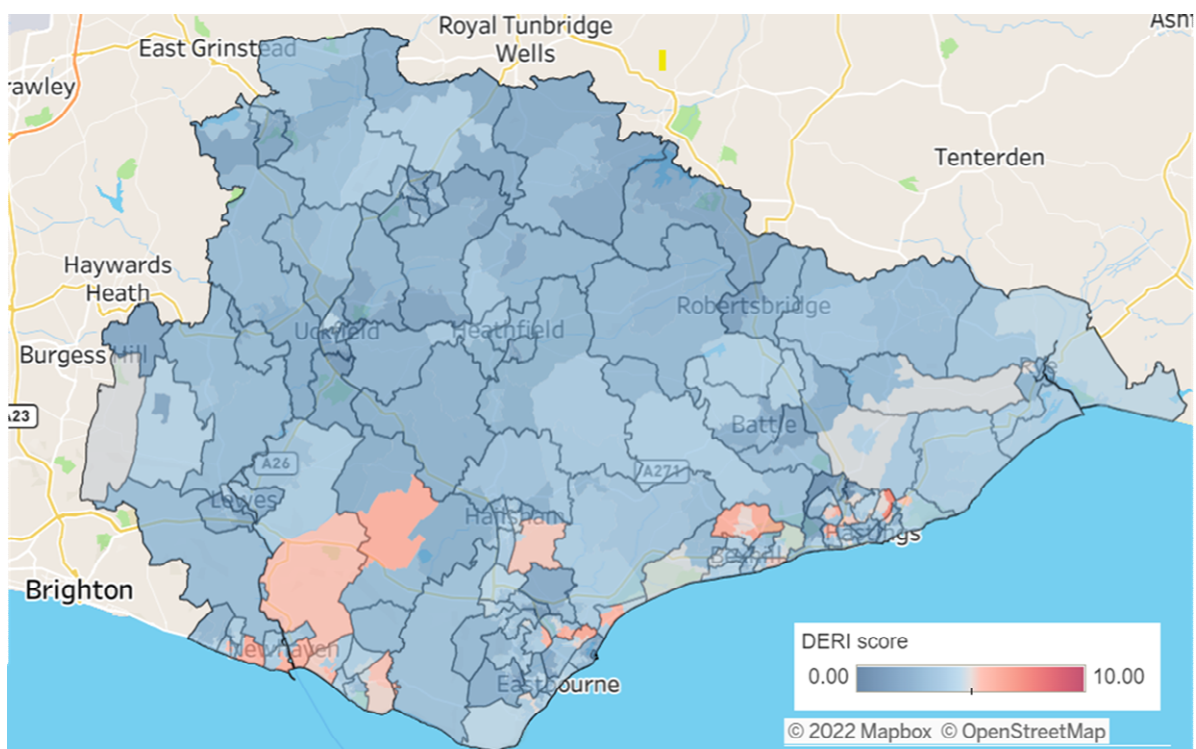


Source: Ofcom fixed broadband coverage data (2021) shown for LSOAs.

Digital Inclusion

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

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



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

Civil Society

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

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

Some of the organisations the Council funded or supported during 2022:



Source: ESICC VCSE Team.

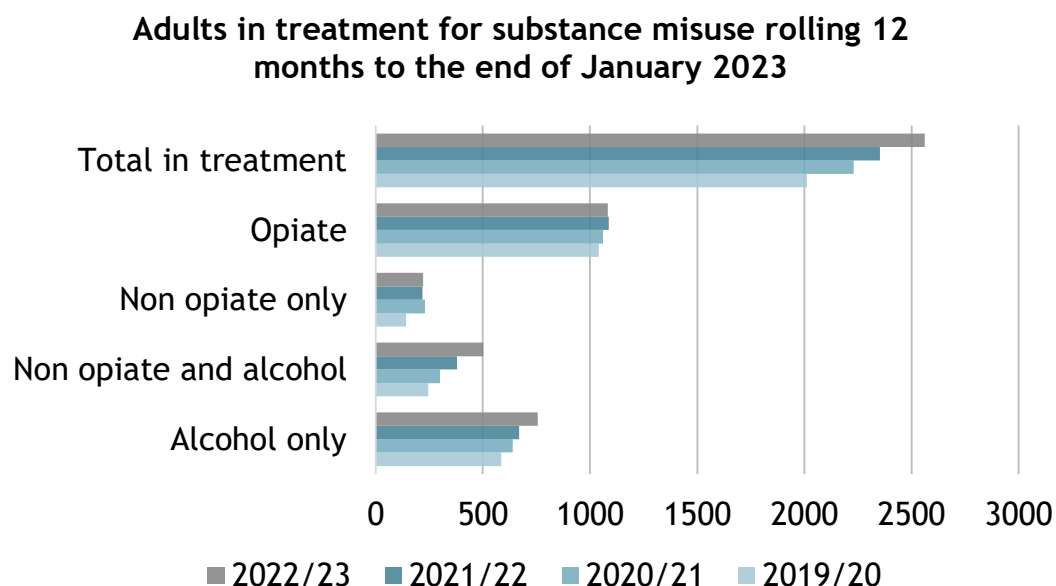
A quarter of the population volunteer at least once a month in East Sussex, giving their time to local causes, groups, and communities that aim to make communities a better place where helping people themselves is part of everyday life. The sense of community that volunteering brings enables people to feel connected and that they are making a positive difference.

Community Safety

Drug and alcohol-related harm

The number of East Sussex adults in substance misuse treatment in the 12 months to the end of January 2023 increased by 8.88% to 2,562, compared to the 12 months to the end of January 2022. This is notable when compared to the national data which saw an overall 0.33% decrease in the number of adults in treatment year on year. Of these 19.63% (503) were in treatment for use of alcohol and non-opiates, this is an increase of 32.72% on the previous year, and 106.15% on the 12 months to 31st January 2020. Nationally, the increase between the 12 months to the end of January 2023 from the end of January 2022 was 2.9%.

The proportion in treatment for opiate use dropped to 42.27% from 46.24% in the previous year while the number in treatment for opiate use dropped slightly from 1,088 to 1,083 individuals. The number of adults in treatment solely for alcohol use increased 13.0% year on year, compared to a 1.12% increase nationally.



Source: National Drug Treatment Monitoring System

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and

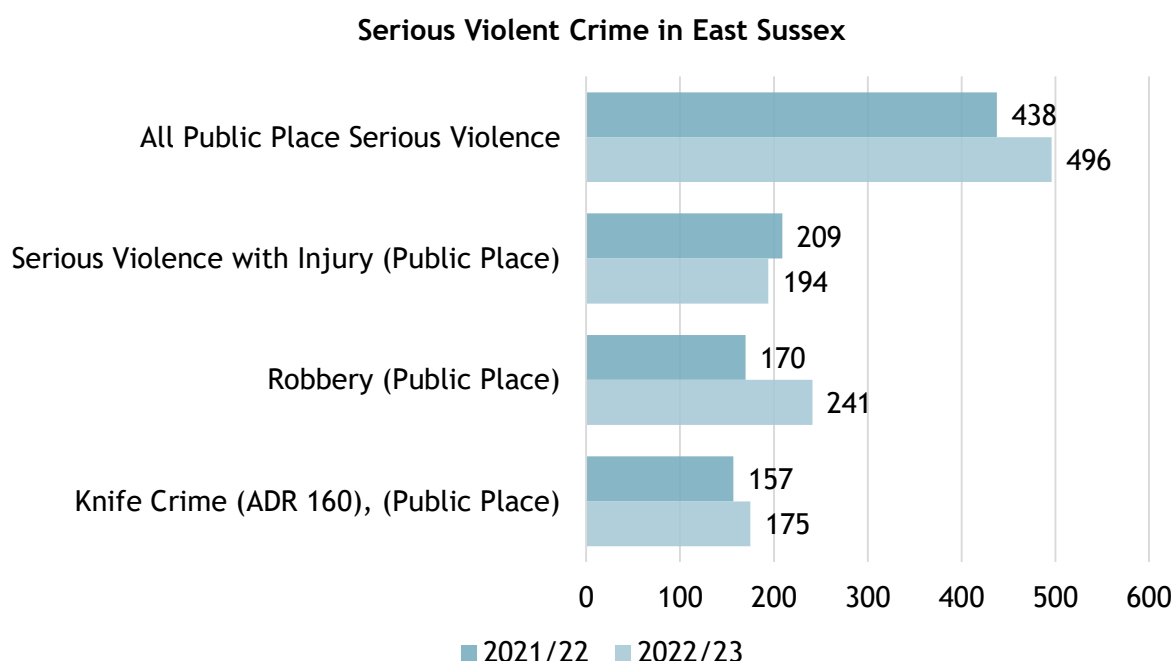
referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. Nationally in 2022, the NRM received 16,938 referrals of potential victims of modern slavery, which represents a 33% increase in referrals compared to 2021 (12,706). 2022 recorded the highest number of annual referrals since the NRM began in 2009. Of all referrals nationally, 52% (8,854) were for potential victims who claimed exploitation as adults whilst 41% (7,019) claimed exploitation as children, and for the remaining cases the age at exploitation was unknown. 80% of potential child victims referred to the NRM in 2022 were male (5,607) and 20% were female (1,978) and the most common form of exploitation reported for potential child victims was criminal exploitation. UK nationals represented the second highest nationality referred to the NRM. Of all the UK nationals referred, 80% were potential child victims.

In East Sussex, two adults and nine minors (child 17 or under) who were potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking were referred by the authority through the NRM in 2022, compared to two adults and ten minors in 2021 (Source: National Referral Mechanism statistics).

Serious Violence

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

In 2022/23, there were 496 Public Place Serious Violent Crimes in East Sussex. This was an increase of 13.2% compared to the previous year (438). The highest percentage increase has been for Robberies (41.8%). There has been a decrease of 7.2% in Serious Violence with Injury and an increase in Knife Crime of 11.5%.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation

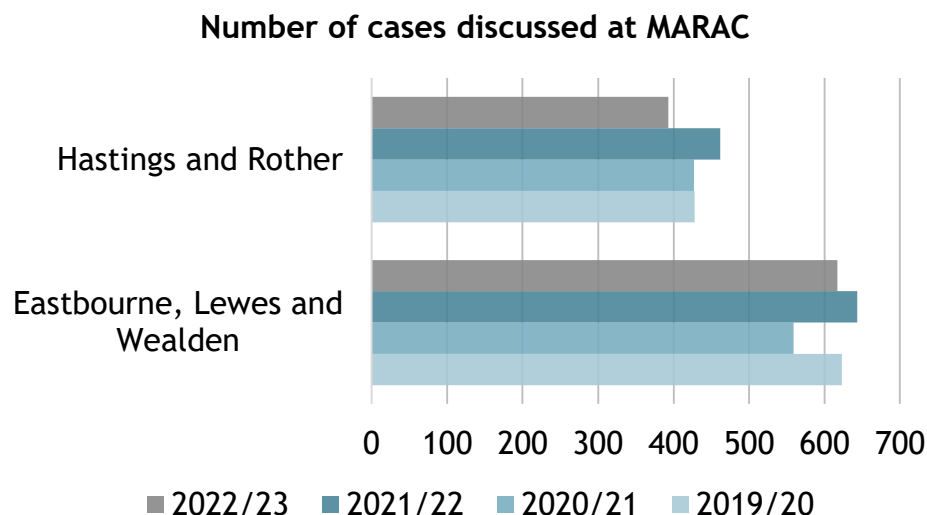
Between April 2022 and January 2023, 33 East Sussex children were experiencing either criminal or sexual exploitation or both. This is in line with the number of children experiencing exploitation in the same period the previous year.

Three quarters of children experiencing exploitation were male and 85% were aged 15 or older. These children receive support from the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) group. 21 children were removed from MACE during the year due to a lowering of their risk level, the average time it took for a child to be removed from MACE was just under six months.

Domestic violence and abuse

During 2022, nationally there was a 2% increase in referrals into Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) compared to 2021. The MARACs are meetings where the highest risk domestic abuse cases are discussed. In East Sussex there was a 4% decrease for the Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden (ELW) MARAC, and an

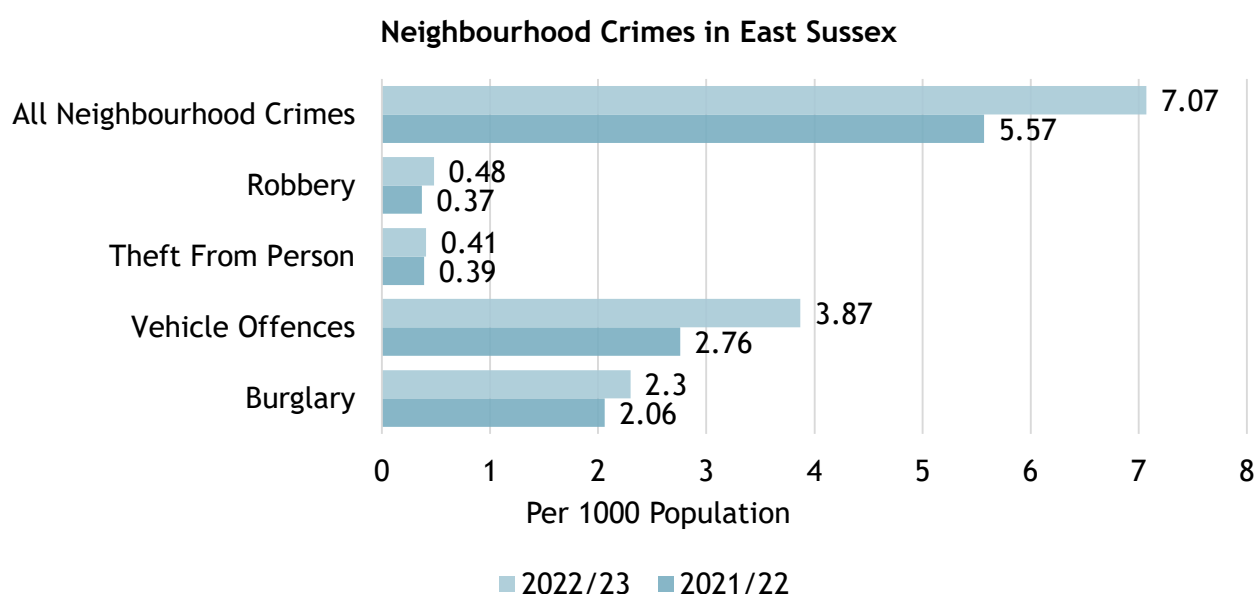
15% decrease for Hastings and Rother (HR) MARAC. This is the first time there has been a decrease in referrals to a MARAC in East Sussex since 2015, aside from the impact of national lockdowns which saw a 3% decrease in referrals to HR MARAC in 2020. However, East Sussex has a historically high number of referrals into MARAC and both ELW and HR remain over the recommended number of 40 cases per 10,000 population.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Neighbourhood Crime

Neighbourhood crime includes burglary, vehicle offenses, theft from person and robbery. In total, neighbourhood crimes in East Sussex increased by 27% in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22, with the biggest increase observed for vehicle offenses with an increase of 40.5%. However, neighbourhood crime rates in East Sussex are lower than the national average across all categories.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Road Safety

The rate of people being killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions in East Sussex has historically been higher than the average for England. For the three-year period 2017-2019 (the latest period not impacted by the national lockdowns) the average rate of people killed or seriously injured for East Sussex was 68.1 per 100,000 population compared to 43.2 in England. Note that standard road safety reporting is based on a three-year reporting period. 2017-2019 has been used as this is the last period not affected by COVID-19.

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

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

State of the County 2023: Focus on East Sussex

Number of people killed or seriously injured in East Sussex

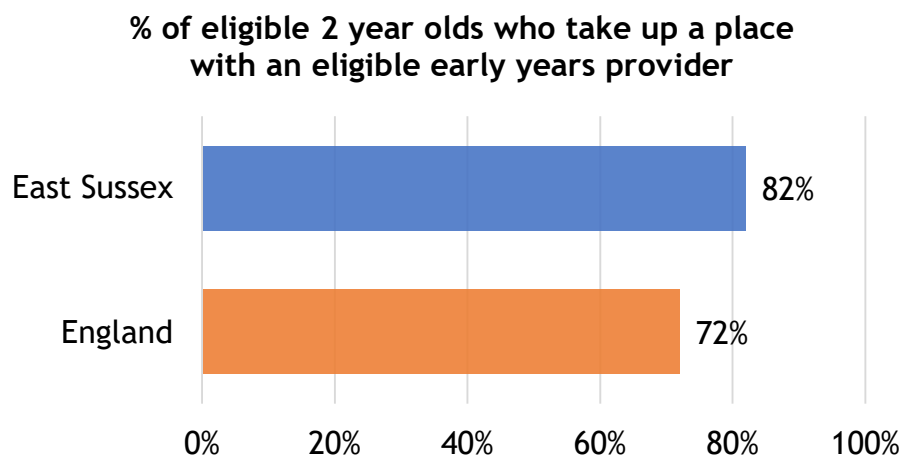
Year	Seriously injured	Fatalities	Total
2022	374	20	394
2021	321	18	339
2020	278	17	295
2019	395	14	409
2018	334	21	355
2017	344	26	370
2016	358	24	382

Source: Sussex Safer Roads Partnership

Schools

Early Years

East Sussex received 1,598 applications for a funded place for eligible 2-year-olds in the spring 2023 funding period. Of these, 275 children were not eligible to receive funding. 82% (1,085) of the remaining 1,323 eligible children have accessed a place with an early year's provider, compared to the national average of 72%.



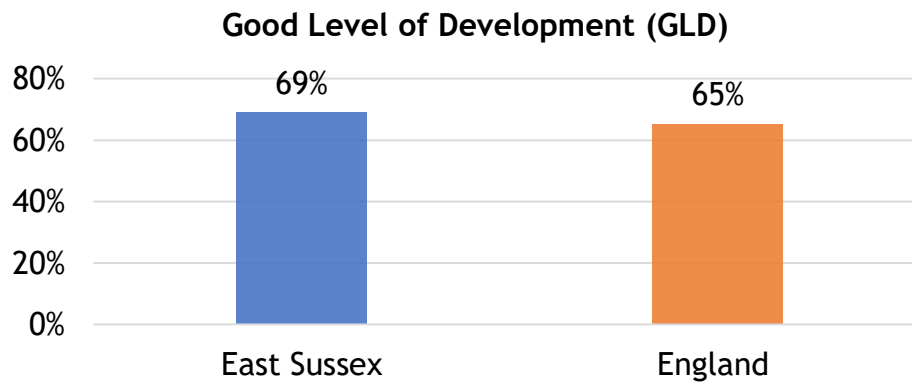
Source: ESCC Children's Services

Attainment

Academic Year 21/22

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Early Years Good Level of Development is achieving the expected standard for: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy and mathematics.



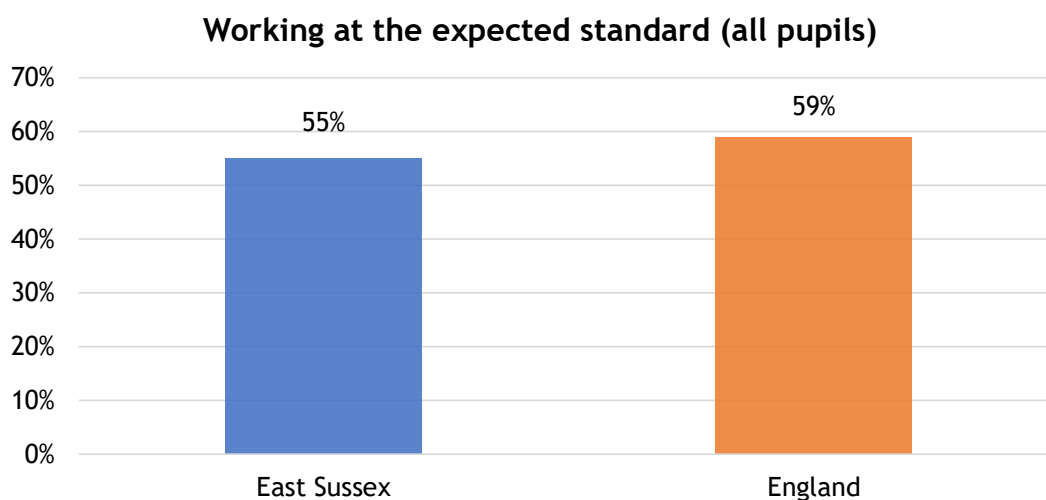
Source: ESCC Children's Services

The percentage point gap between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) achieving a good level of development and their peers is -16.5. The national average gap for this cohort for 2022 is -19.6.

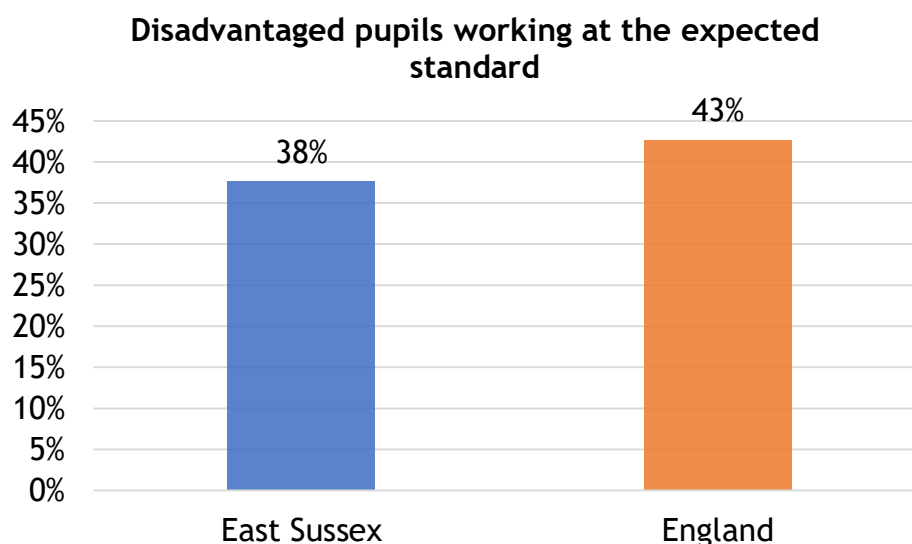
Key Stage 2 Attainment

Key Stage 2: Reading, writing and mathematics.

The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined at Key Stage 2.



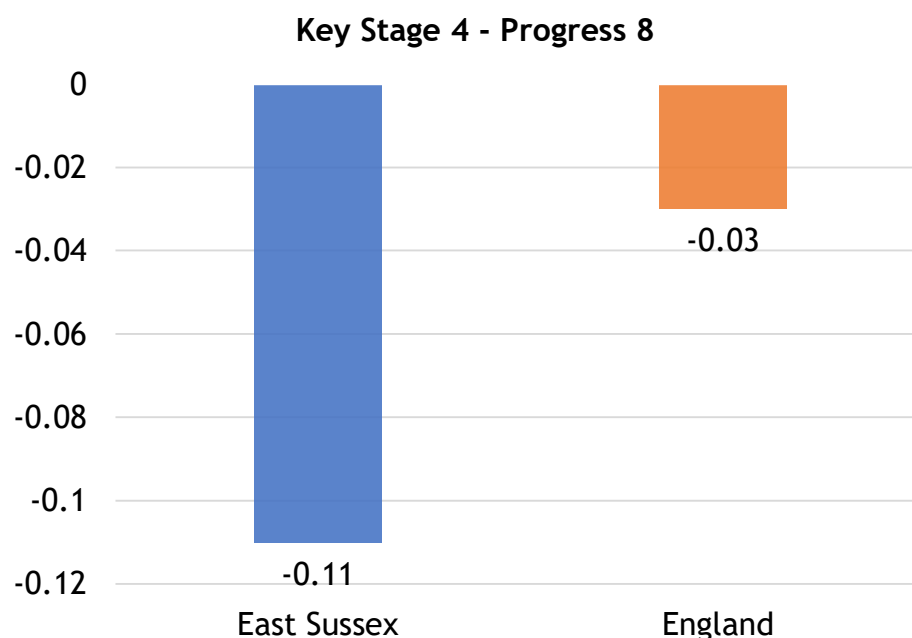
Source: ESCC Children's Services



Source: ESCC Children's Services

Key Stage 4: Progress 8

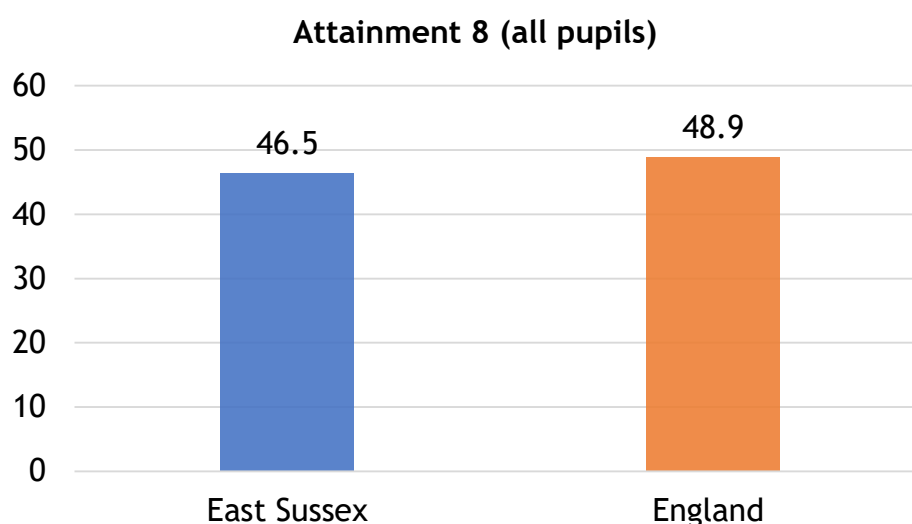
Progress 8 is a measure of students' progress across the Attainment 8 subjects from the end of primary school (Key Stage 2) to the end of secondary school (Key Stage 4). Scores for East Sussex are below national.



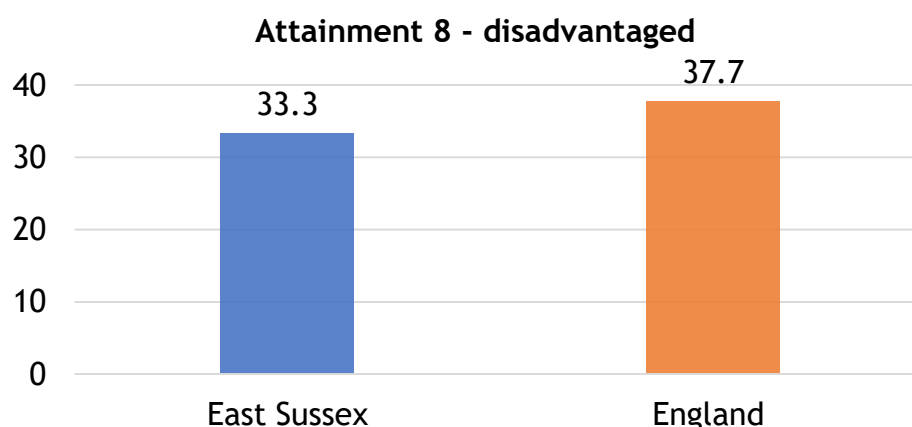
Source: ESCC Children's Services

Key Stage 4: Attainment 8

Attainment 8 is the students' average achievement across eight subjects: English, mathematics, three English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (from sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages), and three further subjects, from the range of EBacc subjects, or any other GCSE or approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualifications.



Source: ESCC Children's Services



Source: ESCC Children's Services

Attendance

The pandemic has had a significant adverse impact on school attendance, with

both nationally and locally, the proportion of children persistently absent from school, defined as missing more than 10% of sessions, doubling. The Government has published new attendance guidance to clarify responsibilities for local authorities, schools, parents and carers. By September 2023, the expectation is that all councils should strengthen their oversight of attendance through regular individual dialogue with all schools, and provide whole family early help support, free of any charge, to schools and all families of children whose attendance is less than 50%.

Absence as of 31st March 2023:

School type	Persistent Absence (%)	Overall Absence (%)
East Sussex Primary Schools*	18.96	6.38
East Sussex Secondary Schools*	30.41	10.36
East Sussex Special Schools*	44.81	15.67
East Sussex schools overall*	24.29	8.24
FFT National Primary Schools**	20.0	6.3
FFT National Secondary Schools**	27.0	9.2

* Please note that this local data is unverified and does not include schools that do not use SIMS for recording attendance. Persistent absence is the number of pupils with attendance of 90% or lower, expressed as a percentage of pupils on the roll. Overall absence is the total number of sessions missed as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions available.

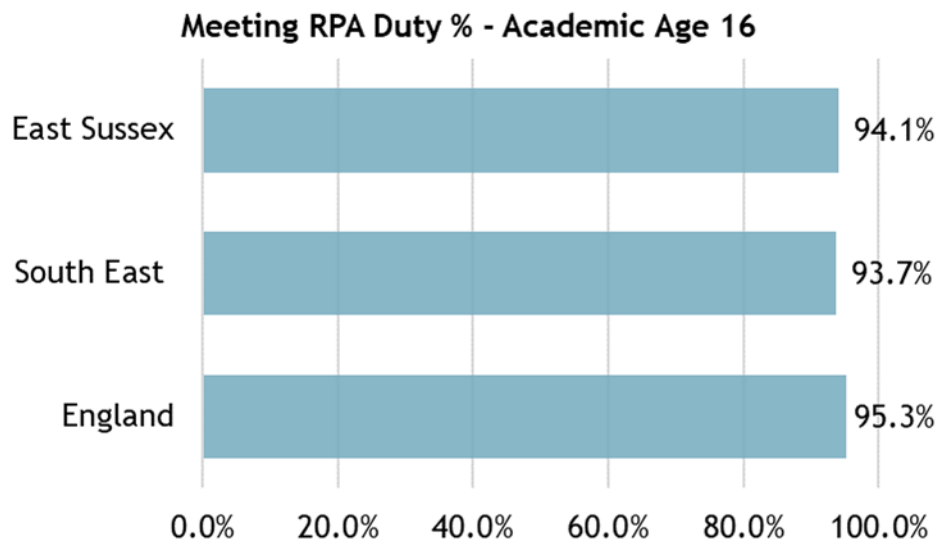
** The Fisher Family Trust (FFT) Attendance Tracker provides a national figure, it is based on the approximately 9,500 schools that participate. This is out of about 22,000 schools and so the FFT national figure needs to be seen in that context.

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

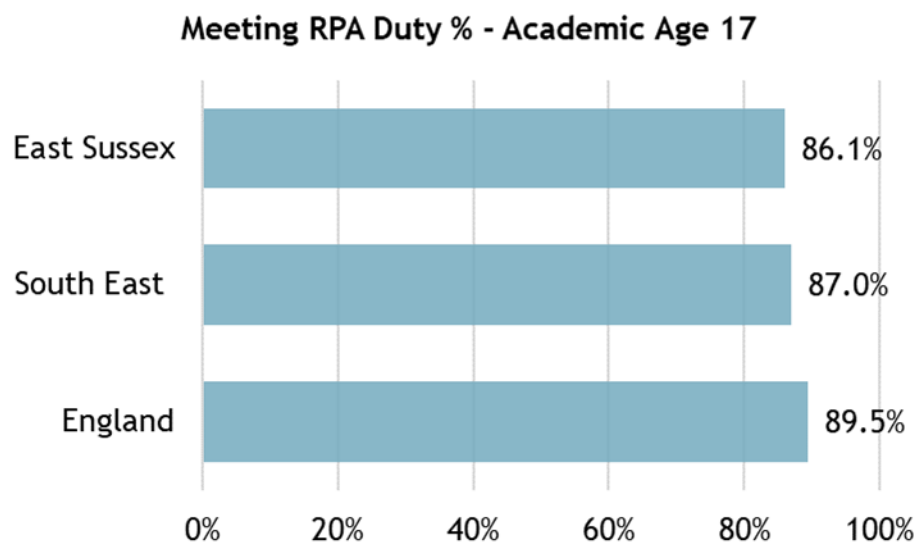
Academic Year 2021-22	
The percentage of exclusions in primary schools per school population in that year:	
(i) Fixed term	1.81%
(ii) Permanent	0.04%
The percentage of exclusions in secondary schools per school population in that year:	
(i) Fixed term	19.19%
(ii) Permanent	0.06%

Young people in education, employment and training

94.1% of young people at academic age 16 (year 12) and 86.1% age 17 (year 13) were participating in education, training, or employment with training under the Raising the Participation Age (RPA) Duty in quarter 4. However, 96.4% of 16 years old and 93.6.% of 17 year olds were participating in some form of education, training or employment - this includes those in employment without DfE regulated training, or part-time/temporary employment. The number of 16- and 17-year-olds who were not in education, employment or training was 4.1%, below pre-COVID levels of 4.4% Jan 2020. There are concerns about the impact of the further reduction in the vocational/work-based learning offer for young people, with the national Traineeship programme ceasing from summer 2023, as well as European Social Fund not in education, training or employment (NEET) provision.



Source: ESCC Children's Services



Source: ESCC Children's Services

School places

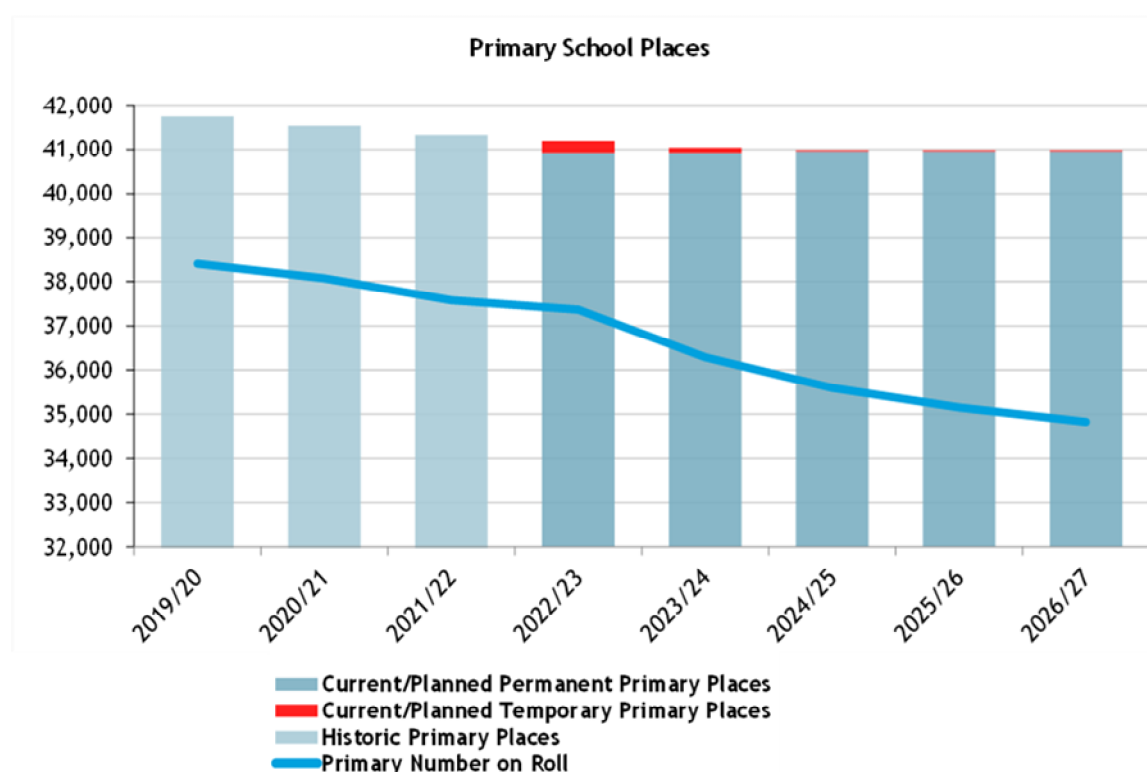
Although our overall population of under 18s is expected to increase slightly over the period 2023 - 2027, the highest rate of growth is expected in those aged 16 - 17, with an expected fall in numbers of children aged 4 - 10.

Age/year	2023	2026	% change 2023-2026	2027	2031	% change 2027-2031
0-3	19,650	20,150	2.5%	20,180	20,840	3.3%
4-10	39,190	38,870	-0.8%	38,770	39,390	1.6%
11-15	31,180	31,390	0.7%	31,160	30,600	-1.8%
16-17	12,280	12,870	4.8%	13,190	12,890	-2.3%

Source: ESCC population projections by age. Interim - April 2023, LDS-based, dwelling-led, numbers rounded to 10

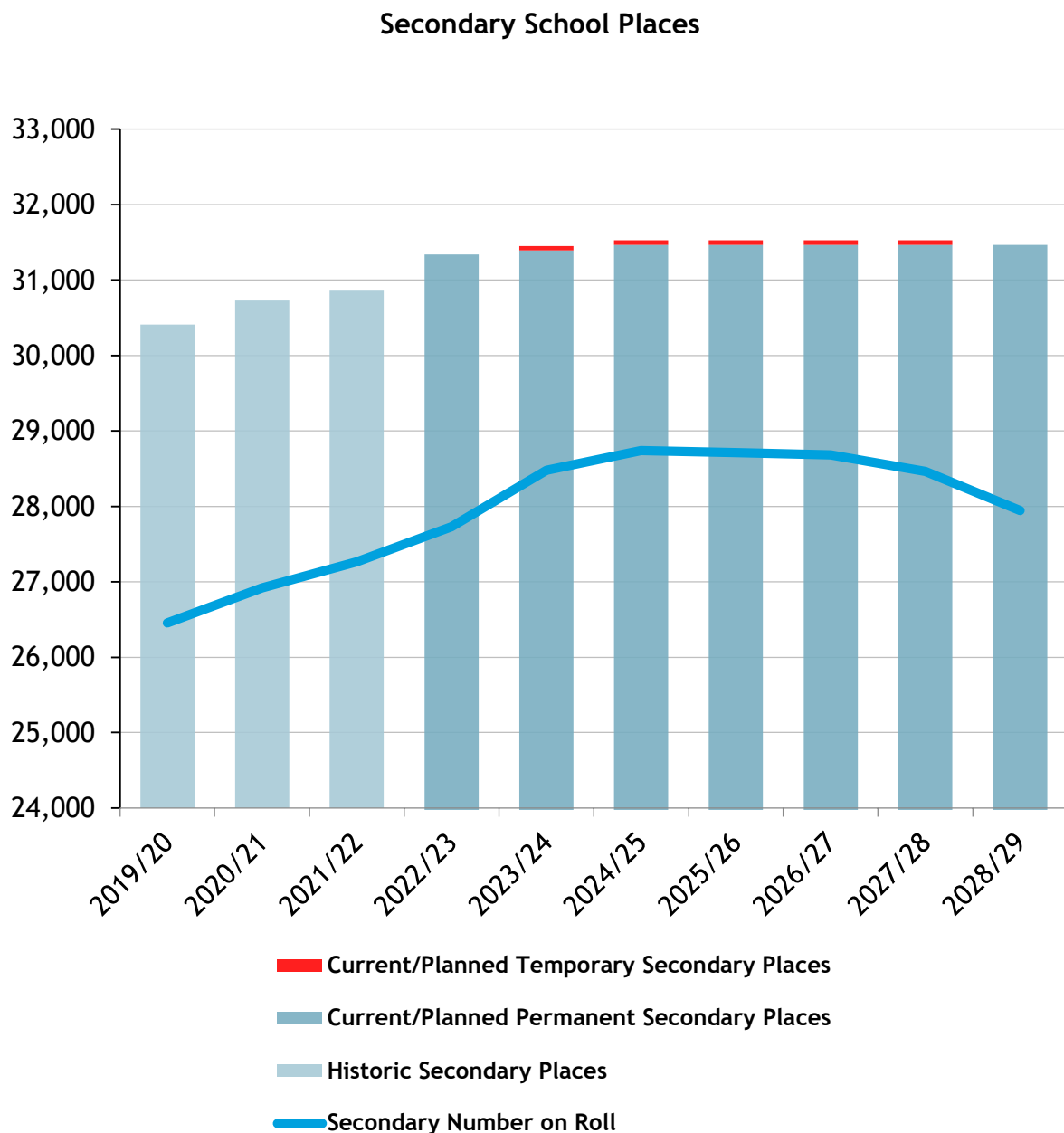
Note: Care should be taken when using the projected population figures above. Due to ONS revised mid-year population estimates not currently being available these are interim projections based on dwelling-led population projections. Please see the note under the Population section for further details.

The total numbers of pupils in primary schools peaked in 2018/19 and are now in decline. As a result the temporary additional capacity in schools that was put in place to accommodate the peak will be removed, leading to a net reduction in capacity of 240 places, between 2022/23 and 2026/27.



Source: ESCC Pupil Forecasting Model, May 2023

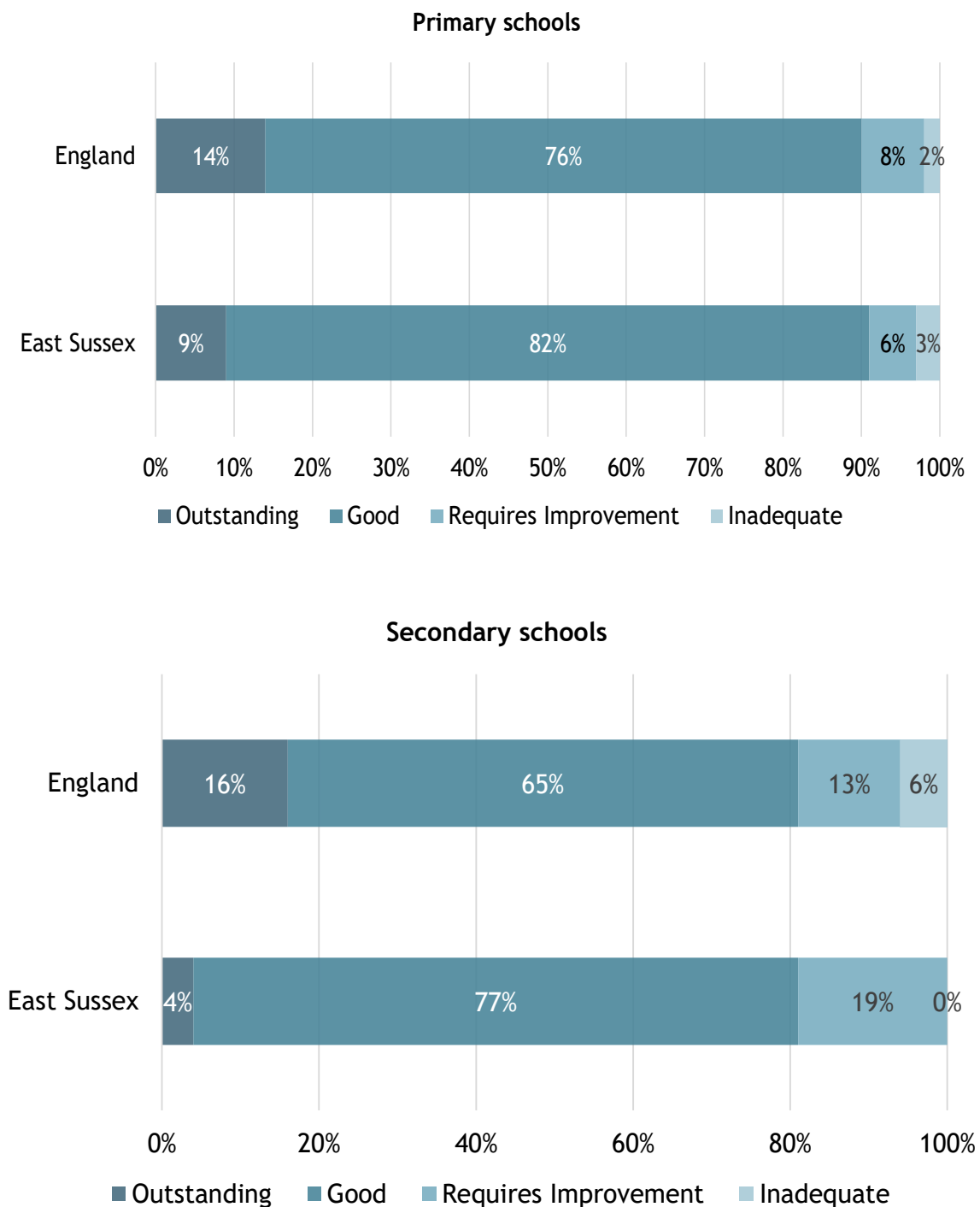
In contrast, secondary pupil numbers are expected to continue to increase and peak around 2024/25. 605 additional permanent places and 60 additional temporary places will be added between 2022/23 and 2024/25 to meet forecast demand in local areas.

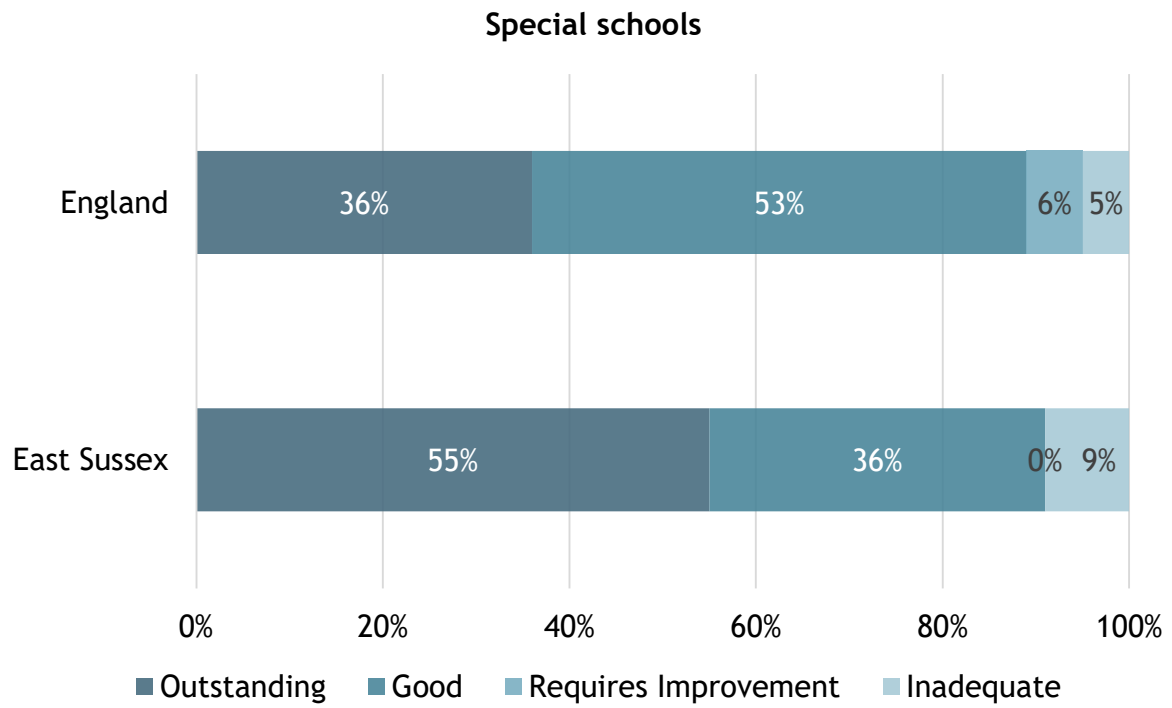


Source: ESCC Pupil Forecasting Model, May 2023

State funded schools, percentage overall effectiveness Ofsted 2021

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





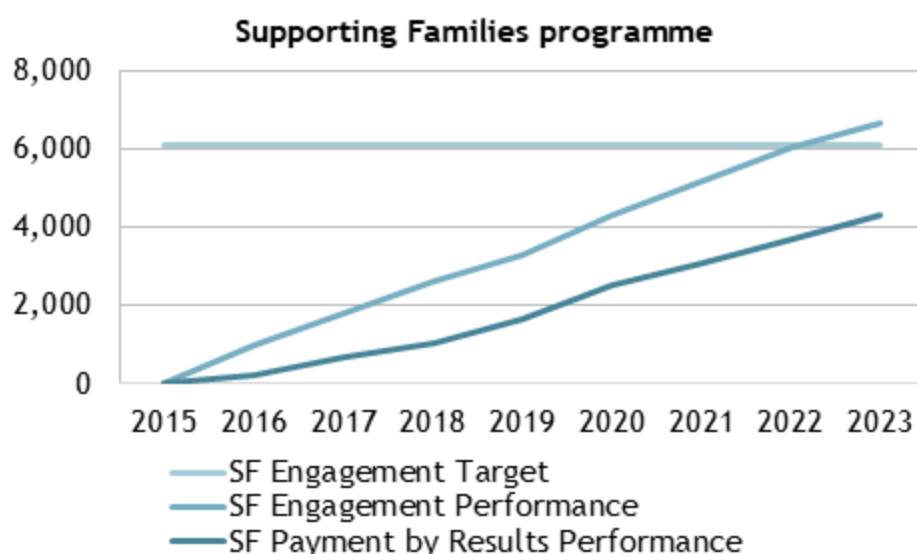
Children

Supporting Families

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

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

We receive payment from Government for each family that we help to achieve significant and sustained progress across each of the outcomes where they need support. By the end of 2022/23, 6,633 families had received or were receiving support and 4,276 had achieved Payment by Results outcomes.

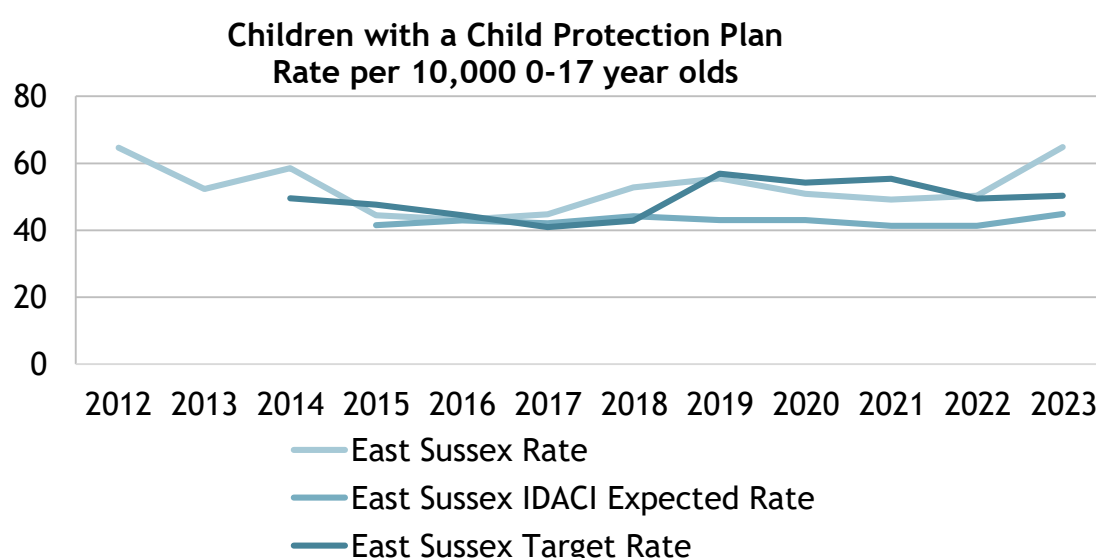


Source: ESCC Children's Services

Child Protection (CP) Plans

At the end of March 2023, the number of children with CP plans was 691, a rate of 64.8 per 10,000 children. This is above the expected rate benchmarked for child deprivation; the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI).

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

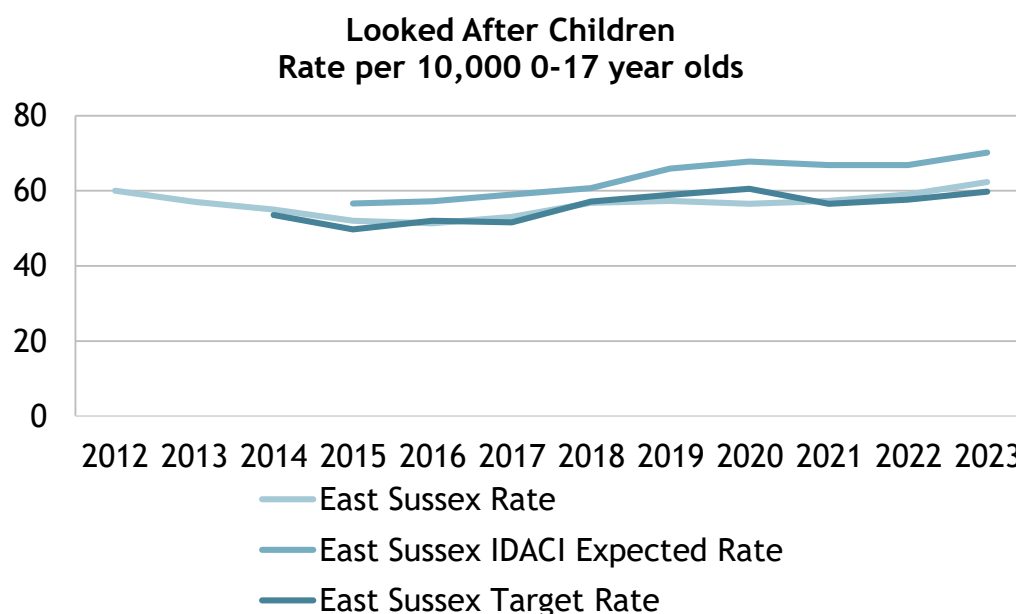


Source: ESCC Children's Services

Looked After Children

At the end of March 2023, the number of LAC was 664, a rate of 62.3 per 10,000 children. Of the 664 children, 73 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC), this group represented 25% of our new entrants to care in 2022-23.

Our strategy of using Early Help, Child in Need and CP plans to help families to stay together has enabled us to have a rate of Looked After Children (LAC) which is below the expected rate benchmarked for child deprivation.



Source: ESCC Children's Services

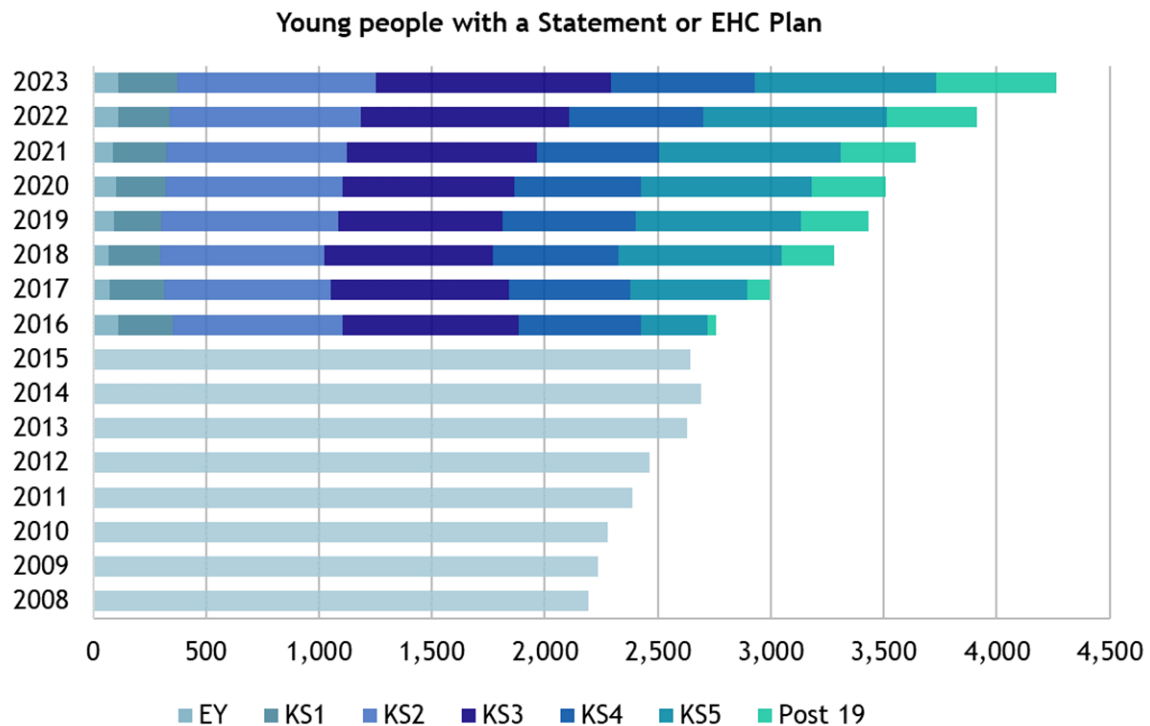
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

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

Over 40% of all children and young people aged 0-25 with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in East Sussex are placed in special schools which is over three percentage points higher than the England average. 47.8% of all new EHCPs were placed in mainstream schools, compared to 66.9% nationally. Council funded high-cost placements at Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools have increased significantly since 2015 and account for 9.8% of all EHCPs - greater than the England average of 6.1%.

EHCPs of SEND maintained by the Council increased by 87% from 2010 (2,280) to 2023 (4,266). Most of the increase since 2015 has been in the Key Stage 5 and Post 19 groups; this is predominantly due to young people retaining EHCPs Post-16.

The number of school-aged pupils with an EHCP is forecast to rise in East Sussex by 11.8% over the next three years, having increased by 11.6% in the last three years.



Source: ESCC Children's Social Care Department

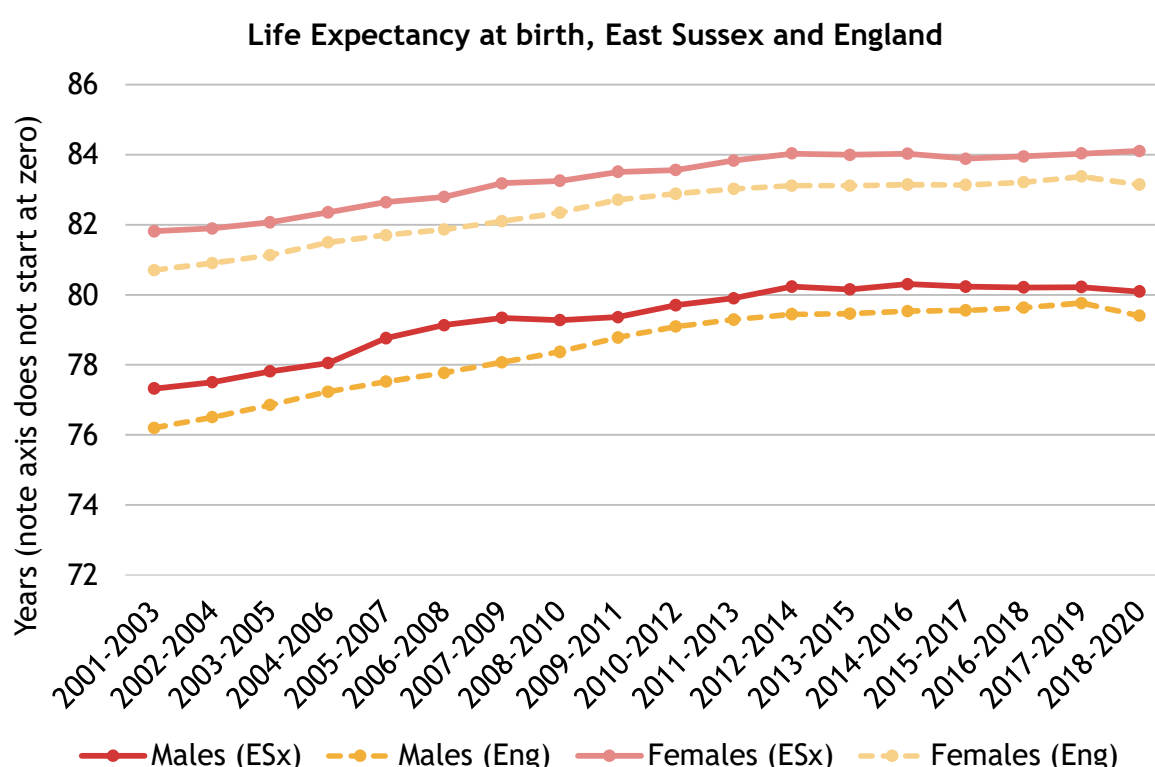
Note: Until Sep-14 a Statement of SEN could remain in place until the young person reached the age of 19. Since the SEND reforms were introduced from Sep-14 EHCPS can remain in place until the young person reaches the age of 25.

Source: ESCC Children's Services

Health

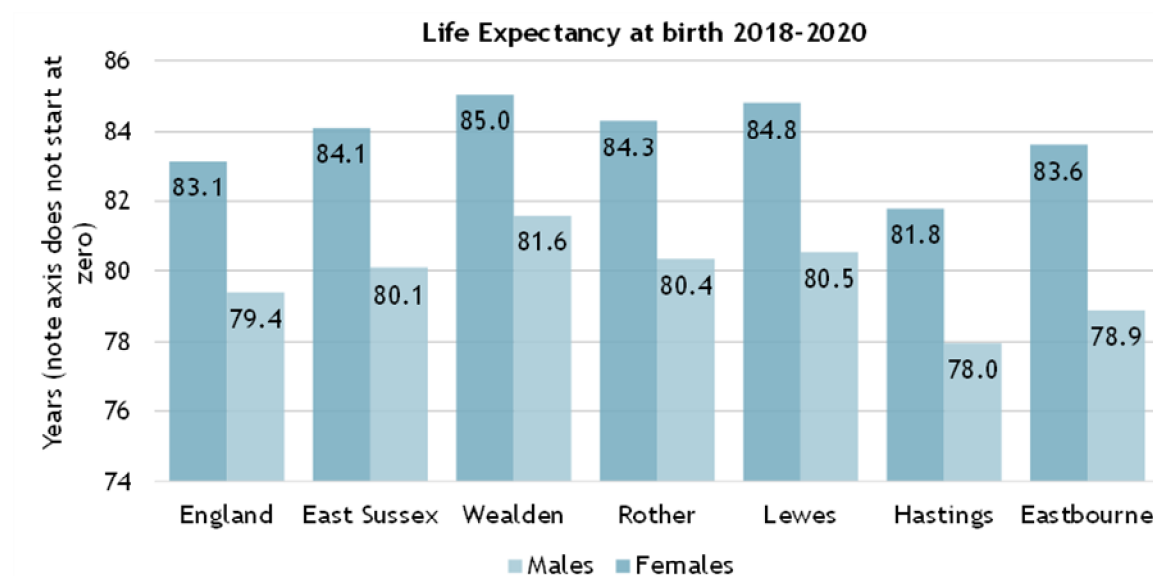
Life expectancy at birth

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



Source: ONS

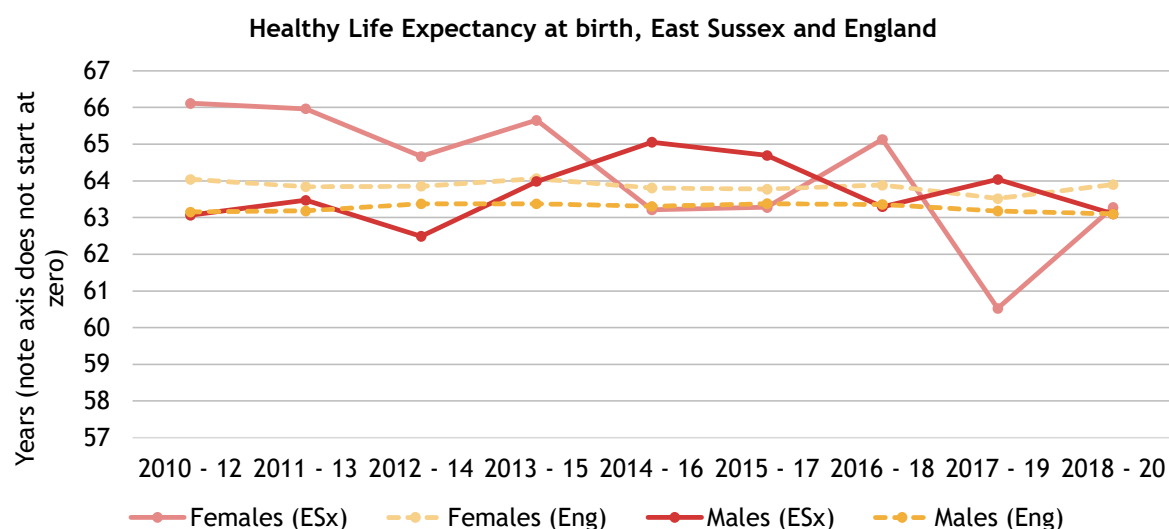
Wealden has the highest levels of life expectancy at birth for both men and women in the county. The lowest levels are in Hastings.



Source: ONS

Healthy Life Expectancy

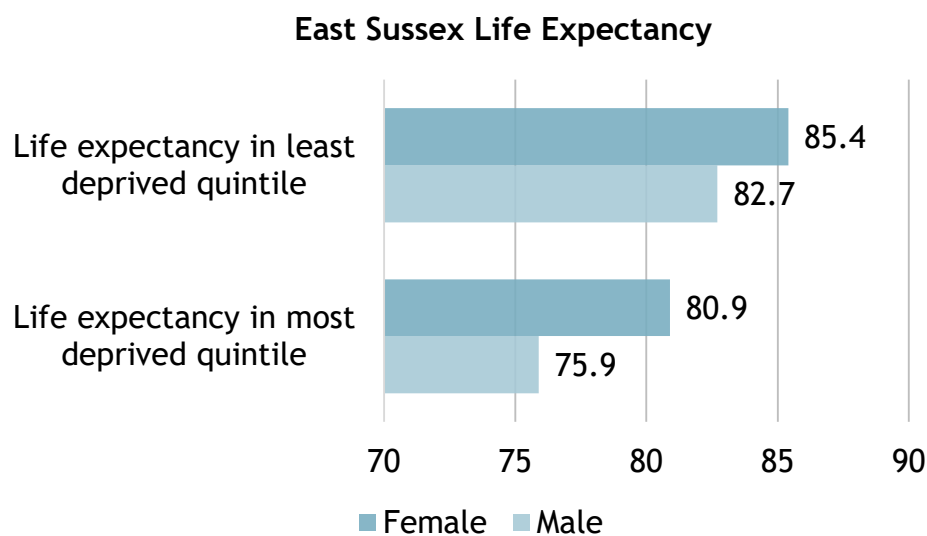
Healthy life expectancy is an estimate of the number of years lived in ‘very good’ or ‘good’ general health, based on how individuals perceive their general health. Healthy life expectancy figures in East Sussex have fluctuated significantly in recent periods. This is most likely due to the small sample size of the survey (Annual Population Survey) rather than actual changes in healthy life expectancy within the population.



Source: ONS

Deprivation and Life Expectancy

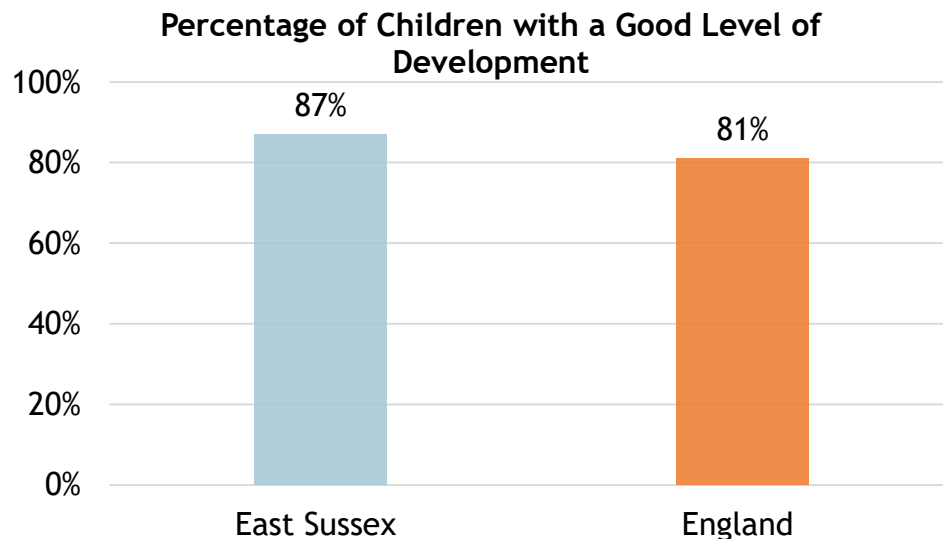
There is a gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas of East Sussex, with the biggest causes of death associated with these gaps being circulatory diseases, cancers, and respiratory diseases. Therefore, people in more deprived areas are dying from these causes, on average, at a younger age than in the least deprived areas. For females, this gap amounts to 4.5 years, while for males it is 6.8 years.



Source: Segment Tool (phe.gov.uk)

Child Development

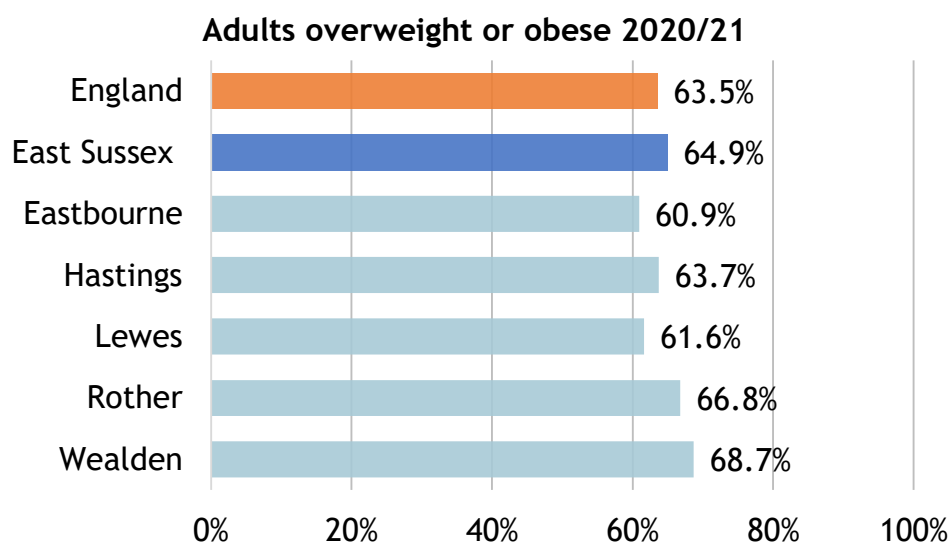
In 2021, 87% of 2-2 ½ year old children within East Sussex are achieving a good level of development, compared to the national average of 81%



Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Excess Weight

Wealden has the highest percentage of adults overweight or obese in East Sussex in 2020/21, at 69%. The lowest percentage in the county was Eastbourne, 61%

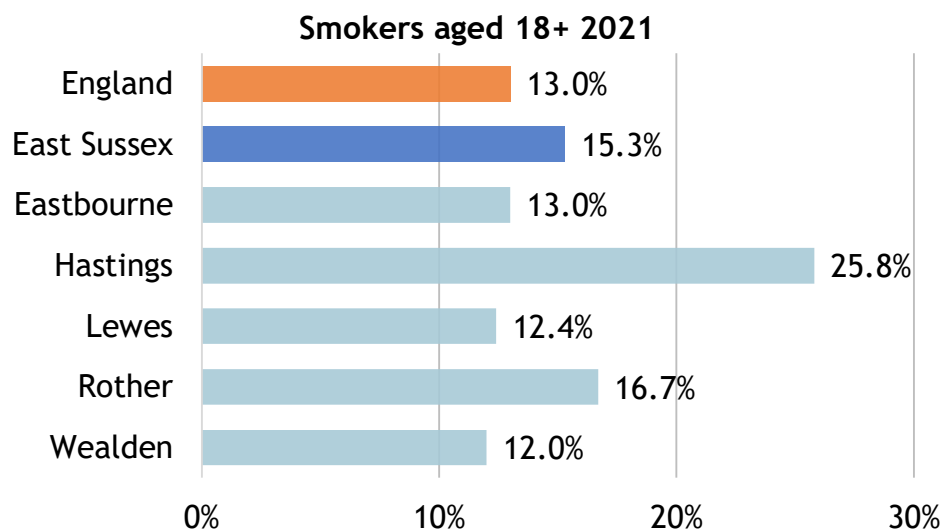


Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Prevalence of Smokers

Hastings has the highest prevalence of smoking in East Sussex in 2021 at almost

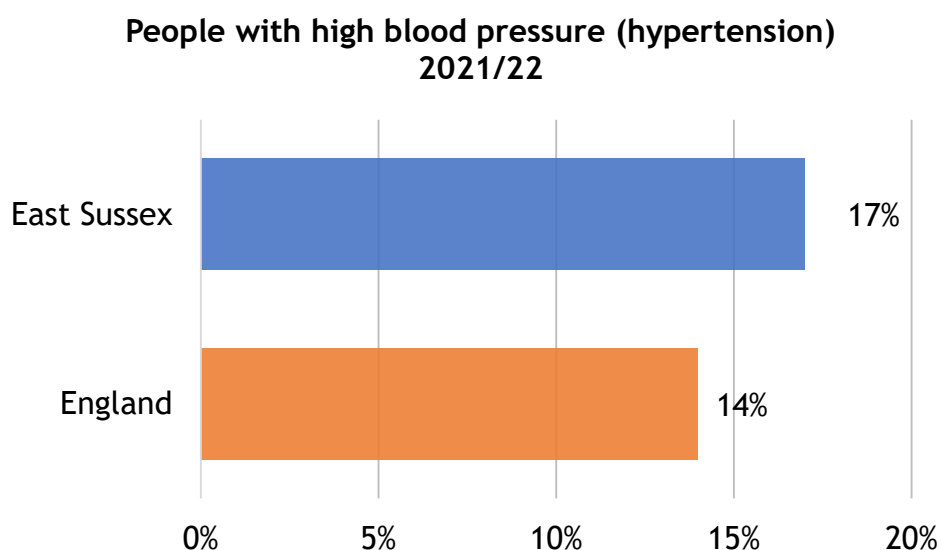
26%. The lowest prevalence is at Wealden with 12%.



Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Prevalence of Hypertension

East Sussex has a higher prevalence of diagnosed high blood pressure compared to England.



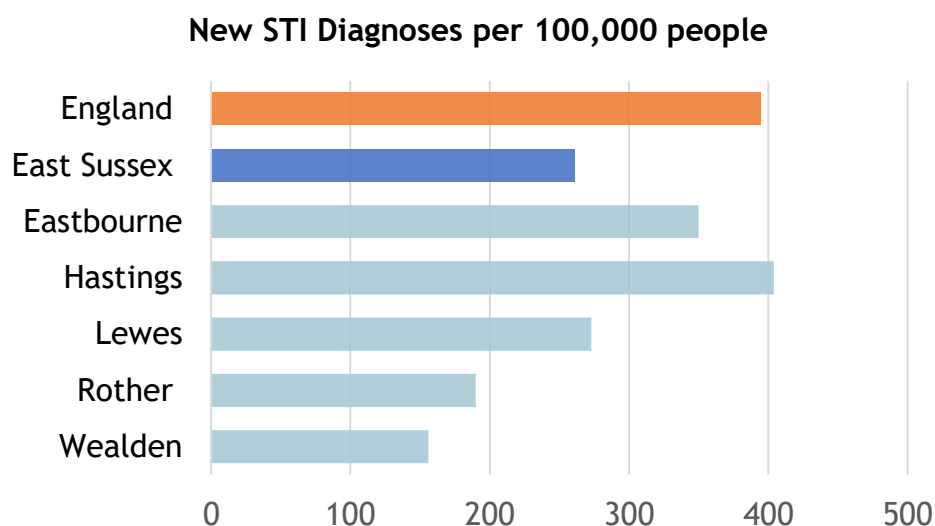
Public Health Outcomes Framework

Physical Activity

Almost 70% of people in East Sussex did 150 or more minutes of physical activity per week in 2020/21. Almost 20% did less than 30 minutes per week with the remaining 11% falling in between these categories (source: Public Health Outcomes Framework).

Sexual Health

East Sussex has fewer new Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) diagnoses per 100,000 population compared to England. Within the county rates are lower than for England except in Hastings which is similar to the national rate.



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

Mental health

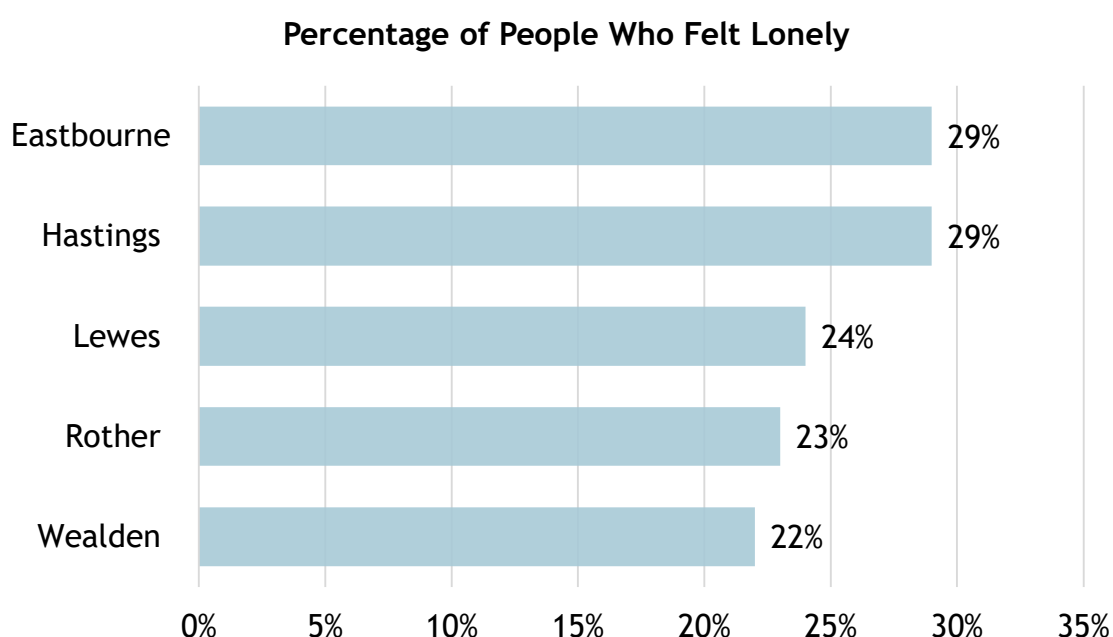
It is estimated that 1 in 6 people will have a mental health condition at any one time. Latest survey figures show a slightly higher percentage of adults in East Sussex reported high anxiety and low satisfaction with life compared to the national average.

Indicator (persons aged 16+ years)	East Sussex	England
Self reported low satisfaction with life	5.4%	4.4%
Self reported low worthwhile score	3.3%	3.4%
Self reported low happiness score	7.4%	7.7%
Self-reported high anxiety score	26.0%	22.3%

Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Loneliness

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



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

Data from the 2019 survey shows that feelings of loneliness are more prevalent among groups who are more likely to spend more time at home (e.g. due to mobility issues) workless residents (56% vs. 20% of those in work); those in poor health (55% vs. 18% of those in good health); those with a disability (44% vs. 19% of

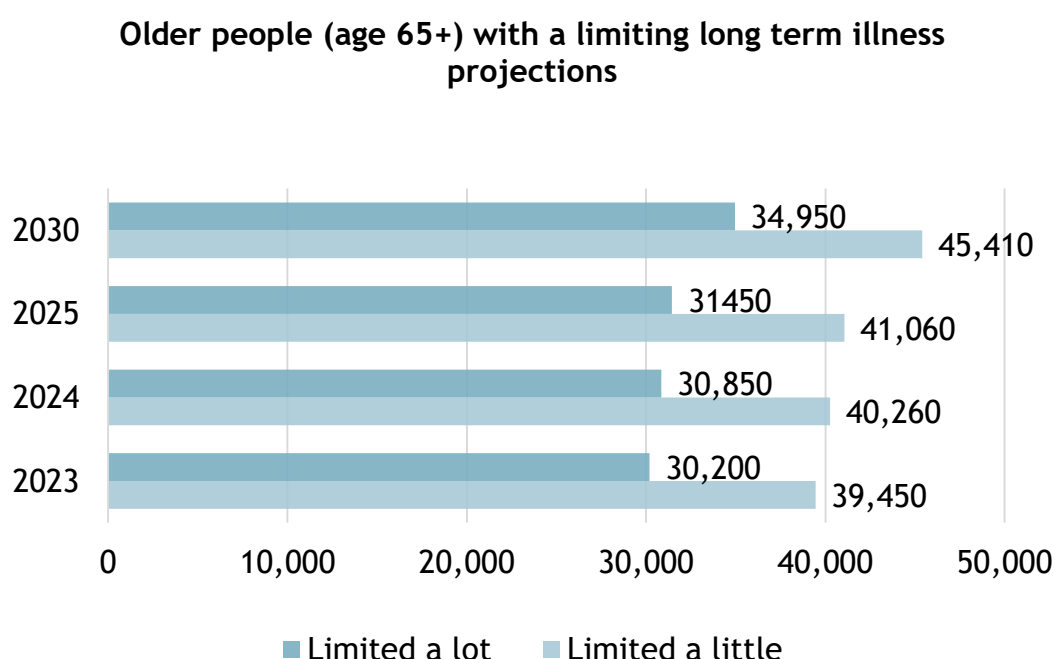
those without); single person households (38%) and single parents (47% vs. 25% overall). Other groups who are more likely to feel lonely include: social tenants (46%) and private renters (39% vs. 20% of owner occupiers); People with no qualifications (34% vs. 25% overall) and women (26% vs. 24% of men). At District level, those in Hastings and Eastbourne are more likely than average to feel lonely often or some of the time (both 29% vs. 25% overall). These Districts are more likely to be comprised of the groups listed above. Those living in Rother and Wealden are more likely to say they hardly ever/never feel this way (77% and 78% respectively).

Adults

Long Term Illness

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

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

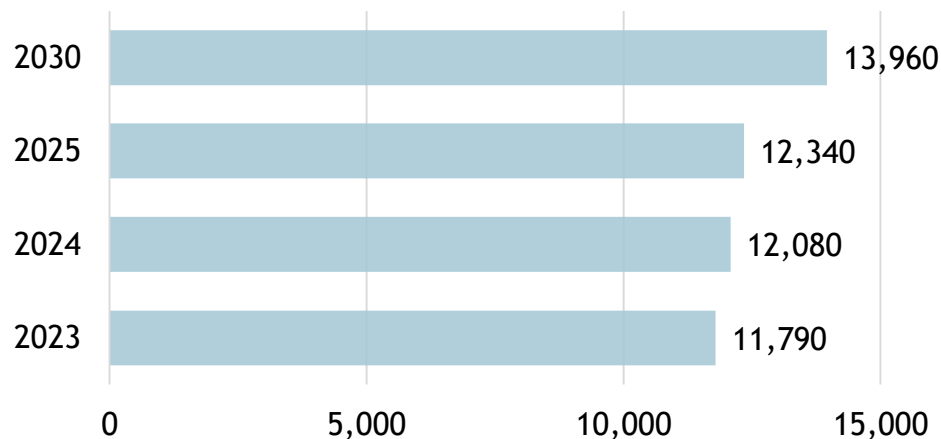


Source: POPPI. Note: The figures from POPPI are based on population projections produced before the latest population figures from the 2021 Census were available.

Dementia Projections

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

Older people (age 65+) with dementia projections

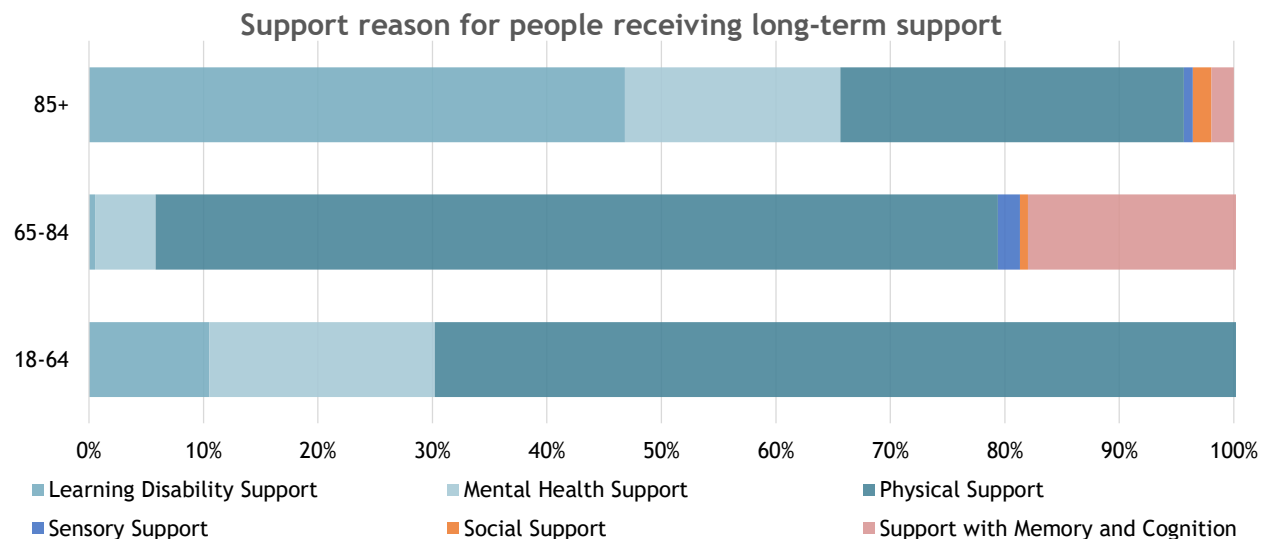


Source: POPPI. Note: The figures from POPPI are based on population projections produced before the latest population figures from the 2021 Census were available.

Reasons for Support

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

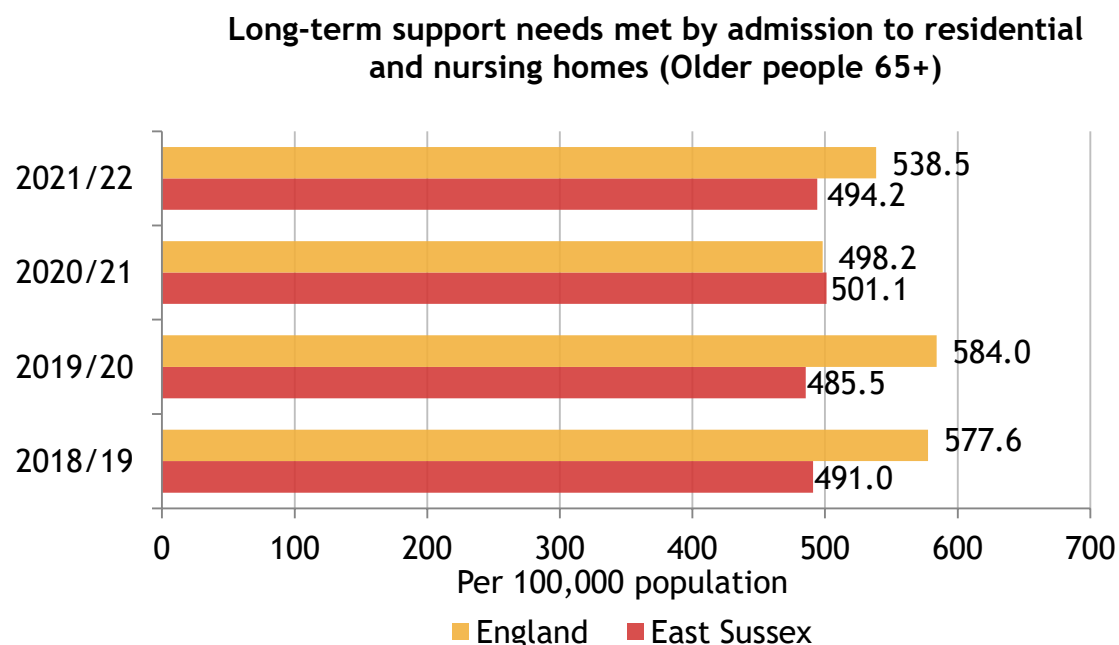
State of the County 2023: Focus on East Sussex



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

Community care and promoting independence

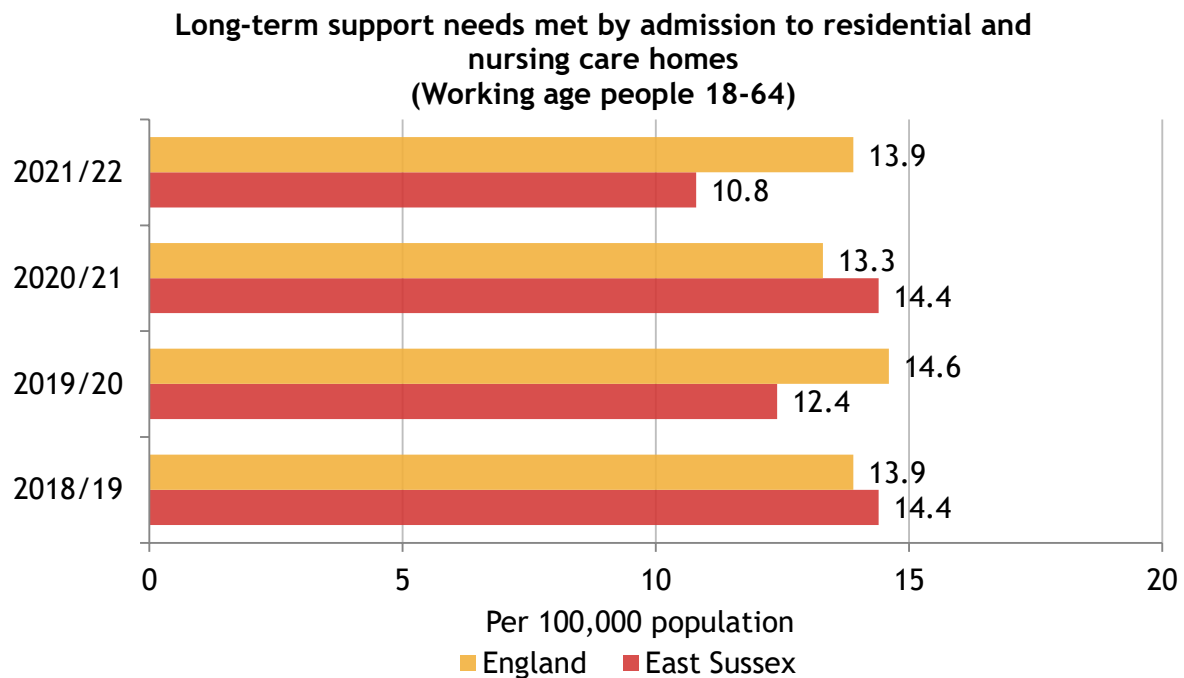
Permanent admissions of older people (age 65+) per 100,000 population slightly decreased in East Sussex in 2021/22.



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

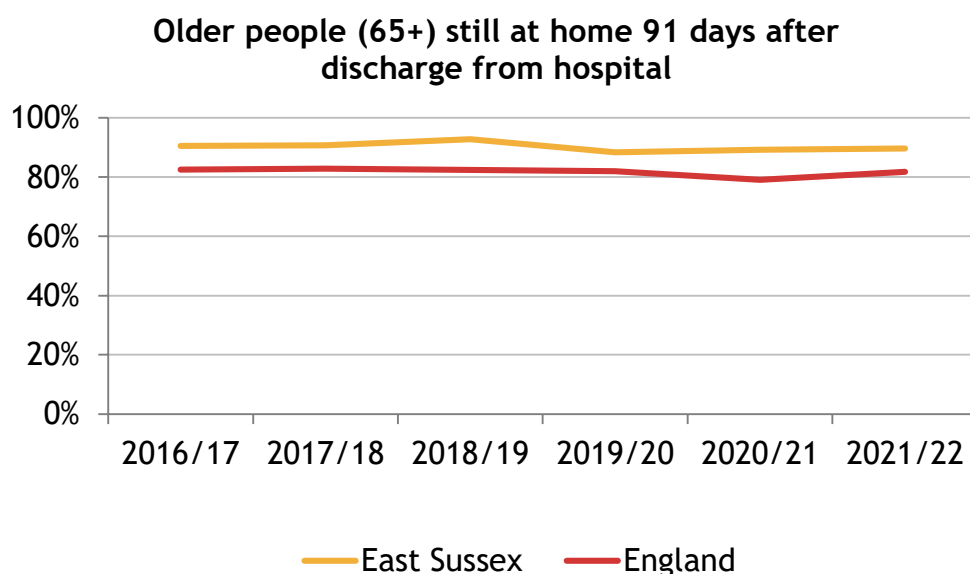
Permanent admissions of working age people (18-64) to long term residential care

decreased in East Sussex in 2021/22 were below the national rate by over 3%.



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

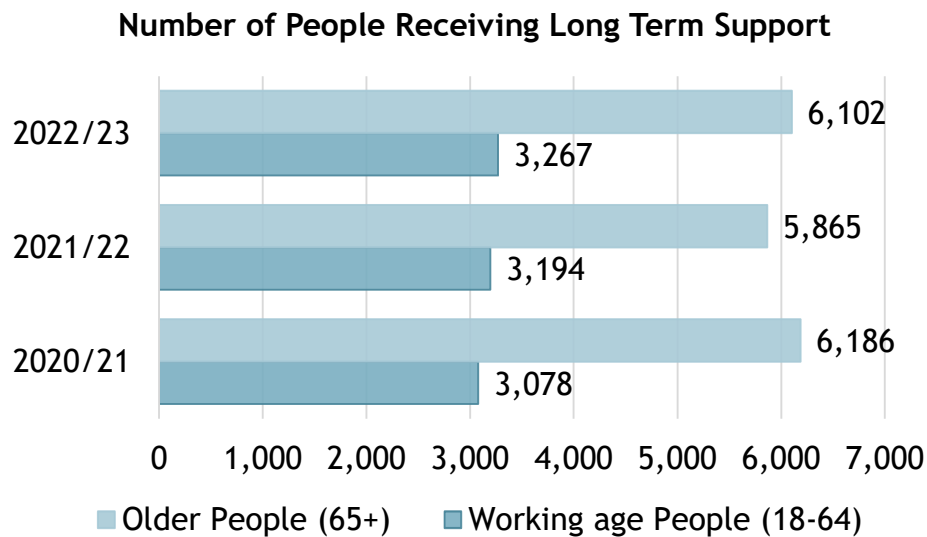
The proportion of older people (age 65+) still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services increased in 2021/22 to 89.7% and remains significantly above the national figure of 81.8%.



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

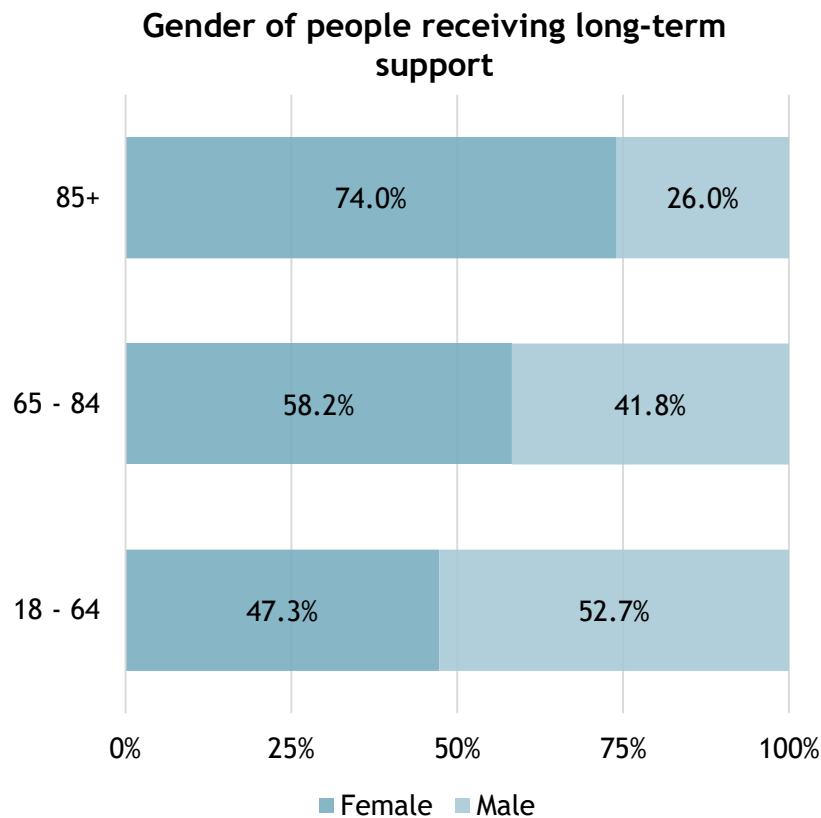
People receiving long term support

The total number of clients receiving Long Term support has increased by 3.3% in 2022/23 to 9,369.



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

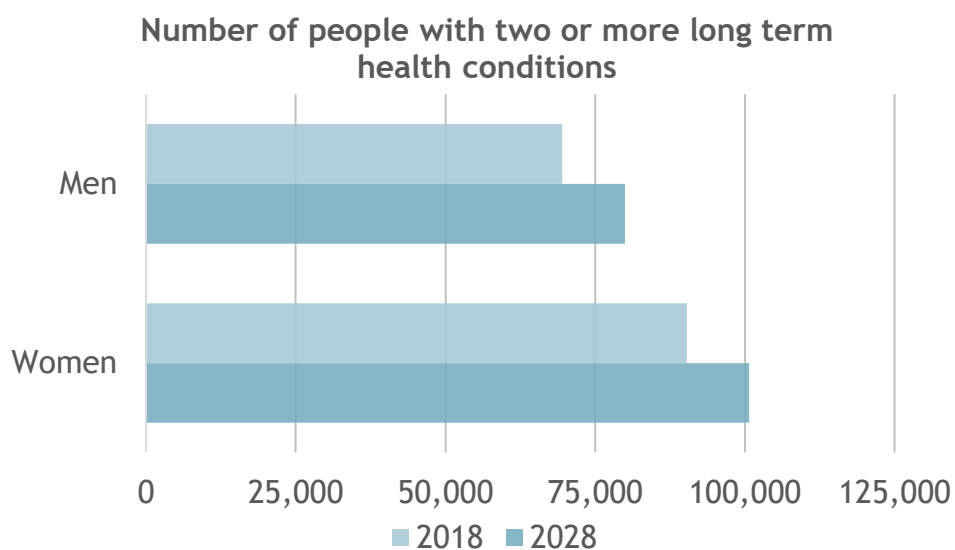
The percentage of females receiving long term support is higher than the number of males for older people, especially those above the age of 85. However, the percentage of males receiving long term support is slightly higher than females for the working age population.



Source: East Sussex SALT Returns

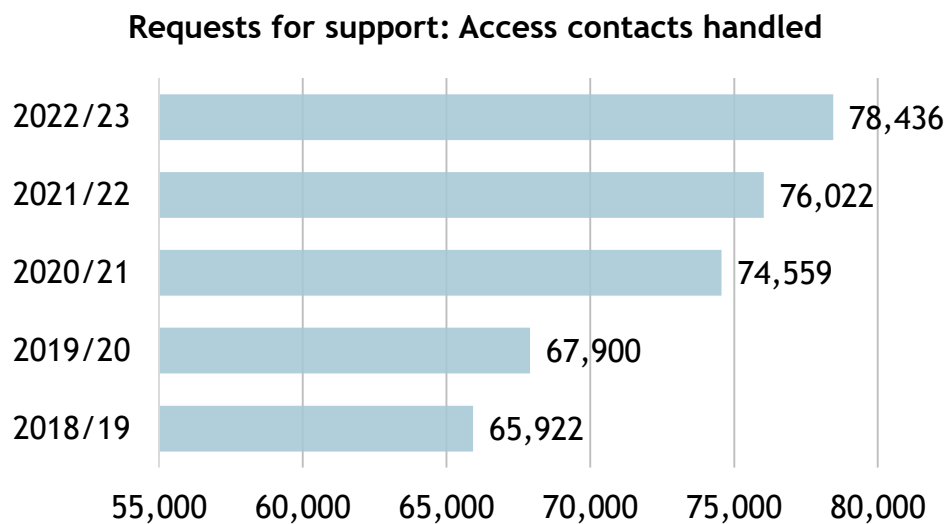
Complex needs

By 2028, around 20,000 more people in East Sussex will be living with two or more of these conditions, when compared with the needs of our population in 2018.



Access contacts

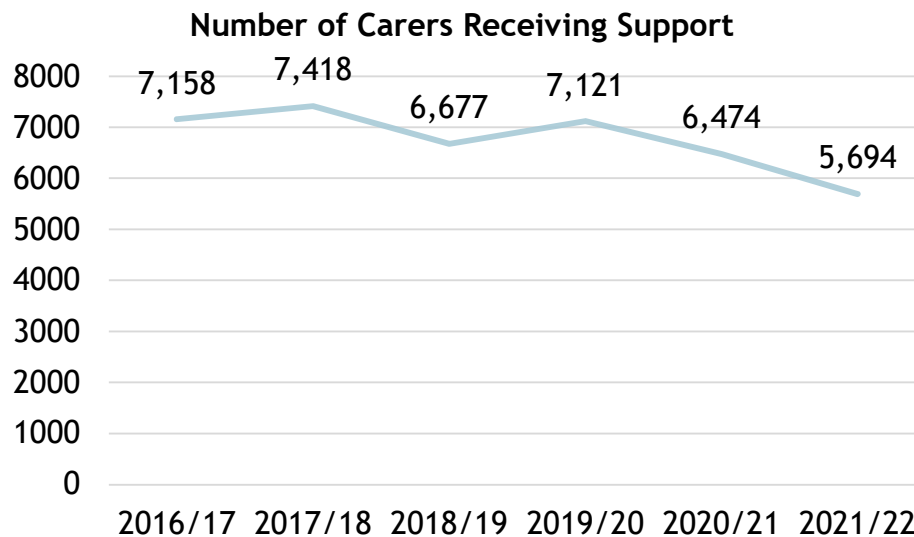
The Access team in Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC) handled 78,436 contacts in 2022/23, an increase of 2,414 (3%) compared to 2021/22.



Source: East Sussex Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC)

Carers receiving support

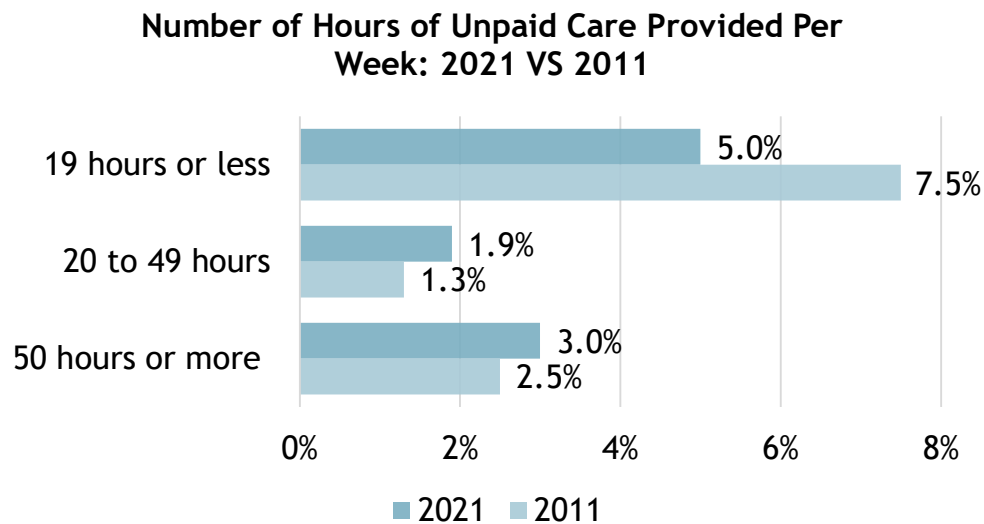
The total number of carers receiving support in East Sussex has decreased by 11.5% in 2021/22. This decrease is partially attributable to the impact of the pandemic, during which carers were less likely to contact Adult Social Care for help, and partially due to an increase in the number of carers being supported by Care for the Carers, a charity providing help, support, guidance and information to carers in East Sussex.



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

Unpaid Carers

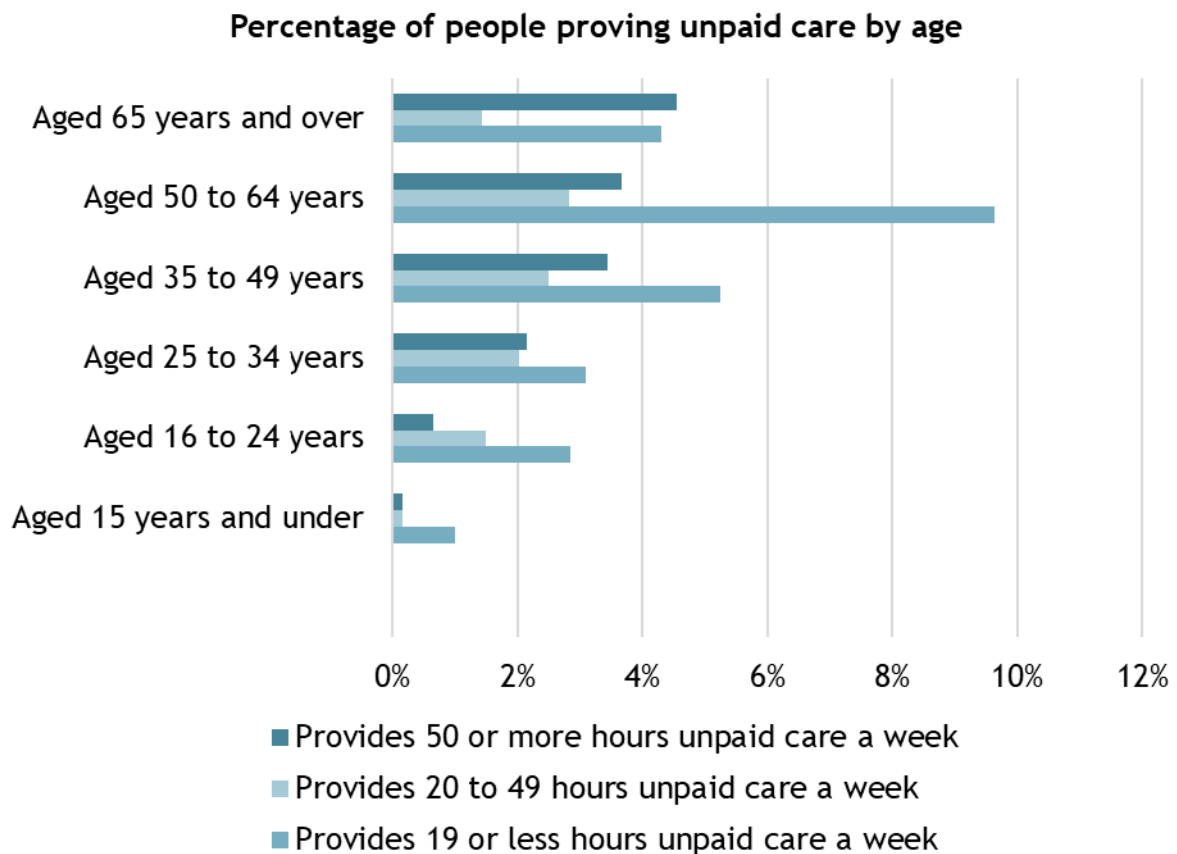
Data from the 2021 Census suggests that 9.9% of the population in East Sussex provides any form of unpaid care, compared to the national average of 8.8%. Compared to the 2011 census however, the proportion of unpaid carers has decreased by 1.8 percentage points within East Sussex. Furthermore, the proportion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



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

Source: ONS

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

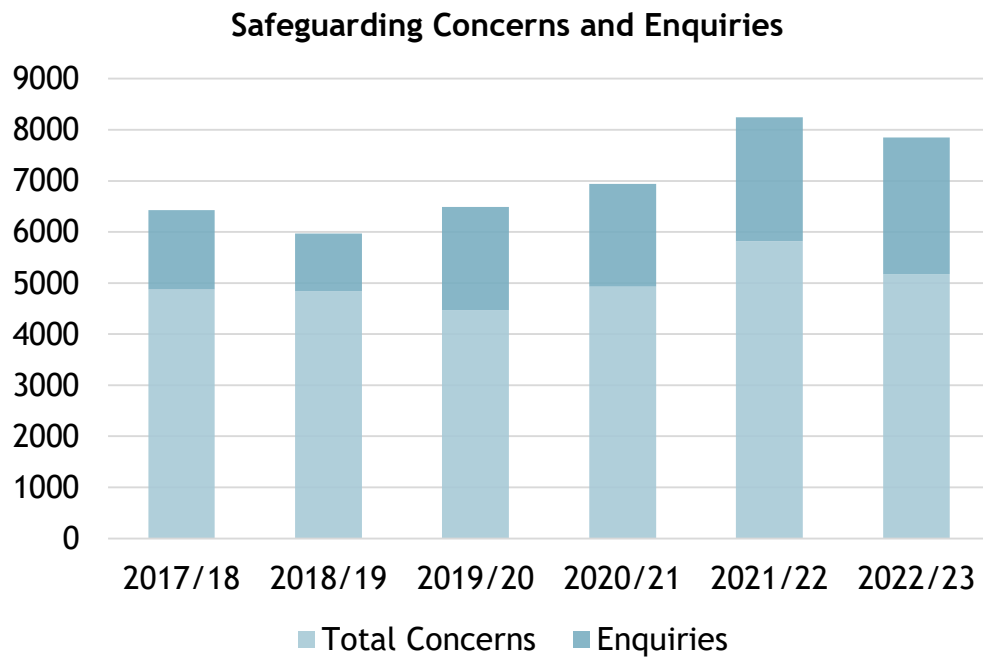


Note: Percentages are representative of the population aged 5 years or above.

Source: ONS

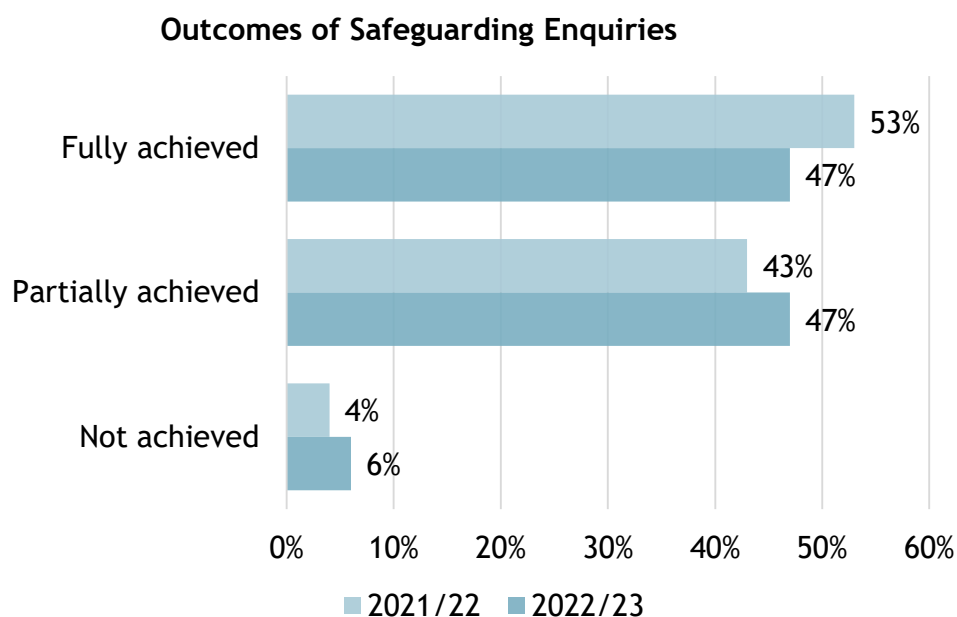
Safeguarding

The total number of safeguarding enquiries that commenced in 2022/23 was 2,680, an increase of 10.4% compared to 2,428 enquiries in 2021/22. The total number of safeguarding concerns received in 2022/23 was 5,171, a decrease of 11.1% compared to 5,819 in 2021/22.



Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health

In 2022/23, there was a decrease of six percentage points in the number of safeguarding enquiries fully achieved compared to the previous year. Furthermore, an increase of four percentage points was noted for enquiries which were partially achieved.



Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health

Data

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

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

Measure	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2021/22 England
Annual gross full-time earnings, median average (residence based)	£30,949	£31,145	£33,208
Percentage of working age population (16-64 year olds) in employment	75.0%	77.1%	75.4%
People claiming unemployment benefits (JSA and Universal Credit) percentage of population 16-64 year olds at March	4.1%	3.6% (2023)	3.8% (2023)
New business registration rate per 10,000 people over 16 (CY)	55.9 (2020)	51.4	71
Percentage of working age residents (16-64 year olds) with a level 4 or higher qualification (HNC, HND, degree etc.) (CY)	N/A	33.8%	37.1%
Percentage of working age residents (16-64 year olds) with no qualifications or qualified only to NVQ1 (CY)	N/A	10.6%	12.4%
Average Attainment 8 score per pupil state funded secondary schools (assessment/calculated grade)	45.3 2018/19	46.5	48.7
Average Progress 8 score for state funded secondary schools	-0.06 2018/19	-0.11	-0.03

Measure	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2021/22 England
Percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-5 pass in English and maths GCSEs (assessment/calculated grade)	49.3	46.3%	46.8%
Average point score (APS) per entry for level A levels (age 16-18)	39.26	36.19	38.87
Attainment of A level students (age 16-18) average point score (APS) per entry, best 3	38.73	34.81	39.01
Attainment of A level students (age 16-18) % achieving grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two are in facilitation subjects	20.2%	12.3%	23.2%
Rate per 10,000 (aged 0-17 population) of Looked After Children	57	61	70
Rate per 10,000 (aged 0-17 population) of children with a Child Protection Plan	49.2	50.1	42.1
Percentage of children who ceased to be looked after adopted during the year ending 31 March	16%	8%	10%
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children aged 0-14 years, rate per 10,000 resident population	99.8	107.6	84.3
Percentage of children aged 4-5 years with excess weight (overweight or obese) LA by postcode of child	23.0% 2019/20	19.8%	20.3%
Percentage of children aged 10-11 years with excess weight (overweight or obese) LA by postcode of child	32.0% 2019/20	32.8%	34.0%
Percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese	62.6% 2019/20	64.9%	63.5%
Proportion of people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital	89.2%	89.7%	81.8%

Measure	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2021/22 England
Long-term support needs of younger adults (aged 18-64) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population per year	14.4	10.8	13.9
Long-term support needs of older adults (aged 65 and over) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population per year	501.1	494.2	538.5
Proportion of older people aged 65 and over who received reablement services following discharge from hospital	2.0%	1.6%	2.8%
The outcome of short-term services: sequel to service: proportion of people who received short-term services during the year, where no further request was made for ongoing support or support of a lower level	89.0%	93.7%	77.6%
Emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 and over per 100,000	2,314	2,523	2,100
Suicide rate per 100,000 of population, three-year average	12.7 (2018-20)	12.1 (2019 - 2021)	10.4 (2019 - 2021)
Number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads (CY)	339 (2021)	374	N/A
New houses built, total completed / total affordable	1,549/ 290	1,606 / 350	N/A

National and Local Policy Outlook 2023

1. Introduction and Contents

1.1 This appendix provides an overview of the key developments in the national and local context that will influence and inform our future service and financial planning through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process for the 2024/25 financial year and beyond. It also provides an update on work to deliver the County Council's local priorities and summarises key strategic challenges for our services.

1.2 Recent developments in national policy and the Council's broader operating context have been significant and continue to evolve. In a speech delivered in January 2023, the Prime Minister outlined his Government's five main priorities, which were: halving inflation, growing the economy by creating better paid jobs, reducing national debt, cutting NHS waiting lists, and passing new laws to prevent small boat crossings and to remove anyone entering the country illegally. In addition to these priorities, the 'Levelling Up' agenda remains central to Government policy, aiming to address geographic disparities between places and regions in the UK. With a general election expected to be held at some point in 2024 (and no later than January 2025), there is uncertainty about the general direction of Government policy beyond this time and whether there is sufficient time for Government to implement all the reforms it intends to in the lifespan of the current Parliament. A King's Speech, expected in autumn 2023, will set out the planned legislative programme.

1.3 Within this broad policy agenda, Government is progressing a number of specific public service reforms that will affect the way we deliver Council services in future, each with associated risks and implications that we must understand, assess and respond to. These include: reforms to ensure the sustainability of Adult Social Care (ASC); the recently published national review of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs); proposed reforms to the children's social care system and market; changes to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) system; planning reforms being progressed in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill; the intended integration of Local Enterprise Partnership functions into local government; and a range of reforms continuing to emerge from the Environment Act 2021. Further information on these reforms and what they mean for East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is set out below.

1.4 Locally, significant work is taking place, as an organisation and with our partners, to respond to national developments, to progress our local priorities and to prepare for future challenges. Detail on this work is set out below, particularly in sections on our work with communities, to deliver transport improvements, to protect the environment and tackle climate change, and to drive sustainable economic growth.

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

Section 2 – Overall Context (pages 3-7)

- The national economic outlook (pg 3)
- Levelling Up – including devolution and the Office for Local Government (pg 4)
- Updated inspection regime (pg 6)
- Local Government finance outlook (pg 6)

Section 3 – Adult Social Care and Public Health (pages 7-12)

- Health and social care integration – including the Hewitt Review of Integrated Care Systems, local developments and hospital discharge (pg 7)
- National Adult Social Care reform - next steps (pg 10)
- Adult Social Care data (pg 10)
- ESCC Adult Social Care Strategy (pg 10)
- Market Sustainability (pg 11)
- Adult Social Care workforce challenges (pg 11)
- Local Public Health priorities – including health protection, recovery and renewal, creative health and suicide prevention (pg 11)

Section 4 – Children’s Services (pages 13-17)

- National reforms to children’s social care (pg 13)
- Service demand (pg 14)
- Local service developments – including Early Intervention, Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme and Family Safeguarding (pg 15)
- SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (pg 15)
- Schools policy (pg 16)
- Education recovery and supporting attainment (pg 16)
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing in schools (pg 17)
- Home to school transport (pg 17)

Section 5 – Migration (pages 17-20)

- Asylum dispersal – including full dispersal, streamlined asylum process, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and the National Transfer Scheme (pg 18)
- Refugee resettlement schemes – including Afghan resettlement schemes, visa schemes, Ukraine refugee response (pg 19)
- Future local support (pg 20)

Section 6 – Communities (pages 20-24)

- Financial Inclusion and Household Support Fund (pg 20)
- Community networks (pg 21)
- Community safety – including Community Safety Partnerships, anti social behaviour, Serious Violence Duty, modern slavery, human trafficking and preventing violent extremism, Violence Against Women and Girls, and drug and alcohol treatment work (pg 21)
- Trading Standards (pg 23)
- Local resilience arrangements (pg 23)
- National planning reforms - including infrastructure funding arrangements (pg 23)

Section 7 – Highways and Transport (pages 24-28)

- Highways maintenance (pg 24)
- Bus Service Improvement Plan (pg 25)
- Refresh of the Local Transport Plan (pg 25)
- Transport decarbonisation (pg 25)
- Active travel (pg 26)
- National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy local e-vehicle charging (pg 26)
- Road safety (pg 26)
- Transport for the South East Strategic Investment Plan (pg 27)
- Exceat Bridge replacement (pg 27)
- National Highways Programmes – A27 and A21 (pg 27)
- Rail developments (pg 28)

Section 8 – Economy (pages 28-31)

- Supporting the local economy – including new economic growth strategy (pg 28)
- Local Enterprise Partnerships (pg 29)
- National economic investment programmes – including UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Multiply programme and Levelling Up Fund (pg 29)
- Local work on, and national reforms to, skills provision (pg 30)
- Culture and tourism (pg 31)

Section 9 – Environment and Climate Change (pages 31-34)

- Climate change national policy context – including the ‘Mission Zero’ Independent Review of Government Net Zero Policy (pg 31)
- Local action on climate change (pg 32)
- Environment Act impacts - including Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Biodiversity, Environmental Improvement Plan and waste (pg 33)
- Flood risk management (pg 34)

Section 10 – Supporting Services (pages 34-37)

- The Modernising Back Office Systems programme (pg 35)
- Workforce challenges (pg 35)
- Property Asset Management (pg 36)
- Procurement Bill (pg 36)
- National audit issues (pg 36)
- Digital development (pg 37)

2. Overall Context

2.1 The following section provides an overview of the overall economic, fiscal and policy context the County Council is operating and planning within, and details of new arrangements for assessing the performance of local authority services.

National economic outlook

2.2 The national economic outlook remains uncertain. In its March 2023 economic forecast, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) set out that the near-term economic downturn was expected to be shorter and shallower, medium-term output to be higher and the budget deficit lower, than at its previous forecast in November 2023. The International Monetary Fund has upgraded its forecasts for UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP), now projecting growth of 0.4% in 2023 and 1.0% in 2024. Wholesale gas prices have more than halved over the past six months and are expected to fall further, and the OBR now predicts that Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation will fall sharply to 2.9% by the end of the year. However, despite these positive developments, the economy still faces significant challenges. Inflation remains high, with CPI at 8.7% in the 12 months leading up to April 2023, which represented the first time the rate fell below 10% since August 2022. Inflation continues to fall by less than expected as falling gas prices are offset by rises in food prices, which on average are 19.1% higher than in April 2022. Inflation levels continue to be impacted by global supply chain issues, worsened by the ongoing war in Ukraine. In response to high inflation the Bank of England raised interest rates by a further 0.25 percentage points in May to 4.5%, with further rises considered likely.

2.3 High levels of inflation are driving historic falls in real household disposable income which, in March 2023, the OBR predicted would fall by a cumulative 5.7% over the two financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24, resulting in the increased cost of living being experienced by residents and businesses. In light of these pressures, the Government has announced a number of measures to support people with the rising cost of living. This includes £1bn to facilitate the extension of the Household Support Fund (to 31 March 2024);

additional payments of £900 paid to those on means-tested benefits, £300 to pensioner households and £150 to people on disability benefits; keeping the triple lock on state pensions; increasing the National Living Wage to £10.42 for over 23s from April 2023 and raising benefits payments by 10.1% in April, in line with inflation.

2.4 Further support was announced at the Spring Budget on 15 March 2023. These measures included extending the Energy Price Guarantee for an additional three months (April to June 2023), extending the temporary 5p fuel duty cut for an additional 12 months (until March 2024) and cancelling the planned increase in line with inflation for 2023-24, £100m to support charities and community organisations helping vulnerable people, and over £60m to support public swimming pools in England with rising energy costs.

2.5 Alongside this, the Government announced measures to help grow the UK economy to support higher paid jobs, increase living standards and strengthen public finances, including:

- Introducing a Universal Support programme to match people with disabilities and long-term sickness with jobs and provide support and training to help them succeed.
- Increasing Work Coach support and work search requirements for those claiming Universal Credit and strengthening support for claimants who are carers of children.
- Abolishing the Lifetime Allowance charge on private pensions.
- Expanding childcare support to help parents return to the workforce, including plans to provide 30 hours a week of free childcare for 38 weeks a year, for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years and funding to substantially uplift the hourly rate paid to providers to deliver the existing free hours offers in England.
- Creating 12 Investment Zones across the UK to drive business investment and Levelling Up, each backed with £80m over five years including generous tax incentives.

2.6 Data on the East Sussex economy, cost of living and labour market are set out in Appendix 1 – Focus on East Sussex. Output of the East Sussex economy remains below the national average; Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour in East Sussex (a measure of the goods or services produced in an area per hour worked in that area) was 23.2% below the England level in 2020 (£29.41 per hour, against £38.29 per hour in England). The unemployment rate for March 2023 was 3.6% for East Sussex, slightly lower than the national average of 3.8%, but above the regional average of 2.9%. The number of people claiming unemployment related benefits was down 14.2% since March 2022, but still remains 23.8% higher than in March 2020, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. In March 2023, the youth unemployment rate (those 18-24 claiming unemployment benefits) was 5.8%, which was slightly lower than in March 2022 (6.2%), but still higher than the England rate of 4.9%, and above pre-pandemic levels. Further information on the national labour market picture and recruitment and retention challenges this presents for ESCC are set out at 10.5-10.8.

Levelling Up

2.7 The Levelling Up agenda, which aims to address disparities across the UK in economic prosperity and general standards of health and quality of life, remains important to the UK Government's agenda.

2.8 To help deliver on this agenda, the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#) is being progressed through Parliament and aims to make provision for the setting of national Levelling Up missions and reporting on progress in delivering them. It is currently at the committee stage in the House of Lords. The Bill contains a number of key reforms, including: a system of brownfield-first development; the introduction of Spatial Development Strategies; reduced 'top down' housing targets; streamlining the local plan process; the new Infrastructure Levy, and measures to deliver on plans for increased devolution.

2.9 To support the Levelling Up agenda, the Government has made funding available to local authorities through a number of competitive bidding streams (discussed in more detail in the economy section of this appendix). This includes the second round of the Levelling Up Fund, which has been released and included funding for Rother District Council, with a third round due to follow. An additional £211m has been announced for 16 regeneration projects across England (none in East Sussex).

2.10 Twenty areas have also been invited to form Levelling Up Partnerships with the Government, including Hastings and Rother. Areas selected were based on analysis in the Levelling Up White Paper which considered places in England against four key metrics: the percentage of adults with Level 3+ qualifications; Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour worked; median gross weekly pay; and healthy life expectancy. These partnerships are intended to deliver £400m in Government funding to drive 'bespoke, place-based regeneration' and build on previous partnerships between the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Blackpool, Grimsby in north-east Lincolnshire, and Blyth in Northumberland.

Devolution

2.11 The Government has maintained its commitment to agreeing a devolution deal with any area of the country that wants one by 2030. To that end, so far six deals have been published outlining the details of agreements between DLUHC and areas named within the nine County Deal pilot devolution areas announced in the [Levelling Up White Paper](#). None of the deals have yet been ratified, and all are subject to a public consultation, agreement through the relevant councils' governance process, as well as parliamentary approval of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

2.12 Deals that have been published to date are largely at Level 3 of the devolution framework set out in the Levelling Up White Paper, which involves adopting a directly elected mayor or leader. The Government continues to prioritise negotiations with areas pursuing deals of this kind. In addition to these deals, the Government has announced two 'trailblazer' deeper devolution deals with the combined authorities of Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. These are set to serve as the blueprint for deeper devolution across the rest of England and, if agreed, intend to transfer additional powers and funding to help local leaders deliver on their priorities. Each will get new funding settlements agreed at the next Spending Review, to invest in local priorities.

2.13 To support current and future devolution arrangements, DLUHC recently published the first edition of the English Devolution Accountability Framework, which will form part of the broader Local Government Accountability Framework. It sets out how those who lead or work for institutions with devolved powers will be held accountable in between public elections. The framework is structured around three key forms of accountability: local scrutiny/checks and balances; accountability to the public and accountability to the UK Government. It will also establish a new scrutiny protocol to embed a sustained culture of scrutiny into these institutions.

2.14 An announcement on the next wave of deals is awaited. ESCC will continue to monitor how these deals progress to better understand the opportunities and risks associated with them.

Office for Local Government

2.15 In June 2022, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced the creation of a new body: the Office for Local Government (Oflog). This followed plans outlined in the Levelling Up White Paper to introduce a new independent data body to improve transparency of local government performance. In January 2023, Lord Morse was appointed as Interim Chair of Oflog.

2.16 This new body will assemble, analyse, and publish data relating to local government performance with the aim of increasing transparency, fostering accountability and using data to improve local government performance and to help identify problems at an earlier stage. It will form a part of the broader Local Government Accountability Framework, which will continue to develop throughout 2023. The first phase of Oflog's development will focus on four policy areas: adult social care, adult skills, waste management and reserves. A policy document will be published imminently to provide further information on the development of Oflog.

Updated inspection regime

2.17 Over the last year there have been a number of changes to inspection regimes for local authority provided services. This includes new powers for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to assess local authority Adult Social Care (ASC) services on how they are discharging their duties under the Care Act 2014. Up to 25 councils will be assessed in 2023/24 with a target of all ASC departments being assessed within two years. Each ASC department will receive a rating, with the timing of individual authorities' inspections currently unknown. In anticipation of the new inspection process, we are making preparations, using the [CQC assessment framework](#) as a useful way to identify our strengths and areas for development.

2.18 Additionally, in November 2022, Ofsted and CQC launched a new joint framework for inspecting provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) which took effect from January 2023. The new regime focuses on the effectiveness of a local area partnership's arrangements and whether these are delivering improved outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND. It will also include an evaluation of commissioning and oversight arrangements for children and young people in alternative provision, something the previous regime did not do. The new regime does not use the standard Ofsted grading system, and areas will instead receive one of three possible broader ratings.

2.19 ESCC can expect to receive inspections under these and ongoing regimes, including a local area SEND inspection and a joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) for Children's Services in 2023, and an ASC inspection within the next two years. In addition, we also expect there to be an inspection of our youth justice service in 2023.

Local government finance outlook

2.20 The outlook for local government funding remains unclear. Funding that ESCC will receive from central Government between 2024/25 – 2026/27 is yet to be confirmed and, while the provisional Local Government Finance 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.

2.21 The 2022 Autumn Statement announced several measures to support social care and hospital discharge, including the continuation of the Services Grant and the delayed rollout of Adult Social Care charging reform from October 2023 to October 2025. Whilst this enables us to maintain a degree of financial stability for 2023/24, demand and costs will continue to grow. There will be additional expectations arising from national reforms in this and other areas, bringing new and sustained financial and service pressures which will impact on our medium term financial plan (MTFP) and ability to meet needs.

2.22 The ongoing delay to the Fair Funding Review has meant greater uncertainty about the shape of any long-term sustainable settlement for local authorities. At a local level, the potential impact the economic downturn and increased cost of living will have on the collection of business rates and council tax respectively has yet to be fully assessed. There

is a risk that the extension of Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme discounts by our district and borough councils will see reductions in the collection of Council Tax. 2022/23 has seen the level of debt rise, particularly for Adult Social Care contributions, and it is expected that this trend will continue into 2023/24.

2.23 For the Capital Programme, there remain challenges in the supply chain for materials and price pressures within existing contracts, the impact of which is exacerbated by delays to delivery. Further significant pressures may materialise as new schemes are developed or go out to tender. The current technical consultation on the Infrastructure Levy has added a level of uncertainty to the value of future developer contributions, which remain an important funding stream for the programme. The Capital Programme holds a contingency of £7.5m to meet these uncertainties.

2.24 While the Council's reserves have been applied and maintained within a robust reserve policy, the level of reserves held by local government is coming under increasing levels of scrutiny. It is likely that national government will require us to review our reserves strategy, with a potential to constrain our use of our reserves in maintaining a stable financial position.

3. Adult Social Care and Public Health

3.1 Whilst major reforms to adult social care (ASC) charging (reported at State of the County 2022) have been postponed until 2025, other national reforms are being progressed and teams across the Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) department are continuing to respond to a range of national and local developments which are set out in more detail in the following sections. These include working with health partners to progress local health and social care integration and implementing initiatives to facilitate hospital discharge. Work to deliver local priorities and respond to strategic challenges, including market sustainability, workforce challenges, supporting the resilience of local communities and addressing threats to health is also covered here.

Health and Social Care Integration

National Health and Social Care Integration

3.2 Nationally, new Integrated Care System (ICS) arrangements came into effect from July 2022. The [Hewitt Review](#) was commissioned by Government later in 2022 to consider how the oversight and governance of ICSs can best enable them to succeed, balancing greater autonomy and robust accountability, with a particular focus on real time data shared digitally with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and on the availability and use of data across the health and care system for transparency and improvement.

3.3 The report, published in April 2023, called for the following:

- A shift from focusing on illness to promoting health;
- Delivering on the promise of systems;
- Unlocking the potential of primary and social care and building a sustainable, skilled workforce; and
- Resetting our approach to finance to embed change.

3.4 The role of local government and social care in the changes proposed is recognised throughout the report, starting with “the need to work on the basis of subsidiarity, through strong, empowered Place Partnerships and neighbourhood teams.” Key messages with particular relevance to ASCH include:

- A reset of national/local relationships with a shift away from a culture of top-down performance management to one of learning and improvement.

- The need for social care to be better understood within the NHS.
- The need for a national conversation about what we expect from our care, and what we are willing to pay for it.
- The vital role for ICSs in supporting a more sustainable social care sector at system level, by taking an integrated approach to reducing the gap between demand for care and available supply, for example by encouraging the adoption of personalised, preventative and proactive models of care.
- Broadening ICS collaboration beyond members of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to encompass wider partners, including social care providers, the VCSE sector, and the independent healthcare sector to ensure they are fully engaged and their contribution better understood within the NHS.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) should include within its assessment of ICS maturity how different partners, including local government, assess their engagement and relationships within the ICS itself, including the extent to which both public health expertise and the social care provider sector are involved in the leadership of the system.
- Using the proposed data framework for adult social care outlined in 'Care data matters: a roadmap for better data for adult social care' setting out what data the sector needs to collect, the purpose of those collections and the standard to which it is collected.
- The necessary focus on reducing elective care waits should be matched by an equal focus on reducing waiting times for acute mental health treatment.
- There should be an acceleration and expansion of existing work on understanding both need and the fair cost of care, before the proposed cap on adult social care costs is implemented.
- Recognition that children's social care is linked to both adult social care and the wider health system and suggestion that the work to understand need and the cost of care should be expanded to capture working age adults and potentially children's social care.
- That the Public Health grant should be increased.

3.5 The Government published a joint response to the 36 Hewitt Review recommendations and a report of parliament's Health and Social Care Committee (HSCC) inquiry on ICSs on 14 June. Key points from the Government's response include:

- Agreement with the proposed reduction of the number of overarching national targets imposed on ICSs, which will empower them to focus on priorities in their local areas.
- Development of a shared outcomes toolkit that will support places to develop their own robust shared outcomes, with priorities and metrics that are directly linked to the needs of their populations.
- Recognition of the importance of prevention to reducing overall demand on services, and that over time the focus of the NHS should increasingly shift towards implementing interventions to help improve prevention and support healthier life expectancy, rather than imposing a national expectation of a shift in spending in line with the 1% (at least) over the next five years recommended by the Hewitt Review.
- Confirmation that the future assessments of the effectiveness of ICS partnership working across the ICS will be undertaken by the CQC.

The response will contribute to shaping the future direction of ICS development nationally and locally and we will work with local ICS partners to review it in more detail and assess implications for the local system.

Local Health and Social Care Integration

3.6 ESCC has a key role in the new statutory arrangements for the local NHS that commenced on 1 July 2022, with representation on the NHS Sussex ICB and the Sussex Health and Care Assembly (the Sussex Assembly). The Sussex Assembly is the statutory

joint committee between ESCC, West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and NHS Sussex.

3.7 In 2022/23 the new [joint Integrated Care Strategy 'Improving Lives Together'](#) was produced by the Sussex Assembly based on the population Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) for the three ICS 'Places' - East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove - and building on the priorities set out in the three Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) Strategies covering each area. This is in line with previous agreements about the role and primacy of 'Place' and Place-based health and care partnerships within the Sussex ICS, and follows national guidance and Hewitt Review recommendations concerning the principle of subsidiarity.

3.8 The Integrated Care Strategy builds on the shared priorities for our East Sussex population set out in the [East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) (2022 – 2027) covering health outcomes improvement, children and young people, mental health and integrated community health, care and wellbeing. It describes an overarching ambition for a healthier future for everyone in Sussex over the next five years, across the following priorities:

- Growing and supporting our Sussex health and care workforce
- Improving the use of digital technology and information
- Maximising the benefit of partnership working; building on the work currently underway and through developing integrated approaches to community teams and partnerships in Places and neighbourhoods.

3.9 A five-year Shared Delivery Plan (SDP) is being brought together to support the strategy, following national guidance issued by NHS England. Following consideration by each local authority, HWB and NHS Sussex, a full finalised Plan will be submitted to NHSE by 30 June 2023 covering year 1 (2023/24) and the high-level milestones for years 2-5 (2024/25 – 2027/28). This will cover existing delivery priorities and high level milestones for ongoing shared programmes of work as well as new delivery priorities in the following areas:

- Accelerating health outcomes improvement, specifically focussed on cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, mental health and frailty/healthy ageing.
- Our model for delivering integrated health, care and wellbeing in communities.

Ongoing implementation of the strategy will be overseen at ICS level by the Sussex Assembly and at place level by each HWB.

Hospital Discharge

3.10 Successful utilisation of the additional £500m Government Social Care Discharge Fund, and other rapid improvement work over winter to help discharge patients safely from hospital and into onward care as fast as possible, led to a successful Sussex ICS bid to be one of six 'Discharge Frontrunners' nationally. This project will, in 2023/24, trial innovative long-term solutions to free up hospital beds and make sure patients get the right care at the right time, which could be rolled out across the NHS if successful. Each Discharge Frontrunner will receive specialist and tailored support, which will include evaluation, economic analysis, demand and capacity planning, leadership, and service design, as well as the ability to learn best practice from other areas.

3.11 In April 2023 the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund 2023/24 was announced. Local authorities must use this funding to build additional ASC and community-based reablement capacity to reduce hospital discharge delays through delivering sustainable improvements to services for individuals. Partners at Place level will finalise plans for use of this funding by the end of June 2023.

National Adult Social Care Reform – Next Steps

3.12 In April 2023 Government restated its committed to the 10-year vision for Adult Social care set out in the [People at the Heart of Care](#) white paper by publishing '[Next steps to put People at the Heart of Care](#)'. This plan sets out how it proposes to build on work to ensure Care (ASC) is of outstanding quality, personalised and accessible. It details how £700 million will be spent to continue transformation of the ASC system in England, including investment in:

- improved access to care and support
- recognising skills for careers in care
- driving digitisation and technology adoption
- data and local authority oversight
- support to enable people to remain independent at home
- encouraging innovation and improvement
- joining up services to support people and carers

Together, these measures aim to put people at the heart of social care and form the next step towards Government's 10-year reform vision.

Alongside the plan Government also:

- launched a call for evidence for the care workforce pathway
- published the Better Care Fund policy framework 2023 to 2025
- published guidance and conditions for the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF)
- provided £27 million to local authorities through a grant to streamline local authority adult social care assessment processes
- launched an expression of interest for year 2 funding of the Adult Social Care Technology Fund

3.13 Further detail on local work to support care market sustainability and address ASC workforce challenges is outlined below.

Adult Social Care data

3.14 '[Care data matters: a roadmap for better data for adult social care](#)', published in February 2023, sets out the Government's roadmap for improving how ASC data in England is collected, shared and analysed, building on the commitments made in the Health and Social Care data strategy, [Data Saves Lives](#) and the ASC reform White Paper, People at the Heart of Care. The roadmap is published in draft, and views are currently being sought from those involved in the delivery and commissioning of care, unpaid carers, clients, and members of the public. Based on this feedback, which ESCC will contribute to, the final version of the roadmap will be published at the end of 2023.

ESCC Strategy for Adult Social Care

3.15 Together with our residents and partners, we have developed an [Adult Social Care Strategy](#) for the county. Specific to East Sussex, and informed by wide engagement, the strategy provides a person-centred framework which gives direction for a range of stakeholders. It will help people know what to expect from ASC services and support, and identifies six priorities:

1. The right support, in the right place, at the right time
2. Information and communication about care and support
3. Cost of living and cost of care, now and in the future
4. A suitable home
5. Personal connections with others
6. Group activities, hobbies and volunteering

3.16 The strategy, to be launched in summer 2023, includes 14 'We will' statements and summarises how those working within and alongside ASC will respond to the priorities of local people. Once launched, these 'We will' statements will be converted into a detailed delivery plan which, in turn, will inform the department's core policies and practice. Alongside this, working with partners and other service providers to help residents (including those not receiving services) to share their experiences of these priorities, we will also adapt the way feedback is gathered from people receiving adult social care services so that it aligns with the six priorities.

Market Sustainability

3.17 The sustainability of the care market continues to be a significant issue both nationally and locally. Announced by Government at the Autumn Statement in November 2022, the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund is intended to support local authorities to make tangible improvements to adult social care services, to build capacity and improve market sustainability. This reflects local authorities' duty, under section 5 of the Care Act 2014, to promote the efficient and effective operation of the market for adult care and support as a whole. Government considers that three vital target areas underpin the overarching objective of building capacity and improving market sustainability. These are:

- increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers in local areas;
- increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention; and
- reducing adult social care waiting times.

3.18 Locally a range of pressures are impacting on care market sustainability. National and international economic conditions have increased the cost of providing services and delays to major national reform programmes have led to uncertainty. The increase in the National Living Wage from April 2023, whilst welcome particularly in light of workforce shortages, also presents a cost pressure for many care providers. The ASC Market Support Team continues to work closely with local providers, the CQC and NHS to support and strengthen the independent care and support market, improve and sustain quality improvements, prevent business failure or service deterioration and identify and address business continuity and sustainability concerns. This supportive partnership approach has been successful in helping to ensure overall quality provision within the county.

ASC Workforce Challenges

3.19 Local and national recruitment continues to be a challenge across the ASC sector which has a significant impact on independent provider services as well as ESCC teams. To address this ESCC has established a three year ASCH workforce programme with six areas of focus: strategic workforce planning; recruitment; retention; enhancing the wellbeing of the workforce; leadership and management and building and enhancing social justice in the workforce.

Local Public Health priorities

3.20 A new Public Health Board is in place with representation from all parts of the Council and the NHS Sussex ICB. The Public Health Board will ensure that priorities to tackle health inequalities are aligned across the Sussex Health and Care Partnership (SHCP).

Health protection and addressing threats to health

3.21 Maximising our health protection expertise and impact to protect health in a wide range of settings is vital. This includes launching our new health protection strategy that sets out our broad priorities now that we have moved beyond Covid-19. The strategy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the local authority, NHS, UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and other key partners involved in health protection, and how the system fits together locally. It demonstrates a joined-up, multi-agency approach to health protection, focusing on

minimising health inequalities and the impacts of the wider determinants of health. It states key indicators of success and outlines categories for health protection action into the life course approach.

Recovery and Renewal

3.22 Covid-19 has exacerbated existing health disparities for many and along with current economic conditions, results in even greater challenges in addressing the wider determinants of health. Work with communities and system partners to mitigate the impacts of Covid continues, applying lessons learned on what worked well for communities and co-producing solutions to longstanding underlying causes of health disparities.

3.23 We will continue to develop plans to address the mental and emotional health and wellbeing of all affected groups. This includes building on the Making it Happen Programme which works with residents in East Sussex who want to build on the positive things that exist in their neighbourhood. We will also progress the Connected People and Places project and the recommendation to establish a 'stewardship approach' to tackling loneliness. This encompasses a collaborative approach to the design and commissioning of a programme of work with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and other partner agencies.

3.24 The use of research and developing evidence is core to Public Health, and this is being strengthened to address inequalities and support community recovery locally. Public Health has responded to the National Institute for Health Research's call for Health Determinants Research Collaborative funding to create innovative research collaborations between local government and the academic sector that focus on improving the wider determinants, or drivers, of health. This aims to maximise impact on established and persistent causes of health inequalities that affect coastal and rural communities in East Sussex. Should the East Sussex proposal progress to stage two of the process during the summer the outcome of the funding bid will be completed in December 2023. If unsuccessful the department will explore how elements of the proposal could be embedded.

Creative Health

3.25 The National Centre for Creative Health and the [All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#) is currently undertaking a Creative Health Review which will highlight the potential for creative health to help tackle pressing issues in health and social care, including health inequalities and the additional challenges we face as we recover from Covid-19. Locally, within the NHS and social care, there is growing recognition of the important role that creative health can play in supporting our health and wellbeing.

3.26 A Creating Healthier Lives – Arts in Public Health workstream is being developed locally to sustain, improve and prevent ill health and promote wellbeing through arts, creativity, and culture. The plan will link in with the [East Sussex Cultural Strategy](#) and support community recovery and renewal. A position paper introducing the work will be published later in 2023, outlining our statement of intent and commitment to developing a strategic plan that works for everyone across East Sussex.

Suicide prevention

3.27 Public Health led on the creation and monitoring of the East Sussex suicide and self-harm prevention plan. This is co-ordinated through a strategy group and broader multi-agency network group. Preventative approaches to the ongoing significant challenge of reducing deaths at places of high frequency is led by the Coastal Suicide Prevention Group. A new Pan-Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategy will be published early summer 2023, which will outline projects best delivered through collaboration between the three local authority areas, such as real time surveillance, communications, and the involvement of people with lived experience. Local plans in East Sussex will be developed subsequently during the summer months.

4. Children's Services

4.1 Major national policy reviews relating to Children's Services have been published in recent months, including the Government's response to national reviews of children's social care and the children's social care market. The Government has also released its Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan, as well as announcing that it no longer intends to bring forward the Schools Bill in the current Parliament. This section also summarises priority focus areas for Children's Services locally, including implementation of Family Hubs, a Family Safeguarding model and our local SEND strategy. In addition, there is information on demand-led service pressures and the impact these are having, work with schools to improve post-pandemic educational recovery, attendance and mental health and emotional wellbeing, and increase in demand for home to school transport.

National reforms to Children's Social Care

4.2 In February 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) published its response to three reports: the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review on the deaths of Star Hobson and Arthur Labinjo-Hughes, and the Competition and Market Authority Children's Social Care Market study. The [DfE's response](#) included an initial implementation strategy and consultation on its proposals, together with a wide range of policy commitments and the announcement of £200m of additional investment over the next two years. The strategy is focused on phase one of the Government's reforms, up to the end of the Spending Review period in March 2025.

4.3 The strategy commits to resetting children's social care to ensure that love and stable relationships are at the heart of the work done by children's social care. It is focused around the following six key pillars, with each pillar having detailed proposals:

- Family Help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families;
- A decisive multi-agency child protection system;
- Unlocking the potential of family networks;
- Putting love, relationships and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care;
- A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one;
- A system that continuously learns and improves, and makes better use of evidence and data.

4.4 It also outlines proposals for Regional Care Cooperatives (RCCs) to address the significant national sufficiency challenges in placements for cared for children. The DfE intends to work with local authorities, health, justice and the third sector to co-design and co-create RCCs in two areas, with a view to further roll out after testing and evaluation with the sector.

4.6 A 'Children's Social Care National Framework' is being developed as part of the implementation strategy. This will describe the outcomes that local authorities should aim to achieve for children, young people and families, with associated performance indicators. The strategy also includes a new five year post-qualifying 'Early Career Framework', which will be aligned to the Children's Social Care National Framework and is intended to include the skills and knowledge needed to deliver on the strategy's key priorities such as increased use of kinship care and loving relationships for children in care.

4.7 Given concerns about the impact of the use of agency social workers in terms of both cost and workforce sufficiency, the Government is consulting on whether to set national rules on agency usage. It is proposed to establish price rates for agency workers and a requirement that agency social workers have five years post qualifying experience.

4.8 The initial £200m financial commitment associated with strategy implementation includes a number of pathfinder and pilot programmes, such as £45m to deliver the Families First for Children Pathfinder, and £30m to increase the number of local authorities with family finding, befriending and mentoring programmes. Before the next Spending Review period the DfE intends to update, publish and consult on a new formula for children and young people's services funding.

4.9 ESCC agrees that reform and investment is required to ensure the right systems are in place to not only protect children, but to help them and their families to thrive. The focus on earlier help, support that builds on the strengths within a child's wider family network, and a greater ambition for our children in care, and care experienced by young people, align with the priorities and practice of ESCC Children's Services. The Council has recently responded to the three DfE consultations.

Service Demand

4.10 Over recent years Children's Services both nationally and locally have experienced a significant increase in demand. Local Government Association (LGA) analysis shows that since 2010 there has been a 53% increase in the number of children subject to child protection planning and a 28% increase in the number of children in care nationally. This has been further exacerbated by the pandemic and, more recently, the cost of living increases, with a continued projected increase in demand and complexity, specifically in the areas of child protection planning and looked after children.

4.11 Over the past two years, in line with national trends, ESCC has experienced a 37% increase in demand at the front door, an 18% increase in the number of social care assessments being undertaken with children and families, and a 32% increase in children subject to child protection planning. There has been an 6% increase in the number of looked after children since 2020 (not including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children). The demand for support has undoubtedly put pressure on the service and it will be important to continue to ensure we have sufficient capacity to meet our statutory duties. Over the last two years, as a service of last resort, we have also needed to provide some direct support to families, in terms of accommodation or other support, and this requirement is expected to continue.

4.12 In line with the national picture, ESCC also continues to experience significant challenges identifying sufficient high quality placements for children in care. Children's Services has been highly successful in supporting children to live within kinship care arrangements wherever possible. However, it is becoming increasingly challenging to identify appropriate placements and the price of placements has significantly increased. Demand for residential provision outstrips supply. Providers have become risk averse to offering placements to children with complex behavioural needs (because they present greater risk of missing episodes, challenging behaviours, and Ofsted notifiable incidents). The high demand in the system has also led to an escalation in the price that some providers are now charging.

4.13 Rigorous steps are taken to manage the market and individual contracts with providers. East Sussex is part of a commissioning framework agreement with other local authorities to improve leverage in purchasing placements and Heads of Service meet regularly with providers to address the safety and quality of placements as well as value of contracts. However, external consultancy support has been engaged to review the scope for different approaches which might help us secure more cost effective options. The interests of children will remain paramount in our approach.

Local Service Developments

Early Intervention, Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme

4.14 In March 2022 the DfE announced that East Sussex was one of 75 local authorities selected for a share of a £302m fund to establish [Family Hubs and the Start for Life programme](#). ESCC has been awarded £4.6m for this programme over 3 years, with an additional £100,000 to deliver a 'Trailblazer' programme on peri-natal mental health.

4.15 ESCC's local Family Hubs build on the current Children Centre and integrated Early Help offers and support families with babies, children and young people from birth to 19 (or 25 for young people with SEND). The Hubs, the first of which are being launched in summer 2023, will provide a one stop shop approach, delivering a range of help, including for physical and mental health, housing, debt advice, youth services, domestic abuse support, as well as links to local voluntary and community sector organisations. At the heart of ESCC Family Hubs will be the Start for Life support, helping parents build strong relationships with their babies by providing parenting classes, health visiting support, infant feeding advice and peri-natal mental health.

4.16 A multi-agency Early Intervention Board was established in 2022/23 which is overseeing this programme as well as the development of an overarching Early Intervention Strategy, incorporating a wide range of early intervention programmes across the county including local implementation of the national Supporting Families programme and the Youth Justice Service 'Turnaround' preventative programme.

Family Safeguarding

4.17 In 2023/24, following a £2.3m annual investment by ESCC, Children's Services will be launching the Family Safeguarding model of child protection as a further development to our Connected Families service for families with children aged 11-17 who are at risk of needing to become looked after. The Family Safeguarding model provides intensive support for adults in three key areas: domestic abuse, mental health, and substance misuse. These areas are the most common factors nationally and locally in assessments of the needs of children for protection, and areas where demand for support services exceeds the available supply. They are often co-morbidities and are a significant factor in family breakdown, premature deaths, and poor outcomes for people with care experience. Family Safeguarding will be an important part of the way we seek to manage demand for social care.

4.18 ESCC's approach to Family Safeguarding will draw on models implemented elsewhere in the country, as well as reflecting and enhancing our own successful and well-established East Sussex 'Connected Practice' approach, which is strength based, trauma informed and relationship-based. ESCC has an established and effective multi-disciplinary SWIFT service and 'Foundations' programme which this initiative will build upon to offer earlier intensive support and interventions to families and increase resources for reunification.

4.19 The Family Safeguarding model aligns with the DfE's children's social care reform implementation strategy outlined in more detail above. This highlights that Children's Services should draw on a multidisciplinary workforce with the time, skills, and autonomy to give children and families the support they need, pursuing improved outcomes for both adults and children. Delivery of the model in East Sussex is planned to commence in January 2024.

SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan

4.20 The [SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan](#) is the Government's response to the SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper consultation and outlines an

ambition to improve inclusive practice in mainstream schools so that more children and young people with SEND can be supported in their local mainstream school without the need for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). However, the development of new guidance for all schools is not expected to be complete until 2025. The Government is also establishing Regional Partnerships to support development of special educational needs provision, with which ESCC will be engaging.

4.21 In line with the national picture, East Sussex continues to see significant increases in demand for statutory assessments and specialist provision for children and young people with SEND. The number of EHCPs has increased by 19% from 3,678 in April 2022 to 4,380 by the end of March 2023. We will continue to work proactively, analysing data to project future demand, and working with schools and Trusts to develop more specialist provision where this is appropriate. In 2022, alongside partners in the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) the Council published a new 2022-2025 SEND strategy which sets out our high-level direction, keeping children and young people and their families at the forefront of our local priorities.

4.22 We continue to work with schools to try to reduce the number of children and young people who are excluded from schools, which in East Sussex remains above the national average, and the corresponding need for alternative provision.

Schools policy

4.23 The Schools Bill, which was to implement legislation to support the [White Paper, Opportunity for All](#), is no longer being taken forward. However, the DfE remains committed to the objectives that underpinned the bill, which include the aspiration for all schools to become part of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). The Council will continue to play a critical role in facilitating strong local partnerships between schools and working with the Joint Primary and Secondary Board to shape a strong and cohesive school landscape across all phases, including through MAT development.

4.24 The DfE has confirmed its intention to pass legislation which will see local authorities obliged to maintain a register of children of compulsory school age who are not enrolled at specified categories of schools such as state schools, registered independent schools and non-maintained special schools. The Council will respond to this new duty when it is put into place.

Education recovery and supporting attainment

4.25 East Sussex has been identified by Government as an Education Investment Area (EIA) and Hastings as a Priority Investment Area. As an EIA, MATs that are interested in expanding or setting up in East Sussex are prioritised for development funding from the DfE. As a Priority EIA, Hastings will receive funding up to August 2025 to improve educational outcomes.

4.26 The pandemic has had a significant adverse impact on school attendance, with a doubling, both nationally and locally, of the proportion of children persistently absent from school, defined as more than 10% of sessions. The Government has published new attendance guidance to clarify responsibilities for local authorities, schools, parents and carers. By September 2023, the expectation is that all councils should strengthen their oversight of attendance through regular individual dialogue with all schools, and provide whole family early help support, free of any charge, to schools and all families of children whose attendance is less than 50%.

4.27 Locally, there will be a continued focus on working with schools to improve the engagement of some families so that they ensure their children and young people are in school. Supported by additional investment of £1.5m annually to deliver the expectations set

by the Government in its new guidance, a new Level 2 Early Help Key Work service will be in place from September 2023 to work with children and young people and their families where attendance is below 50%.

4.28 East Sussex has high levels of suspension and exclusion and these are rising further in line with national trends. School leaders are experiencing increased levels and complexity of need in their school populations and the demand for support services remains high. The Council will continue to work with schools to develop effective strategies and joined-up approaches to meeting children and young people's needs, to increase engagement in learning and reduce exclusions.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing in schools

4.29 Education is a protective factor against many of the risks to good mental health and wellbeing that face children and young people across East Sussex. A key area of our school improvement strategy involves opportunities for schools and settings to develop communities which promote and foreground good mental health and wellbeing. The Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs), funded by the NHS and managed by ESCC, will continue to be integrated into the existing education and clinical landscapes to support this. Five MHSTs will continue to operate across the county, and we will work to embed them into 68 targeted schools. We will use the learning from these schools to champion a whole school approach to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Home to school transport

4.30 Recent rises in fuel costs and driver shortages have led to exceptional increases to the costs of contracts providing taxis for pupils requiring home to school transport. The majority of the spend on home to school transport relates to children with SEND, and the number of pupils with EHCPs has risen by 11.6% over the last three years and is forecast to rise a further 11.8% over the next three. Increased complexity of needs post pandemic and geographical spread reducing the possibility of taxi sharing are also driving cost increases, as are current market conditions which are leading to fewer providers bidding for routes and increased contract prices.

5. Migration

5.1 Over the last year the Government has developed new policy and legislation in relation to immigration, asylum, and refugee resettlement, in efforts to reduce pressures on current systems and services. These pressures arise from factors including an increasing backlog of asylum claims, slower than expected progress in resettling Afghans, significant numbers of Ukrainians arriving in the UK and an increase in small boat crossings via the English Channel.

5.2 Government's 'New Plan for Immigration' includes:

- A 'Full Dispersal' asylum system, incorporating all local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales as asylum dispersal areas.
- The [Illegal Migration Bill](#) which aims to change the law on whether people arriving in the UK, outside of prescribed routes, can claim asylum in the UK, and to remove people more quickly.
- A [Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Rwanda](#) which includes an 'asylum partnership arrangement' that allows the UK to send some people to Rwanda who would otherwise claim asylum in the UK.
- A '[Streamlined Asylum Processing](#)' arrangement which aims to fast-track asylum claims in certain circumstances.
- Exploration of new [large asylum accommodation sites](#) to reduce the use of contingency hotels.

- [Additional funding](#) and policy measures to support the resettlement and accommodation of Afghans and Ukrainians.

5.3 Local authorities continue to play a key role in how these policies and schemes are implemented locally, working with the Government and local partners to ensure that those arriving will have access to safe accommodation, public services and community support. Further detail on the impacts for East Sussex and the County Council are outlined below.

Asylum Dispersal

5.4 The pressures described above have led to an increase in the use of hotels by the Home Office as 'contingency' accommodation for people seeking asylum, including in East Sussex. Although hotels in the county were already being used as short-term accommodation for adults awaiting Home Office decisions on their asylum applications, increasing numbers of people arriving in small boats in recent months and overcrowding at Manston migrant processing centre in Kent led to the Home Office arranging for new hotels to be stood up across the country, often at short notice.

5.5 The Home Office is also exploring the use of large sites, such as holiday accommodation, student accommodation or ex-military accommodation, as options for reducing the use of hotels; this includes the Northeye site near Bexhill. Concerns about the suitability of specific sites, relating to the welfare of those people who may be placed there and the stretched capacity of local services, are being discussed with key partners and Home Office officials to inform planning and decision making. ESCC continues to engage with Government officials to ensure the local context in East Sussex is understood.

Full Dispersal

5.6 The Government has extended responsibilities for asylum dispersal beyond previously specified areas (such as Hastings) and is asking all areas to take a role in dispersal, a model described as 'full dispersal'. Details of full dispersal plans for each local area are still emerging and local authorities are actively highlighting the risks and pressures to local services and infrastructure of additional asylum accommodation in East Sussex and the south east. The procurement of dispersal accommodation by the Home Office should take place after consultation with the relevant housing authority and we await further details on where accommodation may be procured in East Sussex. Areas will be allocated dispersal numbers, mainly based on a ratio to local population, and local authorities will be funded per dispersal bed.

Streamlined Asylum Process

5.7 The streamlined asylum processing model concentrates on legacy claimants from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Libya, Syria, and Yemen (those claims made before 28 June 2022). The model allows greater flexibility in processing these claims to expedite those which are likely to be granted. For claims that are successful, people will become eligible for housing and other support and services which may temporarily increase pressure on those services. Further details on implementation in East Sussex are still emerging.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and the National Transfer Scheme

5.8 ESCC continues to accept Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS), which became mandatory in November 2021. In early 2022, the number of UASC each local authority was expected to care for through the NTS increased from 0.07% of the child population to 0.1%. Through a combination of spontaneous arrivals and UASC received through the NTS, we have seen a steady increase in the numbers we are supporting, which currently stands at 74 looked after children and 110 care leavers (a 16% increase on 2021/22). UASC represented 25% of ESCC new entrants to care in 2022/23 and now make up 30% of care leavers.

5.9 There has been an increase in the number of UASC placed in hotel accommodation by the Home Office, whilst awaiting transfer through the NTS to local authorities. In East Sussex, Children's Services has worked with the Home Office and partner agencies to ensure safeguarding services are in place. Weekly multi-agency meetings take place with the Home Office, health services and Sussex Police to address any safeguarding concerns. A significant number of UASC went missing from the hotels across the South East in 2022-23, including in East Sussex. In line with our safeguarding procedures multi-agency strategy meetings were convened for each child accommodated in East Sussex, with regular review meetings taking place whilst the child is still missing.

5.10 In the autumn of 2022/23, 47 young people accommodated in adult asylum seeker hotels in East Sussex came forward disputing their initial age assessment. Children's Services is required to undertake age assessments in each case. 50% of these young people subsequently became looked after by ESCC as UASC. The proposed development of Northeye as an asylum accommodation site could add significant further pressures to Children's Services capacity and sufficiency of placements if the same proportions of age disputes are seen.

5.11 The new Illegal Migration Bill aims to deter people from crossing the channel in small boats by preventing those that do so from claiming asylum in the UK and detaining and removing them from the country. It places a new duty on the Home Secretary to remove those entering the UK by irregular means via a safe country. The only exceptions to this duty are for people at risk of "serious and irreversible harm" and unaccompanied children until they turn 18. The Bill does not place any significant new duties on local authorities in relation to accommodating and supporting UASC. There is an expectation, however, that UASC will be moved quickly into local authority care and the Home Office will be required to step in through hotel provision only 'sparingly and temporarily'. The expectation is that once they reach age 18 the young people will be recalled by the Home Office and removed from the country.

5.12 It is currently unclear exactly what implications the legislation, if passed, will have for East Sussex. It is possible that the prospect of removal at age 18 will significantly increase the numbers of young people in our care or housed in hotels in East Sussex who go missing, which will place additional requirements on Children's Services as well as the Police locally. There are also tensions between this legislation and the current law in relation to the protection and wellbeing of children (the Children Act 1989) which could create challenges for our staff on the front line in terms of how they best support children until they reach age 18.

Refugee Resettlement

Afghan Resettlement Schemes

5.13 Government established two resettlement schemes for Afghan citizens. For councils who support refugees to resettle through the above schemes, the Government has provided a standard integration funding package. Refugees waiting to be resettled are placed in 'bridging accommodation' (usually hotels) until more permanent housing is found. There are no such bridging hotels in East Sussex, and district and borough councils lead on resettling Afghans in East Sussex.

Visa schemes

5.14 The Government has created schemes which enable people from certain states, for example Hong Kong, to apply for visas and enter the UK. The terms of these visa schemes vary, but they usually enable people to access services, benefits, and the right to work whilst in the UK. Numbers of people entering East Sussex on this visa are not available, but we

engage with the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration (SESPM) and local partners to ensure people arriving in the county through this route can access the support they need.

Ukraine refugee response

5.15 In response to the refugee crisis arising from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Government established two main routes through which Ukrainian refugees can enter the UK - the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine (HfU), under which Ukrainian nationals can be sponsored to come to the UK by private individuals.

5.16 At the end of February 2023 almost 1600 Ukrainian guests had arrived in East Sussex on a HfU visa, matched with over 600 sponsors. To date upwards of 600 guests have moved on from their original hosts, with a high proportion of guests moving to positive accommodation outcomes, and around 60% of guests remaining with their original hosts. Ongoing support to hosts and guests remains vital to sustain arrangements and facilitate planned onward moves in a challenging housing market.

Future local support

5.17 In this context of new and developing policy and legislation, and the potential future impact of climate change and further international conflicts, expectations are that the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers may increase. Given the national expectation that all regions will contribute, it is anticipated that activity to support refugees and asylum seekers will be a significant and long term area of work and focus for the Council going forward. This will require development of our local resources, expertise and knowledge in these areas, a strengthening of existing and new partnerships, and a clear and joined up strategic approach across East Sussex and the wider region. This work will be led by the newly established Migrant Support Team, located in ASCH and working with teams across the organisation, including in Children's Services.

6. Communities

Financial Inclusion

6.1 In response to increases in the cost of living, and resulting impacts on households in the county, ESCC established the multi-agency Financial Inclusion Steering Group. The group brings together the VCSE, NHS, district and borough councils, DWP, and all ESCC departments to collectively work towards addressing financial inclusion.

6.2 The Steering Group has agreed a set of priorities to enable partners to better understand, develop and respond to the pressures that residents are experiencing. These include:

- strengthening data and developing a compelling evidence base;
- supporting cross-sectorial peer learning and knowledge sharing in relation to activities and services that can improve Financial Inclusion for residents;
- collaboratively developing approaches to service delivery that improve Financial Inclusion for the residents of East Sussex;
- maximising funding opportunities and the receipt of benefits and other support financial support to vulnerable residents and communities; and
- providing access to the right information.

6.3 This work is expected to be ongoing, with the priority being the identification of households in poverty or at risk of being in poverty and providing advice and support to ensure that they are in receipt of any benefits or other financial support that they may be eligible to claim.

Household Support Fund extension

6.4 The Household Support Fund (HSF) was introduced by Government in response to increases in the cost of living. Funding is aimed at anyone who is vulnerable or cannot pay for essentials and is distributed via local authorities. For 2023/24 ESCC will be receiving £7,793,567 from the HSF which will be allocated through several routes, reflecting national guidance that ESCC and partners should consider the needs of various households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people.

Community Networks

6.5 ESCC commissioned Collaborate Community Interest Company to review the learning from Covid-19 Community Hubs and recommend how our collective learning could help embed the benefits of Community Hubs in the longer term. The resulting Community Networks programme will ensure we align with the needs and priorities of partners and communities, including:

- contributing to our [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) in East Sussex and our Sussex Integrated Care Strategy
- managing interdependencies with our Early Help strategy for families and the development of Family Hubs
- alignment with Local Plans at district and borough level
- alignment with Public Health led initiatives and programmes
- alignment with the priorities of the VCSE Alliance and wider VCSE sector.

6.6 The delivery of Community Networks in East Sussex, alongside other priorities, will be taken forward by the newly brought together Partnerships Team within ASCH, working across the Council and with key partners from the statutory and VCSE sector.

Community Safety

Community Safety Partnerships and Anti-Social Behaviour

6.7 The overall national policy for crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is set out in the Government's [Beating Crime Plan](#). As part of this, an in-depth review of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) has been undertaken to initially improve their transparency, accountability, and effectiveness, before assessing their position within the wider landscape of local partnerships. It is considering introducing a new duty for CSPs to report on local ASB strategy and delivery to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), as well as legislation to set out the PCC role in the ASB Community Trigger process. The findings of this part of the review concluded that, although the importance of local partnerships such as CSPs was widely acknowledged, they were not being used as effectively as they could be.

6.8 In order to take this forward, the Government has recently published an [Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan](#) and launched a consultation which proposes changes to: the relationship between CSPs and PCCs, the role of both in tackling ASB, and the nature and application of the ASB powers currently available to police forces, local authorities and social landlords. The East Sussex CSPs already work closely with the PCC's office and receive annual funding from the PCC to support community safety initiatives. Although ASB is managed at lower tier authority level, ESCC is working with community safety partners and the Office of the PCC to design the operating model for the proposed 'immediate justice' service that will be rolled out across Sussex.

Serious Violence Duty

6.9 The Police, Crime, Sentencing, and Courts Act 2022 has placed new duties on schools, police, councils, and health to prevent serious violence. The [Serious Violence Duty](#)

requires specified authorities, including councils and Youth Justice Services, to work together to produce an evidence-based analysis of serious violence in their local area and then formulate and implement a strategy detailing how they will respond to those issues. The Act and the Duty is far-reaching and will impact upon many of the services delivered by ESCC and its partnership arrangements. ESCC will have an essential and leading role to play to prevent and address serious violence, beyond involvement in the production of a needs assessment and strategy.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

6.10 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 and independent review 2021 sets out the policy context for local authorities in tackling these issues. [The Modern Slavery Bill](#) is currently working its way through parliament and aims to enhance the efforts in tackling modern slavery supply chains and to further strengthen support measures for victims of human trafficking. Councils have a key role to play in tackling modern slavery, including in identifying and supporting victims and working in partnership locally. The Council will be assessing compliance within the legislative framework by using the LGA 'maturity matrix', which provides a framework for local authorities to assess their current progress and plan future activity on modern slavery.

Preventing Violent Extremism

6.11 The policy context for this work is set out in a number of Government documents, including:

- the Counter-terrorism strategy [CONTEST](#) 2018, which aims to reduce the risk to the UK and its citizens and interests overseas from terrorism;
- the [Protect Duty](#) Bill, which aims to enhance national security by introducing new security requirements for certain public locations;
- changes to the Channel management process under the Government's Prevent anti-extremism programme, giving more responsibility and autonomy to local government safeguarding panels; and
- the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019

6.12 In 2023 the Home Office published the [Independent Review of Prevent](#) which considered the UK's strategy for protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The Government has accepted all 34 recommendations in full and these will inform the development of the East Sussex Prevent Plan for the current year.

National and local plans for tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

6.13 The Government published the National VAWG strategy in November 2021 and the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan in March 2022. Its strategic priorities (of prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators and a stronger system and partnership working) align with the priorities set within the Pan-Sussex Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence and Abuse and VAWG Strategic Framework, which was updated in March 2022 to encompass VAWG and the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act in 2021. In order to meet the statutory requirement under Part 4 of the new Act, ESCC has a legal duty to support victims of domestic abuse and their children living in refuges and other safe accommodation. ESCC has been allocated funding for 2021-2025 to meet this new requirement.

Drug and alcohol treatment work and Project ADDER

6.14 The publication of the Government's new ten year Combatting Drugs Strategy ('From Harm to Hope') in 2021 requires local partnerships to establish an effective governance mechanism, undertake a comprehensive substance misuse needs assessment, and produce a local strategy. Additional Government resources are being made available to realise these requirements. This work is overseen by the East Sussex Harm to Hope Board, a sub-group of the East Sussex Safer Communities Board.

6.15 Additional Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG), now including the funding for Project ADDER, has been made available to East Sussex from Government to meet the outcomes of the Combatting Drugs Strategy. The funding has enabled the expansion of Project ADDER from Hastings to the whole county. The Council has received funding from the SSMTRG - Housing Support Grant to support those in treatment with a housing need in East Sussex, with the aim of preventing people from losing stable accommodation, and funding from the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant to deliver focused support to keep rough sleepers in Hastings engaged in drug and alcohol treatment.

6.16 The Council has also received additional funding from the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities to improve access to inpatient detoxification, and to improve the employability of those in structured treatment. There are also significant contributions – both financial and in kind - to this area of work from ASCH, and the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner.

Trading Standards

6.17 The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill is currently being considered in Parliament. When it was first introduced the Bill was intended to revoke all pieces of EU derived legislation by 31 December 2023, unless specifically kept or replaced. However, the Government now intends to amend the Bill to replace the cut-off point with a list of 600 laws that will be replaced by the end of the year. Among the laws to be revoked or replaced are ones that may have a direct impact on Trading Standards and potentially our ability to intervene in consumer issues. We will monitor this closely, as any reforms in such a volume will potentially have an impact on Trading Standards and, depending on how they are implemented, our resources and focus.

Local resilience arrangements

6.18 In December 2022, the [UK Government Resilience Framework](#) was released. This sets out the Government's aspirations for widespread changes to the way in which resilience activity is managed within the UK and, in particular, how it can be integrated with wider policy areas. The approach in Sussex will be informed pilots which commenced in Spring 2023.

6.19 Rother District Council has joined the East Sussex Resilience and Emergencies Partnership (ESREP) which means that all local authorities in East Sussex are now members alongside East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. This will enable us to create shared, strategic approaches across the whole of Sussex to create efficiencies and opportunities to standardise ways of working across the county.

National planning reforms

6.20 The Government introduced the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#) to Parliament in 2022, which emphasises the importance of a plan-led system (i.e. the Local Plan sets out where, when and how development will take place). This approach is broadly welcomed from by the County Council, although it will increase the need for timely and effective input into the district and borough Local Plan processes, particularly through our role as an infrastructure provider. Other changes and reforms proposed focus on matters including infrastructure funding, environmental assessment of proposals, enforcement, and providing additional protection to heritage assets. These will all impact on the Council, both within our County Planning Authority role and through our statutory consultee and infrastructure provider role. Identifying these impacts and ensuring that the Council can adapt its relevant service provision will be a critical task as the Bill progresses and more details are published.

6.21 In December 2022, the Government published further detail in a [consultation](#) that sought views on a proposed update of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which would set out how housing figures should be derived and applied so that communities can respond to local circumstances. No immediate changes to the standard method to calculating local housing need were proposed. The consultation also sought views on its proposed approach to preparing National Development Management Policies (NDMPs). These would be national policies with statutory weight – effectively ‘trumping’ local policies. The consultation provided only limited detail on NDMPs but it explained they would be set out in a separate (yet-to-be consulted upon) document.

6.22 The initial changes to the NPPF are expected to be published imminently and additional proposed changes are expected to be published for consultation later this year. Changes to national planning policy are having an impact upon the ability of local planning authorities to get an up to date Local Plans in place. In East Sussex, the majority of the county does not currently have an up to date Local Plan, meaning that the majority of development proposals that we are asked to comment upon, and plan for their infrastructure needs, are speculative in nature as they are not supported by an allocation in a Development Plan and are not part of a wider, holistic plan. Whilst this situation remains, workloads for our statutory consultee functions are expected to remain higher than normal and the ability to forward plan for infrastructure is undermined.

6.23 The Government has also published a consultation on the proposed Infrastructure Levy (IL). The IL would reform, and largely replace, the existing system of developer contributions (Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy). The new system is intended to end lengthy negotiations and deliver a mandatory, streamlined and locally determined levy that will be calculated once a project is complete, instead of at the stage the site is given planning permission. The Government recognises that the levy will be a significant change so it will be introduced through ‘test and learn’ over a 10-year period. The Government intends for the reforms to give local leaders the tools to bring forward more infrastructure that communities need. However, there are concerns that this approach could result in spending on infrastructure such as roads, schools, and doctors' surgeries being reduced as the new levy can be spent on a wider array of things such as affordable housing and local council services. To help ensure that development continues to help fund essential infrastructure delivery, the County Council Network (CCN) has argued that the Government should allocate a certain portion of infrastructure levy receipts directly to county councils. The outcome of the consultation is awaited.

7. Highways and Transport

7.1 This section sets out a range of national and local developments impacting on transport planning and infrastructure in the county, encompassing highways maintenance, road safety, the refresh of the Local Transport Plan and planned improvements to local public transport, roads and measures to support transport decarbonisation.

Highways Maintenance

7.2 The new contract for highways and infrastructure services in East Sussex went live on 1 May 2023. The contract, valued at £297m, will run for an initial seven years, with an option to extend to a maximum of 14 years – worth up to £730m. Balfour Beatty Living Places will be responsible for maintaining the county's roads, pavements, drainage, street lights, traffic lights, highway structures and bridges in line with the County Council's asset management policies and investigatory levels. They will also provide winter gritting across the county and deliver highway improvement and maintenance schemes.

7.3 Highways capital investment was increased by £3.1m annually, in addition to

a £5.8m one-off contribution, as part of the 2022/23 RPPR process to reflect the importance of our road network and its role in providing connectivity for our businesses and communities. The additional £5.8m in addition to the existing annual capital maintenance programme provided for additional highway improvement works including further patching, lines and road markings, repairs to pavements and repair or replacement of road signs. These works have a visible positive impact for all road users. Proposals for further investment in highways maintenance in 2023/24 are being considered by Cabinet, in light of the significant increase in potholes and failures on the network caused by poor weather conditions experienced across the county during the winter.

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

7.4 In September 2022, the Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed that ESCC would receive its indicative allocation of £41.4m in BSIP funding. The majority of the capital funding element was specifically to deliver bus priority measures by the end of financial year 2024/25. In October 2022, the Council commenced a feasibility, design and review study across three packages of bus priority measures focussed on South Wealden to Eastbourne, Eastbourne Town, and Seahaven Towns. The progression of the above schemes will be dependent on the outcomes of the feasibility study and then consultation and further design stages. Funding will come from BSIP capital allocation of £18.5m for bus priority measures.

Refresh of the Local Transport Plan

7.5 The [East Sussex Local Transport Plan](#) (LTP) sets out our strategy and policies for how we plan to invest in improving transport and maintaining the roads in the county to meet transport needs. Our current LTP covers 2011 to 2026, but it will be updated to reflect considerable recent changes in national, regional and local policy related to the environment, health and economy. The updated plan will influence how we plan and deliver transport in East Sussex in the future and support the Council's response to the climate emergency. The Government is expected to publish guidance on updating LTPs imminently and our Plan will need to align with this. There is an expectation that local authorities will have an updated plan in place by summer 2024.

7.6 It is proposed to consult on a draft strategy during autumn 2023, including bespoke consultation activities with specific groups, for example young people and the business sector, alongside a public consultation. Formal approval of the Plan will be sought in early 2024.

Transport decarbonisation

7.7 Transport is now the greatest contributor to carbon emissions in East Sussex, and supporting this area will be a major part of carbon reduction within the county. The Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan, 'Decarbonising Transport: a Better, Greener Britain' was published in July 2021. This sets out the pathway to net zero transport in the UK, the wider benefits of net zero transport and the principles that underpin their approach to delivering net zero transport. The Transport Decarbonisation Plan is influencing our own transport policies and plans for the county through the current update to the East Sussex LTP. To tackle transport related emissions, we will need to consider how we can use our cars less, how we move away from planning for vehicles to planning for businesses, people, and places more in the future; and ensure active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport become the preferred choice for short journeys or part of longer journeys.

7.8 To complement our LTP, our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, emerging Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy, Bus Service Improvement Plan as well as our Enhanced Bus Partnership will support the transport decarbonisation agenda at a local level.

Active travel

7.9 Active Travel England (ATE) is a new Government executive agency established to support walking, wheeling, and cycling, sponsored by the DfT. ATE is responsible for:

- allocating and awarding active travel funding
- enforcement of new cycling design guidance
- providing scheme design and implementation advice alongside scheme inspection
- monitoring local authority performance on active travel – including annual review of a local authority self-assessed active travel grade.

7.10 In January 2023, we secured £180,443 of Capability revenue funding. This will fund the development of pipeline schemes for future capital funding bids, including three school streets schemes, an active travel neighbourhood scheme and a potential segregated cycle lane, which will involve collaborative and co-design activities with communities and learning opportunities in relation to active travel.

National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy and local e-vehicle charging

7.11 The Council has made a commitment to develop a strategy to support the growing demand and needs of Electric Vehicles (EV) users within East Sussex. To understand the scope of what is required, ESCC has worked closely with external consultants, other public organisations within the county, and with district and borough councils. This work has highlighted the key areas and locations that will require EV infrastructure, as well as delivery challenges and funding gaps.

7.12 In March 2023, the sum of £4.4m was provisionally allocated to the Council under the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund. This funding will help to scale up the delivery of local charge points, enabling more residents, especially those without off-street parking, to switch to EVs. The ability to charge at or close to home is a major concern to many EV users and this will feature as main priority within the strategy. Further scope within the LEVI grant now allows consideration of sites that will support, tourism, taxis, and commercial vehicles, and work continues to identify suitable locations for inclusion. ESCC has submitted the Expression of Interest to access this funding in late May, requesting funding in 2023/24 in preference to being allocated funds later in 2024/25.

Road Safety

7.13 The statutory duty placed on us, and the expectation of our residents, in terms of road safety is significant. To manage this, we have a range of measures and programmes designed to fulfil the wide-ranging pressures we face, including an annual assessment of crashes occurring on our road network to inform prioritisation of road safety schemes as part of the Local Safety Scheme or Route Study work. We also receive many requests for small scale road safety improvements to be made which do not meet the requirements to be considered through the above routes. To address these concerns, £750,000 has been allocated from the Community Match underspend to deliver community focused road safety interventions. Selected schemes will address identified road safety concerns, and will be 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.

7.14 £500,000 has also been approved by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment to undertake a Speed Management Programme. The funding will be split over the next three years with additional ongoing funding identified within future Capital Programmes. 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 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, the project will see more than 25 stretches of road benefit from speed limit reductions or measures that will increase the effectiveness of existing speed limits.

7.15 Using initial one-off funding from East Sussex Public Health, and working with the Behavioural Insights Team and partners from Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, we launched an innovative programme to understand the causes of serious collisions and trial interventions to help reduce the number of people being killed or seriously injured on East Sussex roads. Further funding has now been secured from Public Health to enable these trials to continue. We are currently working up potential interventions, aimed at our identified priority groups, that can be implemented through a randomised control trial. The outcome of these trials will be fully evaluated to improve our understanding of how to use behavioural science techniques to target those most at risk.

Transport for the South East (TfSE) Strategic Investment Plan

7.16 [TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan](#) (SIP) provides a framework for delivering their 2020 Transport Strategy by outlining the structure for investment in strategic transport infrastructure, services, and regulatory interventions up to 2050. Underpinned by a robust evidence base, the SIP as a regional plan is intended to provide advice to the Secretary of State for Transport on the investment priorities across the TfSE geography.

7.17 The SIP outlines two types of investment packages:

- global policy interventions of national regulatory and policy activities such as adoption of zero emission technologies to decarbonise transport; road user charging; and promotion of mobility methods of travel, which would be delivered across the South East; and
- place-based packages of multi modal (highways, rail, mass transit/bus, active travel) interventions within three area packages which cover parts of East Sussex:
 - Solent and Sussex Coast: A27/A259 and Coastway rail corridors
 - London - Sussex Coast: M23/A23, A22, A26 and A272, and Brighton Mainline, Uckfield rail corridors
 - Kent, Medway and East Sussex: A21, A259 east of Hastings and Marshlink rail corridors

7.18 Following agreement from the Partnership Board, the £45bn SIP has been submitted to the DfT with a request that it be considered as future investment decisions are made.

Exceat Bridge replacement

7.19 In October 2021, ESCC was awarded £7.9m funding from the Government's Levelling Up Fund to replace the Exceat Bridge. The scheme will be sensitively designed to reflect the outstanding natural landscape and to protect the unique nature of the area and ensure that the work we do not only benefits those using the road, but also protects and enhances this ecologically sensitive location. In December 2022, planning permission was granted from the South Downs National Park Authority with conditions in place to protect the natural landscape. Final detailed designs for the bridge are being completed along with negotiations for the required areas of land. Construction is expected to start at the beginning of 2024 and is expected to take between one and two years.

National Highways Programmes – A27 and A21

7.20 In 2020, Government published its second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2), covering the period 2020 – 2025. RIS2 identifies that further work will be undertaken on developing proposals for the A27 between Lewes and Polegate as a potential pipeline scheme for construction between 2025 and 2030. This further work, managed by National Highways (NH - formerly Highways England), has commenced but is at an early stage.

7.21 RIS2 also included the development of a package of road safety improvements for the A21 corridor north of Hastings. NH continues work on the development of the proposed safety package study for the A21 which will be rolled out over the life of RIS2. While not included in the current RIS, we will continue to lobby and make the case to Government, including through TfSE, for improvements to the Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst, Flimwell and Hurst Green sections of the A21 in a future RIS.

Rail developments

7.22 Government has confirmed its intention to create a new public body, Great British Railways (GBR), which will run and plan the network, own the rail infrastructure, procure passenger services, and set and collect most fares and timetables. GBR is currently in shadow format, due to come into effect by autumn 2024, subject to legislation being progressed. The transfer of the current powers held by the Secretary of State for Transport to GBR will enable private partners to be contracted to operate trains, with franchising being replaced by Passenger Service Contracts. Fares and tickets will be simplified, including standardising mobile and online ticketing and flexible season tickets, and there will be better integration of rail with buses and cycling, as well as other forms of transport. It is important that we continue to be involved in future processes associated with the delivery of the Plan for Rail and engage with GBR to ensure that these changes benefit our residents, those visiting East Sussex, and businesses operating in and out of the county.

7.23 Following the Kent and East Sussex Rail Connectivity study, in May 2021 a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) which set out the strategic case for four options (two in East Sussex) to potentially improve rail connectivity to the Kent and East Sussex coast was submitted to Government. A formal response has yet to be received, however the scheme has been included in the Kent, Medway and East Sussex package of interventions in the TfSE Strategic Investment Plan. In the meantime, local MPs and the local authorities in East Sussex and Kent are working collaboratively to explore opportunities to lever in private sector finance or investment to fund the delivery of the rail schemes identified.

8. Economy

8.1 The following sections outline recent developments in Government policy and investment programmes that will affect the support we provide, with partners, to drive sustainable local economic growth in future. There will be challenges and limitations in the scope and scale of the delivery of some of this support in future, arising from reduced availability of growth funding for the county, as detailed in the sections below.

Supporting the local economy

8.2 The economic climate facing businesses across the UK, and locally in East Sussex, is one of unprecedented challenges. Following nearly 3 years of disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the changes to the UK's trading relationship with the EU, businesses must also now contend with the sharpest increase in costs for 40 years, high inflation, energy price instability, and record staff turnover. We will continue to monitor the situation and build a "pipeline" of interventions that can be put in place to support businesses with available resources.

8.3 The Team East Sussex (TES) Economy Recovery Plan (ERP), which was put in place to help businesses, people and communities recover from Covid, has reached its natural conclusion. We are currently working with partners to produce an Economic Insight Analysis which will set out the evidence base for a range of interventions that will have most impact on the economy, particularly in relation to productivity, innovation and pre-scale up businesses. This will inform a new Growth Strategy for the county to support longer term recovery and growth.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

8.4 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were introduced across England in 2011 as partnerships between councils, businesses and other stakeholders, focussed on driving productivity and job creation. East Sussex is part of the South East LEP (SELEP), which also includes Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. In early 2022, the Government set out the “pathway to devolution”, where LEP functions were to be integrated into local democratic institutions across the country in a phased way by 2030. In the 2023 Spring budget the Government announced that it is now minded to end core funding for LEPs from April 2024 and integrate LEP functions into local government.

8.5 Following this announcement, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) launched an eight-week information gathering exercise to gain a fuller understanding of the impacts of their proposal if it is taken forward. DLUHC is expected to notify LEPs and all local and combined authorities of the outcome by summer 2023. Whatever the outcome, it is clear that the SELEP Delivery Plan for this year (2023/24) will need to include some immediate actions to support local areas in their moves toward devolution of these roles, functions and responsibilities. We know that many of SELEP’s existing economic development functions will need to be worked into devolved frameworks, but the actual activities to be devolved, and precisely where they should be devolved to, are all yet to be determined, and so must form the basis of the discussions. We have established a local authority group to consider the implications of both the outcome of the consultation and emerging devolution proposals in Essex.

National economic investment programmes

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

8.6 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is the Government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Fund Programme (ESIF) in which the UK will continue to participate until the end of 2023. The Government launched the prospectus for the new UKSPF programme in 2022 with a focus on three main investment themes: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business, and People and Skills. Each district and borough council in East Sussex has been allocated £1m, with the exception of Wealden District Council which has been allocated £1.2m, with each allocation covering a three year period from April 2022 – March 2025, giving a total allocation of £5.2m to East Sussex. For the limited UKSPF funding available, priorities have been determined by each borough and district authority against the three investment themes.

8.7 ESCC has been working with district and borough partners to develop and manage pan-East Sussex business support programmes and skills interventions. The business support programme has two strands: ‘Start’ will support new early-stage businesses in East Sussex that have registered within two years of receiving support, and ‘Specialise’ will allow businesses to access specialist advice and support from a pool of qualified and experienced consultants who are experts in their field. In terms of people and skills investment, Rother, Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden Councils are all contributing funding towards the delivery of a coordinated ‘Moving on Up’ programme, helping individuals in supported and temporary housing, and those furthest from the workplace, to access training, employability support and support into and in work.

Multiply programme

8.8 In April 2022, the Government also released details of the new UK-wide Multiply Programme (part of the UKSPF) worth £559m. The aim of the programme is to reach adults over 19 years old to improve their functional numeracy skills to a qualification at Level 2.

8.9 ESCC is responsible for managing the programme in East Sussex which has been allocated £2.5m over the three year period from April 2022 to March 2025. The programme has been launched with partners from Further Education, independent training providers, and our local voluntary and community sector who are commissioned to deliver a wide range of numeracy provision. Over a thousand residents will be supported in 2023/24 and in 2024/25.

Levelling Up Fund

8.10 Government announced its £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund (LUF) in 2021. This provides funding to invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities. The LUF addresses the three investment themes of transport, regeneration and town centre, and culture.

8.11 Each upper tier local authority has the right to submit one bid on transport investment throughout the lifetime of the LUF programme. ESCC's first round bid was successful, receiving just under £8m in June 2021 to deliver the replacement of the Exceat Bridge, as outlined above, linking two of our growth areas, Eastbourne and Newhaven, which are also within the highest priority areas for the LUF.

8.12 Additionally, the Government announced in October 2021 that both the Eastbourne Borough Council and Lewes District Council LUF first round bids were successful with £19.8m and £12.7m respectively awarded. The Eastbourne LUF bid included £4.8m towards the pedestrianisation of the Seaside Road to Grand Parade section of Terminus Road (Victoria Place) which forms part of the wider public realm and pedestrian improvements that have been delivered in the town centre in recent years. The Lewes bid focussed on Newhaven, with investment in Newhaven fisheries.

8.13 In January 2023, Rother District Council secured £19.2m from the second round of the LUF for the redevelopment of the De La Warr Pavilion, including investment in satellite infrastructure to involve communities in Bexhill who are not close to the seafront. The Government has indicated that a third round of LUF will be made available in 2023/24 and Hastings Borough Council is intending to work up a proposal for submission. Hastings and Rother will benefit from a share of the £400m LUF fund delivered through Levelling Up Partnerships (LUPs) which are expected to provide bespoke place-based regeneration throughout 2023/24 and 2024/25. ESCC will continue working with colleagues in Hastings and Rother as plans are developed to define the interventions and support the bidding process and successful implementation.

Skills

8.14 The Skills East Sussex (SES) board has agreed the following priorities for 2021-2030 and sector-based task groups are working to action plans to address these:

- ensuring national policy and funding supports the delivery of learning and skills in East Sussex;
- enabling our Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) establishments to recruit excellent educators with specialist technical knowledge;
- improving our digital skills and digital inclusion;
- upskilling our workforce to increase regional productivity;
- supporting the unemployed and unqualified; and
- developing skills and provision for a Net Zero future.

8.15 The impact of advances in technology and the move towards Net Zero are important considerations for skills in East Sussex. Skills East Sussex has commissioned 'Future Skills' research, in partnership with the Institute for Employment Studies, to bring together feedback from over 300 local employers, alongside desk based research. The research will

help us better understand the impact of Net Zero, Artificial Intelligence, Digital/Technology, Brexit and the current economic challenges on the East Sussex economy and employment landscape. The findings will help our providers to plan future learning, and our employers to better understand the upskilling needs of their current workforce to support their businesses and the East Sussex economy.

8.16 The 2021 Skills for Jobs White Paper heralded the development of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), with Sussex Chamber of Commerce successfully applying to be one of eight national trailblazers. The LSIP is a collaboration with employers, education providers, local authorities and partners across Sussex, and builds on the successful model developed by SES and sector-based task groups. In 2023 the LSIP trailblazer is submitting a proposal to the DfE for a forward plan to support its future offers and development. This plan will shape the use of forthcoming Local Strategic Initiative Funding.

Culture and tourism

8.17 Several initiatives are progressing to help harness the potential of the visitor economy in the county. A south east consortium, led by Kent County Council and reaching from Essex to West Sussex, has secured one of six awards nationally to deliver the 'Create Growth Programme', a business support programme targeting pre-growth, intellectually property rich creative businesses with an appetite for growth through investor finance. The programme award of £1.275m sits alongside a £7m investment fund which is being delivered nationally and which south east creative businesses will be eligible to apply for.

8.18 The Turner Prize will be hosted in Eastbourne in 2023/24, and ESCC has worked with local partners to secure an additional £500,000 of funding from Arts Council England to deliver a £1m programme of activity to maximise the benefit of the prize for local young people, hospitality businesses and other tourist attractions.

8.19 The Sussex Visitor Economy Industry Group of leading business representatives has been established to advise the Sussex Visitor Economy Initiative (ESCC, West Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council) on pan-Sussex tourism development. With UK Community Renewal Fund investment, the Sussex Visitor Economy Initiative has supported the production of a prospectus for wine tourism which will be launched this year.

9. Environment and Climate Change

9.1 The following paragraphs detail the range of recent national commitments, strategies and legislation that impact the Council's work to deliver climate change mitigation and adaptation, and also to protect the local natural environment. It is also important to note that net zero is increasingly integrated into wider policy, for example in areas such as housing, transport and public procurement. Whilst the policy context below outlines the main recent developments, it is not an exhaustive list of every new policy that touches on climate change. Much national guidance or detail on plans for delivery is still awaited, including clear expectations on how central and local government will interact in delivery of net zero, and how several commitments made in the Environment Act are to be delivered. The level of funding allocated to delivering new national commitments may also be insufficient. We await further information on funding new burdens for ESCC arising from the Environment Act.

Climate change - national policy context

9.2 In 2021, the UK Government published its [Net Zero Strategy 'Build Back Greener'](#). This did not include any statutory responsibility for local authorities to reduce carbon emissions, but did set out commitments to:

- set clearer expectations for local places, clarify how the partnership with local government should work, and consider how action at national, regional, local, and community levels fit together;

- provide resources for local places to deliver stronger contributions to national net zero targets; and
- build local capacity and capability.

9.3 As the Net Zero Strategy indicates, local authorities are widely considered to have a key role in decarbonising services such as local transport, waste disposal, and public buildings. More broadly, local authorities are seen to have a key role to play in creating change amongst residents and businesses, via their investment and procurement decisions, planning and placemaking responsibilities, and by direct engagement with residents. In 2021, the National Audit Office reported that 91% of local authorities have adopted a commitment to decarbonise either their own activities, their local area, or both.

9.4 The 2022 US Inflation Reduction Act and the EU Green Industrial Plan have significantly changed the global landscape for net zero investment, ushering in significant state subsidies for net zero industries. The UK is expected to respond to these developments, most likely through the 2023 Autumn Statement.

'Mission Zero' Independent Review of Government Net Zero Policy

9.5 In 2022, the Government commissioned Chris Skidmore MP, a former Energy Minister, to undertake an independent review of the UK's net zero policies. The report, ['Mission Zero'](#), was published in January 2023 and contained 129 separate recommendations. A Government response was published in March 2023. Amongst other local actions, the review suggested a statutory duty for local authorities to take account of the UK's net zero targets, a recommendation rejected in the Government response. Commitments in the Government response with relevance to county councils are:

- Establishing a set of principles for devolving net zero funds as part of wider devolution deals
- Exploring simplification of local net zero funding
- Supporting local capacity and capability building through the Local Net Zero Hubs
- Supporting skills and economic development through a Net Zero and Nature Workforce Action Plan (due in 2024) and a Net Zero Power and Networks Workforce Action Plan (timescale to be confirmed)

Local action on climate change

9.6 ESCC declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council set a target of achieving carbon neutrality from its activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050. This is in line with the updated target for the whole UK agreed by Parliament in 2019. Further to this, in 2020, ESCC committed to cutting its corporate carbon emissions by an average of 13% per year. In 2021, ESCC committed an additional £9.6m to help meet this reduction target up to March 2025. A new [Climate Emergency Plan](#) was approved earlier this year, covering the period 2023-25.

9.7 ESCC commissioned modelling work to identify the most cost effective options to reach net zero. Whilst this work identified potential 'quick wins', it also demonstrated the scale of the challenge. The cost for ESCC to get to net zero for building and transport emissions (scope 1 and 2) could be approximately £200m between now and 2050, largely due to the investment needed for decarbonising heat in buildings, including schools. A key area for ESCC is bidding for external funding to maximise the impact and reach of its resources.

9.8 Even if global warming can be limited to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, significant additional investment is likely to be needed in measures to adapt to the effects of climate change that are already locked in. Climate change adaptation refers to the adjustments we need to make in response to actual and expected climate change, to ensure that the Council can continue to operate effectively as the climate changes.

ESCC's Climate Emergency Plan commits us to:

- Assessing the Council's vulnerability to climate change
- Producing a climate risk register
- Developing a climate adaptation/ resilience strategy and programme
- Embedding climate adaptation into business-as-usual decision-making and risk management

9.9 In 2021, the Council worked with its partners on the East Sussex Environment Board to produce a [Climate Emergency Road Map](#) for the whole county, which was adopted by Team East Sussex in January 2022. The road map summarises many areas of work that the Council leads, or collaborates with partners on, to mitigate and adapt to climate change. These include programmes to support more walking, cycling and local bus services, address fuel poverty, support businesses in becoming more energy efficient, support residents to invest in renewable energy and to manage flood risk to homes and businesses. Progress on the county-wide Roadmap will continue to be driven by the Environment Board. A range of existing thematic partnerships will also continue to address climate change in East Sussex, including partnerships covering housing, waste, skills and local planning. ESCC has also recently completed a review with Community Energy South (CES) on ways to align the climate change objectives of the County Council and the network of community energy groups established in East Sussex. We also fund CES to deliver carbon literacy training in the community and recently submitted a bid with CES and UK Power Networks for funding from UK Innovate's Fast Followers programme to develop community energy plans.

Environment Act

9.10 The [Environment Act](#) received Royal Assent in November 2021 and the Government is now in the process of introducing secondary legislation, policy and guidance to implement elements of the Act. Many aspects of the Act will have implications for ESCC, but in some areas, the extent of these will not be fully understood until that secondary legislation, guidance and/or policy emerges.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

9.11 Under the Act ESCC will be a Responsible Authority for preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). In broad terms, the LNRS will set a spatial strategy for how and where measures to achieve nature recovery will be achieved. It has been provisionally agreed that ESCC will work in partnership with West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the Local Nature Partnership to prepare the evidence base and undertake the necessary stakeholder engagement for the preparation of LNRSs. This should ensure a degree of consistency between the two strategies that will eventually exist – one for West Sussex and one for East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

Biodiversity

9.12 Related to the production of the LNRS is the mandating, through the Environment Act, of a requirement for new developments to deliver a minimum of a 10% gain in biodiversity, known as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Following consultations in November 2021 and September 2022, DEFRA published an updated metric and associated guidance in March 2023. Whilst this indicates how Government expects BNG to be implemented, secondary legislation and guidance, along with a national site register for off-site BNG, is still awaited. A phased approach to the implementation of BNG is due to commence in autumn 2023. Whilst the preference will be for the gain to be delivered on development sites (in line with the mitigation hierarchy), there will be occasions where off-site gain is necessary, and the LNRS will be used to guide this to some extent. Given delays to the commencement of the LNRS process, they are unlikely to be in place before BNG becomes mandatory for major developments in November 2023 (and for minors in April

2024). DEFRA has acknowledged that assessing and monitoring the implementation of BNG will create additional resourcing pressures on planning authorities. Clarity over additional burdens funding should be available by autumn 2023. In the meantime, some seed funding has been made available to all local planning authorities to prepare for mandatory BNG.

9.13 The Environment Act also strengthens the existing Biodiversity Duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, requiring all public authorities to consider what action they can take to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, and to report on progress against that duty. The strengthened duty came into force in January 2023, and the first Biodiversity Report must be published no later than three years after that date, with subsequent reports published every five years. Whilst some indications of mandatory content have been provided, further guidance is awaited from DEFRA. Additional funding for this duty should be provided to planning authorities by autumn 2023.

Environmental Improvement Plan

9.14 The Environment Act contained a commitment to refresh the 25 year Environment Plan every five years. The first refresh took place in early 2023, via the release of a new Environmental Improvement Plan. Most of the actions outlined in the plan are part of existing plans and strategies, however, the plan made new commitments to:

- set legally binding targets for air pollutants;
- publish an air quality strategy with clear guidance to local authorities on embedding action into their wider functions; and
- launch a Local Investment in Natural Capital (LINC) programme, initially by funding several pioneering authorities.

Waste provisions

9.15 The Environment Act also has significant consequences for ESCC in its role as Waste Disposal Authority. Changes to waste management in the county will include the provision of weekly food waste collections, the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme and the introduction of extended producer responsibility for packaging. These changes will impact ESCC's waste contracts. They are likely to include the need to modify transfer stations and introduce changes to the volumes and type of recycling materials. There are still significant unknowns in respect of these changes, including how certain elements will be funded, with a Government announcement expected imminently.

Flood risk management

9.16 The Government has stated that it wishes to implement this legislation over the next 12-18 months. It would see Lead Local Flood Authorities (such as ESCC) take on responsibility for the approval, adoption and maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) constructed as part of new developments. This will have significant implications for the Council's Flood Risk Management team, as currently our role is restricted to commenting on proposed drainage schemes at the design stage. Consultation on secondary legislation, new burdens assessments, and matters such as transitional arrangements is expected later this year. Although there will clearly be resource and budget implications for the Council these are unclear until further detail emerges.

10. Supporting Services

10.1 The below section provides updates on key local and national developments for ESCC's supporting services. Local priorities are to deliver the implementation phase of the Modernising Back Office Systems programme; deliver measures in response to workforce challenges; continue delivery of the Council's Property Asset Management Plan including

carbon reductions; and further develop digital approaches to support organisational resilience. Key national developments include public procurement and audit reforms.

Modernising Back Office Systems Programme

10.2 The Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) Programme was established to replace the Council's core finance and Human Resources (HR) systems. The current system, SAP, will no longer be supported by the supplier beyond 2027. Replacing a system originally implemented over 15 years ago provides opportunities to take advantage of new technology which is better able to support an agile and flexible workforce, and provide easily accessible data and insight to support management decision making.

10.3 Following an extensive and robust procurement process, Oracle Fusion was selected as the new software platform, and Infosys as the implementation partner. The replacement system will deliver clear benefits, including a better user experience, undertaking transactional activity (freeing staff up to focus on more complex and value-added advice), and better availability of data and management reporting.

10.4 The programme has now moved to its implementation phase, with governance and resourcing having been refreshed to ensure that it is fit for purpose for a complex implementation, involving the replacement of the organisation's critical finance, HR, recruitment, and procurement systems.

Workforce Challenges

10.5 In common with many employers, we are experiencing significant recruitment and retention challenges as a result of the current national labour market conditions and cost of living pressures. The national labour market is the tightest it has been for 50 years with an increase in the 'participation gap', with more people of working age either retiring or moving into education. Locally, there are particular challenges in front line social care roles (qualified and unqualified) and some of our technical and professional roles such as legal services and engineering. The position is exacerbated in our more rural locations with recruitment in these areas being especially difficult. There is evidence to show that this tight labour market is putting pressure on pay levels.

10.6 The Council has put in place a number of strategies to respond to these pressures. A new employer recruitment brand – We Choose East Sussex – has been developed and launched, aimed at promoting the Council as a high quality employer of choice. Alongside this new brand, targeted recruitment and retention strategies have been put in place including a new 'Refer a Friend' scheme, an updated relocation policy, employee loans policy, salary sacrifice schemes and financial wellbeing resources.

10.7 As well as seeking to attract experienced individuals, we are also utilising approaches such as apprenticeships, traineeships and intern arrangements as a way of bringing new talent into the Council. Our experiences to date have identified the need to support some groups to become 'work ready', and additional one-off funding provided by Cabinet has funded a new Pre-Employment Co-ordinator post which has a specific responsibility for establishing clear pathways for job seekers to access opportunities within the Council. Being a diverse and inclusive place to work further supports our recruitment and retention aims.

10.8 Retention of or existing workforce is also a key aim. We are committed to supporting our staff with continuous professional development and creating an environment where staff are encouraged to learn and grow. In line with this, two new leadership development initiatives were launched during 2022/23: the 'Ladder to Leadership' programme and Heads of Service masterclass programme. Both initiatives were well received and evaluations are now taking place in order to further enhance and develop these programmes for the future.

We continue to develop our extensive wellbeing offer to support our staff to remain healthy and well, both in and out of work.

Property Asset Management

10.9 The Council's Asset Management Plan 2020-2025 contains an action plan to ensure operational assets are used efficiently, and a programmed approach to asset disposal has been established. There is increasing focus on ensuring the Council's assets are optimally utilised and continue to reduce their carbon and physical footprint. This includes reviewing the use of our corporate estate, including County Hall, and rationalising use where possible.

10.10 Capital investment has been targeted to improve environmental sustainability as part of the Council's net zero commitment, as well as ensuring that property assets support all Council objectives and services. Property policies are being updated to increase support for communities including common asset transfer and joint use leisure assets.

Procurement Bill

10.11 The Procurement Bill currently working its way through Parliament is expected to receive Royal Assent in July 2023. The Bill is the foundation for the Government's Transforming Public Procurement regime, which will see the biggest change to the Procurement Regulations in nearly 30 years. The Government has committed to providing a six month implementation period, which will commence once secondary legislation has been agreed. Current timescales predict that procurement will be required to be fully compliant with the regulations from July 2024, although this is dependent on the Bill passing prior to Parliament's summer recess.

10.12 The impact on procurement teams will be significant over the next two years. In preparation for the new regulations, work is required to understand existing processes, systems, people, and planned procurement activity that will be impacted. By starting planning now, we can ensure we are in the best position when the new regulations come into force. An extensive Learning and Development package will be rolled out by the Cabinet Office which will require all procurement practitioners to complete a minimum of 10 hours of training and an advanced course which will consist of three days for expert practitioners. The resource implications of the planning, training, and implementation will have a significant impact on the available resources of the procurement team.

10.13 The Cabinet Office has also confirmed that a revised National Procurement Policy Statement will be released that will align with the new regulations and continue to support our approach to Social Value and Sustainable Procurement. The onus will be on procurement professionals to take advantage of the flexibility and apply their commercial skills, whilst also aligning with local and national priorities as set out in the National Procurement Policy Statement. During the implementation period there are likely to be additional costs to develop new policies and implement the changes, with pressures around resourcing and training to ensure that Orbis Procurement is confident and compliant in delivering under the new regulations.

National Audit Issues

10.14 The challenges with the delivery of local authority audits continue, with the National Audit Office reporting that auditors were only able to give opinions on 12% of local government bodies' 2021/22 financial statements by the statutory publication deadline of 30 November 2022. This compares to 9% of opinions for the 2020/21 statements when the deadline was earlier, on 30 September 2021. This remains a significant reduction on the 97% achieved for 2015/16. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) reports that 632 audits remain outstanding. This is the case for ESCC, where the audits of 2020/21 and 2021/22 accounts remain unclosed. The accounts for 2022/23 have been published

([Statement of Accounts | East Sussex County Council](#)) and are open for public inspection. It is expected that Grant Thornton will start their audit of the accounts in July 2023.

10.15 The challenge of finding sufficient staff within audit teams and heightened regulatory expectations, particularly with regard to Property, Plant and Equipment and pension valuations, is adding to these pressures. The PSAA procurement of local authority external auditors for five years, from 2023/24, focused on encouraging new audit firms into the market and a more sustainable supply. This resulted in audit fees increasing by an average of 150%. The Government has promised £45m over the three years from 2022/23 to support additional audit and financial reporting costs. The Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority (ARGA), which is being set up to replace the Financial Reporting Council, will become the new system leader for external audit in 2024, at the earliest.

10.16 The CIPFA 2022 Position Statement for Audit Committees set out principles that it expects all local government bodies to strive to adopt, including the inclusion of at least two independent members of the committee, as well as undertaking a self-assessment of committee effectiveness.

Digital development

10.17 Developments in process automation, chatbot technology and artificial intelligence (AI) present a variety of opportunities to ESCC to support organisational capacity and resilience. The rapid progression of AI-enabled solutions means that expectations of ESCC service recipients are likely to evolve as well as the variety of technical solutions that may become available.

10.18 Whilst there would be a requirement for investment in establishing the prerequisite data architecture and technology infrastructure, and skilled resources in this area, it does present an opportunity to innovate in service provision to provide a more efficient and better service to users or to increase organisational resilience.

Current and Proposed Priority and Delivery Outcomes

a) Current priority and delivery outcomes

Driving sustainable economic growth - delivery outcomes

1. East Sussex businesses are supported to succeed and grow sustainably
2. The county is an attractive place to live, work and do business
3. Individuals, communities and businesses thrive in East Sussex with the environmental and social infrastructure to meet their needs
4. The workforce has and maintains the skills needed for good quality employment to meet the needs of the current and future East Sussex economy
5. The value of our role as both a significant employer and a buyer of local goods and services is maximised
6. All children progress well from early years through school and into post-16 education, training and employment

Keeping vulnerable people safe - delivery outcomes

7. All vulnerable people in East Sussex are known to relevant local agencies and services are delivered together to meet their needs
8. People feel safe at home and well supported by their networks
9. Children grow up supported by enduring, loving relationships
10. People feel safe with services
11. We work with the wider health and care system to support people to achieve the best outcomes possible

Helping people help themselves - delivery outcomes

12. Commissioners and providers from all sectors put people first when providing services and information to help them meet their needs
13. The most vulnerable get the support they need to maintain their independence and this is provided at or as close to home as possible
14. 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 - delivery outcomes

15. To help tackle Climate Change East Sussex County Council activities are carbon neutral as soon as possible and in any event by 2050
16. We work as One Council
17. We work in strong and sustained partnership with the public, voluntary community, social enterprise and private sectors to ensure that our collective resources and influence are used to deliver maximum benefits
18. Ensuring we achieve value for money in the services we commission and provide
19. Maximising the funding available through bidding for funding and lobbying for the best deal for East Sussex
20. We are an employer of choice and support our staff to achieve and develop

b) **Proposed** priority and delivery outcomes

Driving sustainable economic growth - delivery outcomes

1. East Sussex businesses are supported to succeed and grow sustainably
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18. Ensuring we achieve value for money in the services we commission and provide
19. Maximising the funding available through bidding for funding and lobbying for the best deal for East Sussex
20. 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

Appendix 4 – State of the County 2023 Capital Programme Update

Capital Programme Update

1 Background

- 1.1 Through the Reconciling Policy Performance and Resources (RPPR) process the Capital Strategy and programme are reviewed annually to ensure that they support the Council's responsibilities and departmental service strategies. To manage investment to a sustainable level, the Capital Strategy focuses on the delivery of targeted basic need for the council to continue to deliver services as efficiently as possible, rather than rationing through prioritisation. Basic need for the purpose of strategic capital planning is provided below: -
- Place: ensuring we can deliver services by planning for future need.
 - Asset Condition: maintaining our assets to an agreed level.
 - ICT Strategy: ensure that our ICT is fit for purpose for delivering modern council services in a digital era and protecting data.
 - Climate Change: supporting the Council's aim of reaching carbon neutrality from our activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050 in an appropriate and cost-efficient way.
- 1.2 At Full Council in February 2023 the target led basic need capital strategy of 20 years, supported by a 10-year planned capital programme was approved. The strategy provides for the programme being updated annually to maintain this 10-year planning horizon.
- 1.3 The capital programme 2022/23 to 2032/33 reported as part of the Budget in February 2023 had a total programme expenditure of £724.9m and a borrowing requirement of £332.9m. Table 1 below provides details of the approved capital programme and funding.

Table 1 – Capital Programme (Budget 2023) (£m)	2022/23	MTFP Period			2026/27 to 2032/33	Total
		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26		
Gross Expenditure	82.207	96.744	102.376	61.050	382.528	724.905
Specific Funding	(10.293)	(18.680)	(26.973)	(3.417)	(1.386)	(60.749)
Net Expenditure	71.914	78.064	75.403	57.633	381.142	664.156
Formula Grants	(33.418)	(25.243)	(17.937)	(17.960)	(135.738)	(230.296)
New Homes Bonus Grant	(0.816)	-	-	-	-	(0.816)
Capital Receipts	(9.591)	(5.149)	(3.149)	(3.360)	-	(21.249)
Reserves and Revenue Set Aside	(20.435)	(12.768)	(5.540)	(6.100)	(15.106)	(59.949)
Developer Contributions Target	-	-	-	-	(18.970)	(18.970)
Programme Borrowing	7.654	34.904	48.777	30.213	211.328	332.876

- 1.4 In addition to the basic need programme the Capital Strategy allows for the Council to consider business cases where a clear payback or funding stream can be demonstrated. Any payback reduces the borrowing in the year it is received and therefore contributes to the ongoing sustainability of the programme. As such these projects are not included in the capital programme until their overall impact, including funding implications, have been assessed and approved.

2 Capital Programme Updates

- 2.1 Table 2 below summarises the gross movements to the approved capital programme since budget setting in February 2023, noting that the first 3 years of the programme to 2025/26 are

approved, whilst the remaining years to 2032/33 are indicative to represent longer term planning against priority outcomes for capital investment. The movements reflect the 2022/23 outturn position and other updates in accordance with the approved governance and variation process. A detailed programme has been included at **Annex 1**.

Table 2 - Capital Programme (gross) movements (£m)	2022/23	MTFP Programme			2026/27 to 2032/33	Total
		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26		
Approved programme at February 2023	82.207	96.744	102.376	61.050	382.528	724.905
Approved Variations (see 2.2)	1.891	0.200	0.000	-	-	2.091
Other Programme Updates (2.3)	-	0.689	-	-	-	0.689
Capital Programme Reprofiles (2.4)	-	(17.007)	(10.399)	19.227	8.179	0.000
*2022/23 Net Outturn Slippage (2.4)	(7.988)	8.226	(0.200)	(0.038)	-	0.000
*2022/23 Net Outturn Over/Underspend (2.4)	(0.702)	-	-	-	-	(0.702)
*2022/23 Expenditure (2.4)	(75.408)	-	-	-	-	(75.408)
Total Programme	0.000	88.852	91.777	80.239	390.707	651.575

2.2 Net nil approved variations to the programme since Budget in February 2023 total a gross £2.1m, as summarised in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Approved Variations since February 2023	Gross Variation (£m)
Getting Building Fund: Observer Building (Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Specific Grant)	0.315
Getting Building Fund: Seven Sisters (Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Specific Grant)	0.084
Passenger Transport Software Replacement (revenue set aside)	0.037
Hastings/Bexhill Movement and Access Programme (Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Specific Grant)	0.174
Lewes Bus Station Replacement (revenue set aside)	0.100
Community Match Fund (Parish Council Contributions)	0.021
Youth Investment Fund (specific funding and revenue set aside)	0.193
Solar Panels on Primary Schools (specific grant)	0.151
Schools Delegated Capital (specific grant and schools contributions)	0.712
Eastbourne Town Centre Phase 2b (specific grant)	0.304
Total Net Nil Approved Variations	2.091

- 2.3 The capital programme has also been updated for cash limited programmes that represent grants received. Following government announcements of 2023/24 grant allocations, the Other Integrated Transport Schemes (£0.022m) and Schools Capital Building Improvements (£0.667m) programmes have been updated to reflect anticipated grant as detailed in section 3.
- 2.4 Total 2022/23 capital expenditure was £75.4m against an approved budget of £84.1m, resulting in a variation to budget of £8.7m. This variation comprises of net slippage of £8.0m which has been reprofiled into future years following a review by services and Capital and Strategic Asset Board, and a net underspend of £0.7m on the planned programme. Details of this are presented in the Q4 monitoring report. The revised programme also reflects reprofiles across years following a review from services to reflect current best knowledge.

3 Funding Update

- 3.1 At budget setting in February 2023 several announcements regarding future formula grant allocations were still outstanding. Assumptions previously made for planning purposes relating to these were therefore not changed, as levels were considered reasonably prudent. Given that these non-specific grants are used to fund the approved targeted Basic Need capital programme, not to inform the level of investment. The level of investment being a strategic decision by the Council. Therefore, the Capital Strategy asserts that any additionality is used to reduce the Councils need to borrow.
- 3.2 Considering the above, Table 4 provides the capital funding position, updated to reflect the 2022/23 outturn position, approved variations and Government funding announcements.

Table 4 - Capital Programme Funding movements (£m)	As at February 2023	Approved Variations (see 2.2)	2022/23 (Under) / Over Spend* (2.3)	2022/23 Funding * (2.3)	Other Funding Changes	Updated Funding
Developer Contributions - identified (see 3.7)	9.860	0.004	0.000	(0.558)	0.332	9.638
Development Contributions - Target (3.7)	18.970	-	-	-	(0.332)	18.638
Other Specific Funding	50.889	1.924	(0.856)	(7.472)	0.114	44.599
Capital Receipts (see 3.8)	21.249	-	-	(9.591)	3.162	14.820
Formula Grants (see 3.3 to 3.6)	230.296	-	-	(33.857)	8.584	205.023
New Homes Bonus Grant	0.816	-	-	(0.816)	-	0.000
Reserves and Revenue set aside	59.949	0.163	0.115	(17.302)	(0.034)	42.891
Borrowing	332.876	-	0.039	(5.812)	(11.137)	315.966
Total Programme Funding	724.905	2.091	(0.702)	(75.408)	0.689	651.575

Formula Grants

- 3.3 **Highways Maintenance Capital Funding:** As part of the Budget on 15 March 2023, the government announced an additional one-off £200million for highways maintenance for the financial year 2023/24, of which the East Sussex County Council allocation is £2.360m. In addition, the DfT also confirmed that Highways Maintenance allocations for 2022/23 of £13.275m per year will be rolled forward to 2023/24 and 2024/25, being an increase of £2.939m per year compared to the prudent planning assumption. It should be noted that these announcements are subject to wider incentivisation measures to be consulted on with local highways authorities.

The level of grant funding continues to be lower than the approved highways maintenance investment, and therefore in line with the principles outlined in the Capital Strategy, it is proposed that the total additional funding of £8.238m between 2023/24 to 2024/25 will reduce the required borrowing associated to highways investment.

The Integrated Transport capital programme is funded by the Integrated Transport Block at grant level, supported by external funding (such as developer contributions) approved via variations. The allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25 of £2.941m per annum have been announced alongside the Highways Maintenance block funding. Consistent with current funding

principles, the increase in Integrated Transport Block funding of £0.022m per year compared to the planning assumption will therefore result in an increase to the programme budget.

- 3.4 **Schools Basic Need Allocation:** On 28 March 2023 the Department for Education (DfE) announced the schools' capital funding to local authorities for the 2025/26 financial year to support the creation of places needed for September 2026. With regards to Schools Basic Need capital allocation, the announcement based principally on data collected from local authorities in the 2022 School Capacity Survey (SCA), represents a total decrease in funding of £0.344m compared to estimated grant funding. ESCC allocates this grant to fund the Schools Basic Need capital programme to meet the statutory duty of providing sufficient school places. The required level of investment is historically greater than the level of basic need grant received, with a borrowing requirement of £6.2m over the period 2022/23 to 2025/26.
- 3.5 **High Need Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA):** The DfE announcement in March 2022 provided allocations for the HNPCA for East Sussex County Council for 2022/23 (£3.775m) and 2023/24 (£5.124m). ESCC allocates this grant to fund the programme of required SEND places. From 2023 there will be a requirement to report on SEND places in the annual School Capacity (SCAP) return to the DfE in the same way for mainstream school places. As a result, capital funding for SEND places is likely to come through the council's annual school basic need funding allocation in future years.
- 3.6 **Schools Condition Allocation:** The Schools Capital Building Improvements programme is currently planned on the basis of priority one (health and safety) works; identified via condition reports, and essential safeguarding risk mitigation. This is a cash limited budget representing estimated grant received, thereby having a net nil impact on the programme. The confirmed funding allocations for 2023/24 of £4.649m represents an increase of £0.667m compared to planning assumptions and will therefore result in an increase to the programme budget.

Developer Contributions (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy)

- 3.7 S106 and CIL funding contributions provide an important source of funding towards basic need requirements and unfunded infrastructure schemes, and can often facilitate leverage of additional external funding. Ongoing work through the cross departmental CIL and S106 working group has identified a further £0.332m of developer contributions that can be used to fund basic need programme to reduce the S106/CIL funding target in the capital programme.

In May 2022, the Government introduced the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill into Parliament. Within this Bill are likely to be changes to the mechanism currently used for securing new and expanded infrastructure with the introduction of a single Infrastructure Levy which continues to increase the uncertainty with regard to this funding stream.

There continues to be a risk that the current target for Developer Infrastructure Contributions to support the programme is too high, and opportunities will be sought through the RPPR process to reduce the funding target while not increasing the need to borrow.

Capital Receipts

- 3.8 Review and refinement of Property Services schedule of capital receipts is undertaken on a regular basis with estimates based on Property Officers' professional judgement on a site by site basis. This is supported by the work undertaken recently and successfully getting a number of surplus properties to the point of sale. Following a recent review, it is suggested that anticipated capital receipts can be increased by £3.162m for capital planning purposes.

4 Programme Update and RPPR Next Steps

- 4.1 Work will now be progressed as part of the RPPR process to extend the programme by a further year to maintain a 10-year planning horizon and ensure continued links into, and support

of, the Council's other strategies, as well as adequacy of the risk provision and climate emergency work allocation.

- 4.2 The Capital Strategy will also be reviewed to ensure it continues to drive investment ambition in line with the Council's priorities and to continue to include equality impact assessments (EQIAs) as part of the capital RPPR process, whilst also providing for appropriate capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management within the context of sustainable, long-term delivery of services.
- 4.3 As part of RPPR Service Departments will also, as normal, be asked to conduct a general review of their specific investment and any ongoing business case development outside basic need. Specific issues arising are set out below: -

School Place Planning - School Basic Need and Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) School Places

- 4.4 There remains some uncertainty over precisely how many school places will be required in the future. This is dependent on local planning authorities developing their local plans for housing and the impact this will have on the number of school places required to serve those developments. The 10-year school basic need capital strategy will be updated taking into account potential impacts of local plan reviews to inform future requirement.
- 4.5 The number of children and young people in East Sussex with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) continues to rise steeply. In the next four years, it is forecast that overall numbers of children and young people aged 4-19 with EHCPs will grow by around 15%. The current capital budget allocation for SEND place provision is £21.9m over the MTFP period to 2025/26. This includes £18.9m for nursery, secondary and post-16 provision at Grove Park, which is proposed to be taken forward at the current primary school site subject to consultation and feasibility. An update of the schools basic need strategy over the summer will assess need and gaps in provision for specialist facilities and inform requirements for the wider 10-year programme as part of the RPPR process.

Highways Maintenance Investment

- 4.6 The Highways Maintenance capital programme was uplifted as part of the 2022/23 RPPR process to stem the rate of road deterioration and ensure the basic need target maintained current road conditions. A review of the latest highway maintenance prices from the recent highway contract procurement and the condition information from recent surveys in is being undertaken to inform potential additional one-off and ongoing investment requirements to maintain the Council's road condition targets of 4%, 4% and 14%, and is to be considered as part of a separate report and as part of the RPPR process.

Carbon Neutral Commitment

- 4.7 To achieve the Council's aim of reaching carbon net zero by 2050 at the latest in an appropriate and cost-efficient way, extensive works to decarbonise ESCC's estates operations will be necessary. It is anticipated that there will be increasing pressures on the current programme due to the climate change agenda meaning additional requirements will need to be incorporated into the current programme, such as emerging environmental planning requirements and low carbon replacements of current assets.

Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS)

- 4.8 The Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) programme was established to deliver the replacement of the Council's financial, resource management and procurement systems. The total approved capital budget allocation for the MBOS delivery is £13.1m, of which £3.3m is remaining in 2023/24. Additional resources are earmarked in reserves to support delivery, to be

included in the capital programme as an approved variation at a later date as the programme progresses.

5 Programme Risks and Pressures

- 5.1 A £7.5m ongoing risk provision was approved in February 2023 to mitigate against capital programme risks, representing more than 2% of the programme over the MTFP period. This risk provision is a permission to borrow for emerging risks and is managed through ensuring Treasury Management capacity rather than representing funds that are within the Council's accounts. There are several risks and uncertainties regarding the programme to 2025/26 and beyond which have necessitated holding a risk provision, these risks as reported at Budget 2023 include:
- Excess inflationary pressures on construction costs
 - Uncertainty about delivery of projects in the programme, e.g. highways and infrastructure requirements
 - Any as yet unquantifiable impact of supply issues and cost increases
 - Any as yet unknown requirements,
 - Residual project provision (previously removed) if required; and
 - Uncertainty regarding the level of government grants and the ability to meet CIL and S106 targets.
- 5.2 There are currently increased uncertainties that exist within the construction industry in terms of supply chain issues and high-cost inflation. The capital programme includes an element of 'normal' level of inflation for ongoing target-based core programmes (as opposed to programmes that have cash limited envelopes) such as Highways of 3% annually, with any increases above this level to be covered by the risk provision.
- 5.3 In addition, it is anticipated that there will be increasing pressures on the current programme due to the climate change agenda meaning additional requirements will need to be incorporated into the current programme, such as emerging environmental planning requirements and low carbon replacements of current assets. The risk provision and potential provision for the area will be reviewed as these requirements become clearer.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This report provides an update on current approved capital programme as part of the annual RPPR cycle. Work will now be progressed as part of the RPPR process to extend the programme by a further year to maintain the 10-year planning horizon and link into and support the Council's other strategies. The Capital Strategy and programme will be reviewed, considering other Council strategies as defined in the Capital Strategy, any requirements outside basic need will need to be supported by a business case.

Annex 1 – Detailed Capital Programme

Capital Programme (gross) (£m)	MTFP Period			2026/27 to 2032/33	Total
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26		
Adult Social Care:					
House Adaptations	0.050	0.050	0.050	-	0.150
Learning Disability Support Living Scheme	2.177	2.914	0.854	0.104	6.049
Greenacres	0.140	-	-	-	0.140
Adult Social Care Gross	2.367	2.964	0.904	0.104	6.339
Business Services:					
Salix Contract	0.350	0.350	-	-	0.700
Lansdowne Secure Unit – Phase 2	0.065	-	-	-	0.065
Schools Basic Need	1.931	0.837	11.833	49.177	63.778
Special Educational Needs	1.692	1.347	-	-	3.039
Special Educational Needs – Additional Places	5.422	8.000	5.000	0.429	18.851
Disability Children's Homes	0.716	0.024	-	-	0.740
Westfield Lane	0.053	-	-	-	0.053
Capital Building Improvements (Schools)	5.594	4.199	4.182	28.074	42.049
Capital Building Improvements (Corporate)	3.509	4.640	4.640	31.960	44.749
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation	4.742	5.319	7.187	55.708	72.956
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation - MBOS	3.332	-	-	-	3.332
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation - Utilising Automation	0.024	-	-	-	0.024
Business Services Gross	27.430	24.716	32.842	165.348	250.336
Children's Services:					
House Adaptations	0.050	0.050	0.050	-	0.150
School Delegated Capital	1.150	1.150	1.150	-	3.450
Conquest Centre Redevelopment	0.015	-	-	-	0.015
Children's Services Gross	1.215	1.200	1.200	-	3.615
Communities, Economy & Transport:					
Broadband	0.160	0.100	5.257	-	5.517
Climate Emergency Works	3.095	5.459	-	-	8.554
Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme	0.943	0.930	0.989	0.683	3.545
Bexhill and Hastings Link Road – Complementary Measures	0.189	-	-	-	0.189
Economic Intervention Fund – Grants	0.175	0.300	0.300	1.083	1.858
Economic Intervention Fund – Loans	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.850	1.750
Stalled Sites	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.120	0.270
Upgrading Empty Commercial Properties	-	0.007	-	-	0.007
Community Match Fund	0.140	0.325	-	-	0.465
Community Road Safety Interventions	0.485	0.237	-	-	0.722

Newhaven Port Access Road	0.086	0.708	-	-	0.794
Real Time Passenger Information	0.070	0.094	0.061		0.225
Passenger Services Software	0.026	-	-	-	0.026
Bus Services Improvement Plan	3.245	18.680	-	-	21.925
Lewes Bus Station Replacement	0.004	-	-	-	0.004
Queensway Depot Development	0.504	-	-	-	0.504
The Keep	0.228	0.026	-	0.823	1.077
Other Integrated Transport Schemes	3.740	3.308	7.324	20.762	35.134
Integrated Transport Schemes – A22 Corridor	0.100	-	-	-	0.100
Exceat Bridge Replacement	2.320	3.612	0.920	-	6.852
Libraries Basic Need	0.508	0.799	0.449	1.796	3.552
Peacehaven Library Refurbishment and Conversion	-	0.027	-	-	0.027
Highways Structural Maintenance	20.193	21.688	22.246	172.805	236.932
Bridge/Structures Assessment Strengthening	4.740	1.775	3.025	14.616	24.156
Street Lighting and Traffic Signals	4.686	3.839	3.888	8.012	20.425
Street Lighting and Traffic Signals – Salix Scheme	0.219	-	-	-	0.219
Visibly Better Roads	1.293	-	-	-	1.293
Rights of Way Surface Repairs and Bridges	0.552	0.514	0.484	3.705	5.255
Communities, Economy & Transport (LEP Funded Schemes):					
Eastbourne Town Centre Phase 2	3.296	-	-	-	3.296
Eastbourne/South Wealden Walking & Cycling Package	2.064	-	-	-	2.064
Hailsham/Polegate/Eastbourne Movement & Access Corridor	0.275	0.119	-	-	0.394
Hastings & Bexhill Movement & Access Package	4.154	-	-	-	4.154
Communities, Economy & Transport Gross	57.840	62.897	45.293	225.255	391.285
Total Programme Gross	88.852	91.777	80.239	390.707	651.575

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date: 17 July 2023

By: Chair of the Review Board

Title: Scrutiny Review – Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health

Purpose: To present the outcomes of the Scrutiny Review and make recommendations

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is recommended to consider and endorse the report of the Review Board, and make recommendations to Cabinet for comment and County Council for approval.

1. Background

1.1 The Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Department has developed an ASCH Equality and Inclusion Strategy, which is now in its third year of delivery. In March 2022 the People Scrutiny Committee established a Scoping Board to consider this Strategy, and the ongoing work to deliver it, to help identify any possible gaps in the approach and future priorities for the work.

1.2 A Scoping Board met on 1 July 2022 and heard about the mechanisms ASCH uses for engagement, including its use of consultations and equality impact assessments, and how the Department is trying to improve its engagement with seldom heard communities and people.

1.3 The Scoping Board concluded, based on the discussion with officers, that whilst they were encouraged by the work underway, there were issues that could benefit from closer examination by scrutiny through a review, in particular identifying key barriers preventing seldom heard groups and people from engaging with and accessing ASCH services. The Scoping Board agreed to focus on the following areas, which were subsequently agreed by the committee as the basis for the scrutiny review:

- Identifying key communities that ASCH seldom hears from, but should
- Barriers preventing groups and people from accessing services
- How ASCH can ameliorate those barriers and improve its engagement with those groups

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Scrutiny Review Board is comprised of Councillors Penny di Cara, Nuala Geary, John Ungar and Trevor Webb. Councillor Ungar was appointed as the Chair of the Review Board.

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

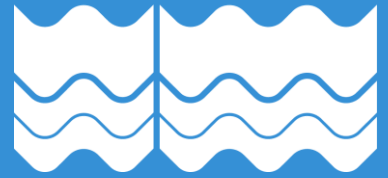
3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Committee is recommended to consider and endorse the Review Board's report for submission to Cabinet and County Council on 28 September 2023 and 10 October 2023 respectively.

Councillor John Ungar
Chair of the Review Board

Contact Officer: Rachel Sweeney Tel: 07561267461
Email: rachel.sweeney@eastsussex.gov.uk

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Scrutiny Review of Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health

Report by the Review Board:

Councillor John Ungar (Chair)

Councillor Nuala Geary

Councillor Penny di Cara

Councillor Trevor Webb

People Scrutiny Committee - 17 July 2023

Cabinet - 28 September 2023

Full Council - 10 October 2023

The report of the Scrutiny Review of Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health

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Recommendations

	Recommendation	Page
1	<p>To continue to learn about and listen to seldom heard groups and people and share findings with key partners. The Department should prioritise resources to take actions and adapt services to remove barriers for these communities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the use of internal and external forums and advisory groups and through ongoing conversations with external partners and trusted people in the communities; b) considering whether engagement has taken place with these communities and people by recording this in Equality Impact Assessments, where applicable; c) giving feedback to seldom heard communities about how responses to engagement have been utilised through appropriate approved mechanisms in a timely manner including in print and online. 	13
2	<p>The Department to work closely with internal and external partners and trusted partners in the community, with expertise on working with seldom heard people and communities, to tackle stigma and lack of trust. Including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) collaborating with the Homeless Inclusion Health Service to make signposting/ referral to ASCH easier and simplified. b) collaborating with Gypsy and Traveller Team to gain better inside knowledge into the communities they work with and to spread awareness about accessing ASCH services. 	18
3	<p>The Department to involve, engage and include communities by reaching out to them through community events with trusted partners in the communities in order to record, and disseminate feedback about effectiveness of services and policies within the Department to embed learning.</p>	19
4	<p>The Department to make use of links with people associated with ASCH including Members, volunteers, People Bank and Citizens Panel members and VCSE partners to support the sharing of information about ASCH services and programmes with wider residents.</p>	20
5	<p>The Department to work closely with ESCC's Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Board to support broader approaches to community engagement across the Council through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) co-ordinating mechanisms for engagement with communities identified as being seldom heard; b) furthering best practice through the development of a community engagement framework, ensuring all communities, including seldom heard groups, are clear on how their feedback will be used and the outcomes of engagement work. 	20

6	<p>The Department to develop staff knowledge and skills through ensuring appropriate provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the development of peer learning opportunities to enable staff to share knowledge and experience; b) embedding knowledge and skills about working effectively with people from seldom heard communities into ESCC equality, diversity and inclusion training; c) developing the equality, diversity and inclusion training offer to staff through training by expert partners, incorporating this into staff CPD, and ensuring that training is responsive to changing local need; d) ensuring managers support and actively encourage staff to attend equality, diversity and inclusion training. 	22
7	<p>The Department should ensure that it raises awareness about its services and that communication is accessible and inclusive by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) undertaking further work to promote and support the use of ESCC interpreting and translation services to staff, and using this to respond to changing local need; b) using a variety of all available and appropriate communication media and formats to target particular groups including non-text and translated versions, and including providing newsletters and information leaflets in different formats; c) communicating clearly what the service and offer is in promotional material; d) ensuring that the priorities identified in the Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care Review are considered in communications. 	23
8	<p>The Department to increase inclusivity at initial contact by adapting services to support the needs of communities and individuals, considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) how to support people to access services; b) the location, timing and staffing at meetings to support different needs, including being sensitive to cultural and religious values; c) how information is presented to and gathered from people. 	24
9	<p>The Department to develop a systematic way of working with a range of partners in relation to seldom heard groups by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) building upon existing relationships and exploring new partnership work by regularly reviewing and expanding the list of identified VCSE partners to help build trust with seldom heard groups; b) supporting partners to facilitate equality, inclusion and diversity conversations through guidance; c) where possible, sharing data with other local authorities and groups to support people moving in and out of East Sussex. 	26

Introduction

1. The Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Department has developed an ASCH Equality and Inclusion Strategy, which is now in its third year of delivery. This sits within the broader One Council approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and focuses on actions which are more specific to ASCH services.
2. The strategy sets out how the Department will:
 - Tackle equality issues
 - Aim to eliminate discrimination
 - Create good relationships between communities
 - Ensure those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
3. At the People Scrutiny Committee meeting on 24 March 2022, the Department indicated it would welcome scrutiny consideration of this strategy, and the ongoing work to deliver it, to help identify any possible gaps in the approach and future priorities for the work. A Scoping Board met later in 2022 and heard about the mechanisms ASCH uses for engagement, including its use of consultations and equality impact assessments, and how the Department is trying to improve its engagement with seldom heard communities and people.
4. The Board concluded that, whilst they were encouraged by the work underway, there were issues that could benefit from closer examination by scrutiny through a review. The Board agreed to focus on the following lines of enquiry:

1) Defining and engaging with seldom heard groups:

- a) Who are the key communities in East Sussex that ASCH seldom hears from in its engagement but should?
- b) How could the Department improve its engagement with those groups?

2) Accessing services:

- a) Building on previous research, what is the level of understanding and awareness of ASCH services among residents, including those from seldom heard groups, and are there ways this can be improved?
- b) If residents, including those in seldom heard groups, are aware of ASCH services but choosing not to access them, why is that?
- c) Are there barriers preventing residents, including seldom heard groups, approaching ASCH services?
 - i) Is lack of trust or confidence in services a barrier?
 - ii) Is use of digital communication and services a barrier?
 - iii) If there are barriers, how could they be addressed?

5. The review looked at a range of evidence including information provided by the Department, internal data, external reports and case studies, and heard from a range of witnesses.

6. The Department provided key evidence based on interviews with a number of partners including, but not limited to: NHS Sussex; ASCH Operational, Commissioning and Strategy teams; CET Libraries and Gypsy and Traveller Teams; VCSE partners including Healthwatch East Sussex, Groundwork - Together South project, East Sussex Recovery Alliance, Traveller Pride, ADFAM, African Community in Surrey and Sussex, Citizens Advice, Homeless and Inclusion Health Service, Refugee Buddy Project, Care for the Carers, Lewes Area Access Group, Eastbourne Dementia Action Alliance, East Sussex Refuge Service, Lewes District Food Partnership, East Sussex Seniors Association, Possability People, Sanctuary Café, Diversity Lewes, Diversity Resource International, Hastings Voluntary Action, Sussex Community Development Association, Eastbourne Rainbow Alliance, East Sussex Hearing, Eastbourne Blind Society, Tech Resort and many more individuals and key voices in the community as well as engagement forums.

7. During this review the Board found that there were several groups which could have better engagement with ASCH and a number of barriers which may be preventing people within these groups from accessing ASCH services. The review identified who seldom heard groups were, what some of the barriers are to accessing services, and explored potential solutions to remove these barriers and increase engagement. The Review Board found that some of these barriers were relevant across different community groups and recommendations put forward in this report are therefore aiming to increase engagement across multiple groups and be as far reaching as possible to support the Department and the wider Council in offering an accessible and inclusive service overall.

Background

Local and National Context

National legislation

8. The [Equality Act](#) was introduced in 2010 to protect people's rights and encourage equal opportunities, as well as provide an updated, simplified and accessible framework of discrimination law.

9. Under the Act, people are not allowed to discriminate, harass or victimise anyone because of the following 'protected characteristics':

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

10. Two additional characteristics that ESCC recognises are:

- carers
- rurality

11. The Equality Act includes an equality duty for public bodies. It says that public bodies, including councils, must show 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

12. East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has a One Council approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring a consistent and co-ordinated approach across the organisation, whilst also recognising that there are service specific needs and issues which are appropriate to take forward at departmental level. A single Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan supports the development of equality, diversity and inclusion strategies across the Council, and, where relevant, individual departments take forward specific action plans which address more service specific issues. This includes the ASCH Equality and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.

Adult Social Care and Health

13. ASCH provides support to adults, communities and networks to enable people to live as healthily and independently as possible and for as long as possible. Services offer a range of support including with care, housing, safety, and living a healthy

lifestyle. An overview of the range of ASCH services and support is detailed on the [Adult social care and health | East Sussex County Council](#) website.

Adult Social Care and Health Equality and Inclusion Strategy

14. The [ASCH Equality and Inclusion Strategy](#) is a three-year strategy that sets out the Department's commitment to promoting equality and diversity across all its services and within the workforce. As part of this strategy, ASCH has identified five key priorities:

1. Know our communities
2. Have inclusivity at the heart of service development and strengthening engagement with communities
3. Create a safe, fair and inclusive work environment
4. Use robust data collection from service users and use of data for equality analysis
5. Strengthen ASCH staff practice and knowledge on all aspects of equality and human rights as they connect with ASCH work

15. To further 'strengthening engagement with communities', outlined in priority 2, ASCH identified the need to enhance understanding of people and communities they seldom hear from and are creating an Action Plan to address some of the identified barriers to this engagement.

Equality data for East Sussex

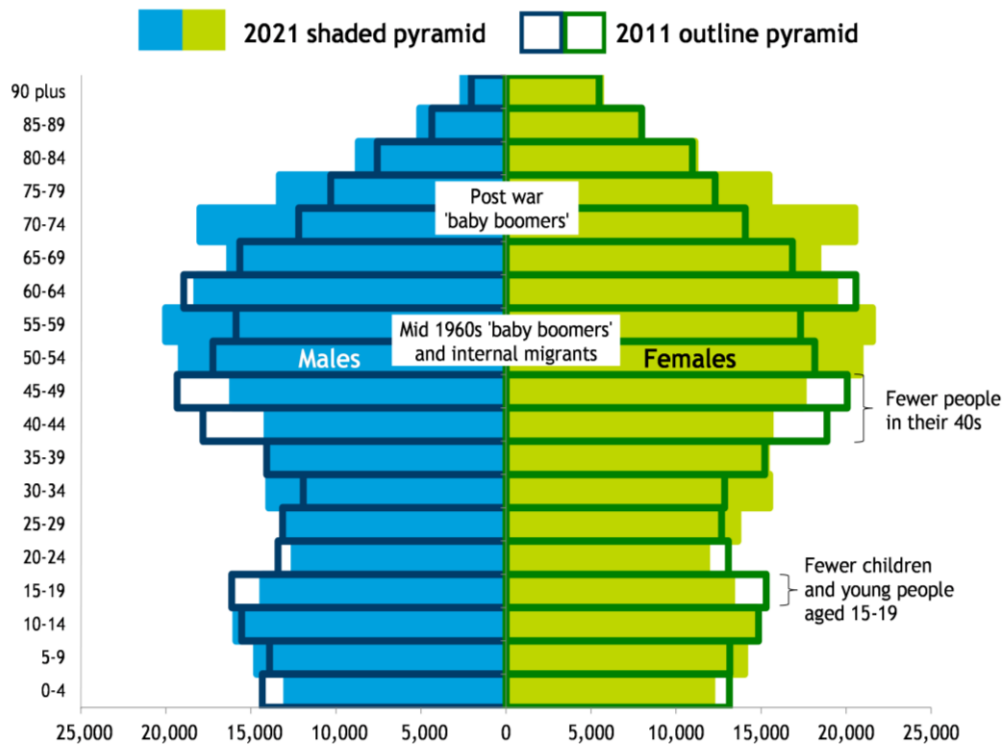
16. East Sussex recorded a population of **545,800** in the 2021 census. The Census also provided updated data in relation to a number of characteristics protected under the Equality Act.

Demographics

17. People aged 65 and over make up **26.1%** of the county's population. This is considerably higher than the national picture where 18.6% of the population in England is aged 65 and over. East Sussex continues to have the second-highest proportion of over-85s in the country, just behind Dorset.

18. East Sussex has consistently had a higher life expectancy for both men and women than the national average, however there is a gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas of East Sussex, with the biggest causes of death associated with these gaps being circulatory diseases, cancers, and respiratory diseases.

East Sussex Population by age and gender



19. 8% of the adult population in East Sussex is from an ethnic minority background including White minority groups, although there are notable variations by area. This compares to 18.8% in England.

20. In Census data 96.3% of usual residents¹ of East Sussex aged three years and over cited English as their main language in 2021. A further 3.2% of the overall population were proficient in English, and said they spoke English either "well" or "very well", but did not speak it as their main language. Additionally, 0.5% could not speak English well, and a small percentage (0.1%) of the overall population could not speak English at all.

21. The number of people stating that they have no religion in East Sussex increased to 44.7% in 2021 from 29.6% in 2011. 45.9% of usual residents of East Sussex identified as Christian down from 59.9% in 2011 and the proportion of the population stating they were Muslim increased from 0.8% in 2011 to 1.1% in 2021.

22. The 2021 Census shows 89.2% of the population aged 16 and over identify as straight or heterosexual and 3.3% identify with an LGBT+ orientation. 7.5% of people did not answer the voluntary question.

¹ A usual resident is anyone who on Census Day, 21 March 2021, was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months

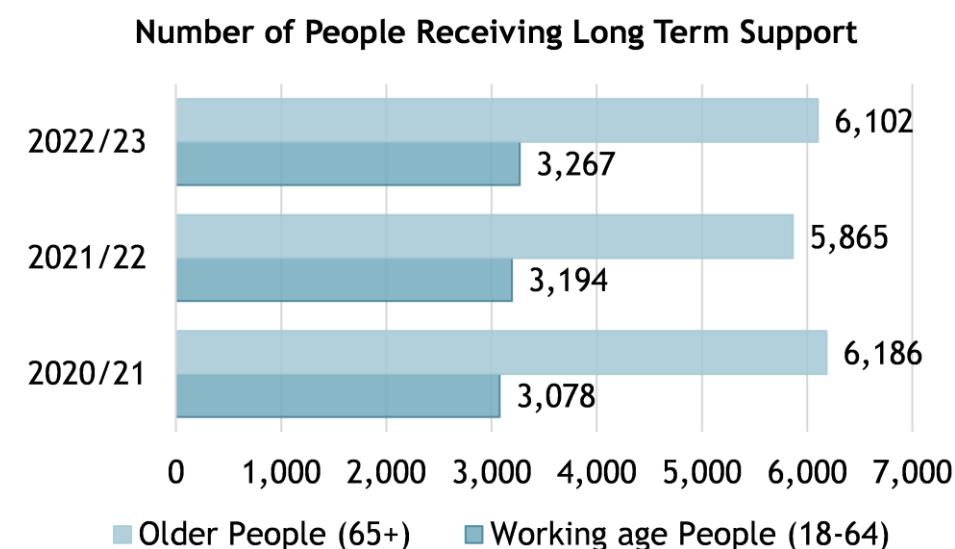
23. **73.7%** of the population in East Sussex live in an urban area, with the remaining **26.3%** living in a rural area.

24. The 2021 Census showed **34.8%** of households in East Sussex had at least one member identifying as disabled. Local projections suggest that by 2033 there will be over **119,000** disabled people in East Sussex and **12,340** older people (65+) are projected to have dementia (up 7.2%) by 2025.

25. [Projecting Older People Population Information](#) data suggested that by 2028, around **20,000** more people in East Sussex, compared with the needs of the population in 2018, will be living with two or more long term health conditions, increasing the need for support from unpaid carers and the health and social care system.

Adult Social Care and Health

26. ASCH supports a large number of the population in East Sussex. In 2022/23, **27,335** people were supported by ASCH and **9,369** clients were supported with Long Term Support.



27. Compared to 2022, by 2025 it is predicted that, in East Sussex, there will be **41,060** older people (age 65+) projected to have a limiting long-term illness whose day to day activities are limited a little (up 6.5%) and **31,450** people's day to day activities will be limited a lot (up 6.8%), indicating that demand for ASCH support will continue to increase.

28. **5,760** carers received support from ASCH (including information and advice) in 2020/21. These carers were providing care for **5,838** people, highlighting that some carers provide care for more than one person. **40%** of carers are 26-64 years old and **48%** are 65-85 years old.

Review Board Findings

Identifying and defining seldom heard groups

29. To address the Review's first line of enquiry, the Review Board sought to define and understand the term 'seldom heard', and to identify who this term relates to. The ASCH Department defines seldom heard as:

“under-represented people who use or might potentially use health or social care services and who are less likely to be heard by these service professionals and decision-makers”

30. 'Seldom heard' has replaced the term 'hard to reach' (which can suggest that the problem lies within the group, rather than within services' approach to them) and emphasises the responsibility of agencies to reach out to excluded people, ensuring that they have access to health and social care services and that their voices can be heard. Although this review focuses on engagement with seldom heard groups, the Department recognised the importance of enhanced engagement with, and inclusion of, people from all communities and of all identities in their work.

31. The Board found that the Department had carried out extensive work to understand the needs of its service users and identify people it seldom hears from. This included data gathering, internally and from partners from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE), staff engagement sessions and engagement with intermediaries representing seldom heard communities.

32. This work helped to identify key groups who may be less likely to engage with services including people protected under the Equality Act including:

- Older people
- Unpaid carers
- People from ethnic minorities, particularly people who do not speak English as their main language, or do not speak it 'well' or 'very well'
- Disabled people, including those with invisible disabilities, sensory impairment or a mental health condition
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people
- Trans and non-binary people
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- People in rural areas

33. Communities which are seldom heard due to social circumstances were also identified, including:

- Homeless people
- People in prison

- People with low levels of literacy
- People who are digitally excluded
- People in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction, and their families
- People who have experienced domestic abuse

34. Community engagement for the new Adult Social Care Strategy identified additional groups including men at risk of suicide, people in the armed forces and veterans, and people with unmet need or not yet eligible for ASCH support.

35. It was agreed that seldom heard people may be different for each service and/or department but the above list applies to most public services. In light of the wide range of groups identified the Board agreed, for the purposes of the review, to focus on a sub-set in order to explore the lines of enquiry and identify potential recommendations which may have broader relevance. The Board's research included, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, homeless people, ethnic minority groups and communities (including refugees and asylum seekers), older people, adults who are digitally excluded and unpaid carers.

36. Other issues and barriers, which cut across several groups, were considered more generally as part of the Review.

37. Information provided by the Council's Equality Manager stressed that the people who are seldom heard may change over time and that it was important to note the different layers of identity and to consider intersectionality; how different aspects of people's identities (such as ethnicity, gender, age, disability and so on) can interact and affect how we experience the world and how we are seen and treated.

38. ASCH communicates with a number of groups through relationships with partners. The Board questioned how the Department knew those partners were reaching the right people in the community and heard in response that, to mitigate the risk of over reliance on organisations to communicate with groups, the Department uses a variety of methods to engage, including through the use of a diverse VCSE sector and District and Borough and Parish and Town councils, to ensure there is not a singular reliance on any organisation. ASCH is continually seeking to build upon these networks to ensure they are increasing their reach in the community.

39. Members recognised that who is seldom heard will change over time and concluded that it would be important to continue engagement work to not only address barriers, but to continue to identify groups and people they seldom hear from, moreover engagement when developing services was critical across the whole community. Evidence from the Council's Equality Manager and the ASCH Policy Development Manager stressed the importance of ongoing conversations with groups through the use of forums, advisory groups and with external partners. This work needs to be considered at the right stages of projects and service changes, and its effectiveness monitored.

Recommendation 1

To continue to learn about and listen to seldom heard groups and people and share findings with key partners. The Department should prioritise resources to take actions and adapt services to remove barriers for these communities through:

- a) the use of internal and external forums and advisory groups and through ongoing conversations with external partners and trusted people in the communities;
- b) considering whether engagement has taken place with these communities and people by recording this in Equality Impact Assessments, where applicable;
- c) giving feedback to seldom heard communities about how responses to engagement have been utilised through appropriate approved mechanisms in a timely manner including in print and online.

40. Having reviewed evidence on the engagement undertaken to date, the Board concluded that this had been extensive and had been thorough in identifying potentially seldom heard groups. Moreover, this work was informing ongoing actions. The Board therefore focused the review primarily on the second area of enquiry, understanding and addressing barriers. This was informed by the existing robust analysis of seldom heard groups and sought to build on this and gain a deeper understanding.

Understanding and addressing barriers

Understanding barriers

41. Work to understand the barriers to residents engaging with ASCH is ongoing, with the Department recognising that a minority of people intentionally do not want to interact with public services. The Board drew on a range of sources to assess and explore levels of understanding, including information from staff, based on their experience of working with clients and carers, case studies and research locally and in other parts of the country, and by talking to a range of people working with specific groups of people within the county who may be seldom heard.

42. ASCH staff engagement sessions highlighted a number of barriers facing some residents, including:

- a lack of trust in ASCH
- stigma around accessing services
- poor literacy skills
- digital exclusion
- a fear of social services/a lack of understanding about ASCH
- cultural differences
- mental health issues

- a lack of plain English in communications/inaccessible forms

43. Interviews with external partners undertaken by ASCH similarly noted barriers of trust, stigma, feeling excluded from the wider community, a lack of understanding of what services are available, the inability to access services and/or frustrations with lengthy processes.

44. To further explore the local position, the Board discussed the findings from the Activmob report *East Sussex County Council, Adult Social Care & Health: Experience during Covid-19 lockdown: What can we learn from population groups?* A key finding in this report was that the majority of participants (people from ethnic minority backgrounds, younger people, older people, and men) responded that they had ‘absolutely no idea or very little awareness at all of what ASCH can offer’. For those who did know, there was a negative view regarding accessing support and many would only do so if someone told them to get help from the service. The ASCH Policy Development Manager confirmed to the Board that evidence suggested the main barrier to people accessing services was a lack of awareness.

45. The Board heard from a number of witnesses who were able to provide greater insight into barriers preventing groups they worked with from accessing services. Although not every seldom heard group was represented, the Board were presented with a range of insights from witnesses who work with specific groups in the community and it became apparent to the Board that many of the barriers cited in relation to specific communities shared similar themes and applied to multiple groups. A systematic view of these barriers was developed by the Department and grouped into four main categories:

- **Organisational barriers** - which impacts on the seldom heard if they are unable to find, or have difficulty accessing services, for example some clients may find forms or fast paced meetings challenging, or have insufficient funds to travel.
- **Cultural barriers** - including a stigma associated with using or needing services.
- **Practical barriers** - if there are not practical steps in place to help people access services, for example information translated into languages.
- **Attitudinal/Behavioural barriers** - relating to attitudes of people and staff, including unconscious biases. This can lead to a relationship which is disempowering between staff and clients.

Examples of Organisational barriers

46. The Board heard from the Head of the Homeless and Inclusion Health Service (HIH), which provides outreach care for homeless people and rough sleepers in Eastbourne. The HIH offers pop up services in the community on a regular basis, aiming to build trust through continuity of staffing and creating a friendly and safe space. The Head of HIH felt that there was a general lack of knowledge and awareness of ASCH within the homeless community, and amongst related health professionals, which may prevent some people from engaging with and accessing services. This included information about who supports homelessness preventative

“People who need support the most, have the least access”

- Homeless and Inclusion Health Service

initiatives, including the Rough Sleepers Initiative and Changing Futures. The Board was also informed of the need for local authorities to share information to ensure continuity of care for transient communities. Lengthy processes for referrals and delays in being offered an assessment were also cited as significant barriers for this transient population.

47. This lack of awareness was also highlighted by the ASCH Practice Manager in relation to support for the prison population. The Board heard that the proportion of prisoners (at HMP Lewes) accessing ASCH services is low, and although this is mainly due to basic support for daily living being offered through the prison service, it is also due to prison officers not being consistently aware of the support available from ASCH.

Examples of Cultural barriers

48. The Board heard from the Council's Gypsy and Traveller Team Manager who highlighted a range of issues affecting these communities, including poor health, low levels of literacy, and inequalities in access to healthcare (particularly mental health services). Many within Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities report feeling excluded from society, both at a national and local level and, due to negative portrayals in the media, many find it hard to build trust with people outside of their community. The Board also heard that communication with these communities is extremely difficult, and it often takes many years for teams to build trust; this is additionally challenging when families and individuals are likely to move and when staff change in teams or roles are restructured.

49. The Board asked about barriers facing people coming to the UK and heard from a Senior Outreach & Community Engagement Officer at Groundwork South about his own experiences as a refugee, as well as working with refugees in East Sussex. He told the Board that cultural differences impacted on some people's opportunities to integrate locally and utilise local services. Moreover, although there is English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision in colleges and schools in East Sussex, many providers do not understand the background of these communities and the additional barriers many are facing, including mental health problems and trauma.

"Information presented is in a complex language; people don't understand it"

- Diversity Lewes

50. Cultural barriers were also presented as a barrier to carers accessing support. The Board heard from the Chief Executive of Care for the Carers (CftC) about the role of carers in East Sussex. Caring can involve taking on a number of supporting roles for family, friends or neighbours for reasons such as frailty, substance misuse, disability or mental health problems. Caring cuts across all communities and every role is different; it is estimated that unpaid carers match the number of NHS workers in the UK, with most people taking on caring roles at some point in their lives. The Chief Executive of CftC informed the Board that there is often a reluctance from carers to identify as a 'carer' (this is even more prevalent in certain cultures) which results in some people being unaware of the support available to them.

51. The Board reviewed the report ‘*Understanding unpaid carers and their access to support*’ by the Health Foundation (2023), which suggests that only a small proportion of carers request support from their local authority. Evidence suggests that barriers facing many carers include feelings of isolation, cultural stigma around care, and, for many, financial pressures.

52. The Chair of East Sussex Seniors Association (ESSA) told the Board that some older people were too proud to ask for help, feeling that support was not for them. The Board heard that it is a struggle to get information out, to break down this stigma and to make people aware that support is available to everyone. The Chair also informed the Board that some older people had moved to rural parts of East Sussex to retire but had left social groups behind and now felt isolated, especially those who had become carers or had been bereaved. This isolation, coupled with difficulties getting online or travelling into towns, often results in older people not being able to engage with events and services.

“People are too proud to ask for help”

- East Sussex Seniors Association

Examples of Practical barriers

53. The Head of HH highlighted a number of barriers facing the homeless community including, for some, mental health problems, substance misuse, and the significant barrier of not having a fixed address. This can prevent some individuals accessing primary care, including receiving medicine, and supporting this community is increasingly challenging when individuals move around, including in and out of local authorities.

54. The Board noted similar barriers affecting other transient communities like people from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller backgrounds, as well as an inconsistency of support when people move across counties.

55. The Board heard from the Senior Outreach & Community Engagement Officer at Groundwork South that being unable to communicate in English is a significant barrier for many refugees trying to access local services. This language barrier, and lack of alternative options, often results in people being unable to fill out paperwork, or read information in letters and leaflets, and needing to seek assistance from others.

56. The Chair of the ESSA told the Board of her experiences of supporting older people, including that only around 13% of ESSA members were online, with many older people not trusting online services (including banking). She indicated that in rural areas many were now struggling to access in person services due to a reduction in bus services and the closure of banks, and that a lot of older people felt very left behind with rapid changes to service delivery. She explained that when people don’t see an associated phone number to access a service, and only a website or email address, that can be the biggest barrier to asking for help.

57. The Board explored digital exclusion further and how being digitally excluded may prevent some adults from accessing and engaging with ASCH services. The Being Digital Delivery Manager informed the Board that the ability to access ASCH services in East Sussex was not reliant upon internet usage, however, people who could use digital technologies would be able to access information and advice more quickly and

easily given that all the information published in leaflets and factsheets is available instantaneously on the ESCC website, removing the need to phone for information, or obtain a paper leaflet.

58. Conversations with witnesses highlighted that low levels of literacy amongst certain groups further impacted on their understanding and awareness of services, as well as acting as a barrier to accessing those services. The Board explored this further and heard from a Librarian who runs the ESCC Library Service programme ‘Step into Reading’, which provides one to one phonics reading sessions to adult learners. They heard that the demographic of learners was varied, including people of all ages, and sessions were taking place across the county. Most learners had complex needs including a special educational need and/or a neurodiversity issue which impacted on process and recall of language.

59. In relation to the prison population, security and systems can also be a practical restriction on the ability to provide care to prisoners, with incidents such as lockdowns preventing care workers accessing clients. The Board heard that the Department was working to increase the uptake of social care support by prisoners by continuing to liaise with the prison’s inclusion officer and using communication mechanisms that are in plain English and Easy Read to help promote offers to the prison population, many of whom have low levels of literacy. The Board suggested that relationships could also be built with VCSE organisations working in the prison to spread awareness of ASCH support.

Examples of Attitudinal/Behavioural barriers

60. The Board heard some examples of barriers relating to attitudes or lack of representation in communications. For instance, HOPE G in Hastings, who represent older people from ethnic minorities, had reported to ESSA discrimination in that there can be language and cultural barriers when accessing services, with some information too complex or perceived as unrepresentative.

“We just want to be respected and accepted as who we are”

- Eastbourne Rainbow

61. A case study on Greater Manchester’s ‘*Improving access to health services in the LGBT community*’ highlighted that previous discriminatory experiences with health services had resulted in some LGBT people feeling reluctant to access council services and that staff were not knowledgeable enough of their specific needs. Lack of representation of LGBT people in communications and promotional material also acted as a barrier to accessing services in this study.

62. The Board noted the feelings of being disrespected and discriminated against that people from minoritised communities, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds and LGBTQ+ people, can face. These can impact negatively on people’s ability to access services.

Lack of trust and stigma around using services

63. Evidence from interviews with external partners and witnesses, and from broader case studies, suggested that stigma around accessing services or identifying in a certain way, and a lack of trust in government or council services were key barriers

for many groups. This lack of trust often stemmed from previous negative experiences with services, societal discrimination, and/or a lack of confidence in the Council's understanding of cultural differences.

64. The Head of HIH reiterated that the issue of trust in council services presents a barrier for many homeless people, and it is important for professionals to engage with people in the community through outreach.

65. ASCH interviews with external partners, recorded in *The Seldom Heard People Report*, included conversations with a number of organisations working with marginalised groups. The issue of trust featured in most conversations. Groundwork Together South, who work with refugees and asylum seekers, suggested that people were reluctant to speak openly with authorities due to past experiences and fear that they may receive poor treatment, moreover ESCC was viewed in the same way as all other government organisations including the Home Office.

66. The organisation African Community in Surrey and Sussex highlighted the role stigma plays in some communities accessing support and cultural differences in attitudes towards mental health. The Chief Executive of Care for the Carers also noted that attitudes towards care could differ amongst cultures, resulting in some people being reluctant to seek support where caring was viewed as an expected role within the family. Organisations, including ESSA, also cited stigma as a barrier for many older people who could be reluctant to ask for support, or fearful that engagement with social services could result in being judged or moved from their home.

67. The Board concluded that the more the Council understands about different communities and potential barriers, the more work it can do to address these.

Recommendation 2

The Department to work closely with internal and external partners and trusted partners in the community, with expertise on working with seldom heard people and communities, to tackle stigma and lack of trust. Including (but not limited to):

- a) collaborating with the Homeless Inclusion Health Service to make signposting/referral to ASCH easier and simplified.
- b) collaborating with Gypsy and Traveller Team to gain better inside knowledge into the communities they work with and to spread awareness about accessing ASCH services.

Addressing Barriers

68. Witnesses and evidence presented to the Board suggested several possible ways to further build on work to address some of the barriers identified.

69. The Board identified and explored the following key themes in these approaches:

- Community engagement
- Enhancing staff knowledge
- Effective and inclusive communication
- Inclusive services
- Knowledge and data sharing

- Relationships with external partners

Community Engagement

70. Community engagement work has been conducted throughout the Council through a variety of projects and with a range of communities. The Board heard from the ASCH Policy Development Manager on the community engagement work when developing the new ASC Strategy; the Council's Equality Manager on wider engagement work within ESCC; the Gypsy and Traveller Team Manager on his team's continued engagement with Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities, as well as ASCH's work with partners. Learning from a range of community engagement activities demonstrated the importance of ongoing conversations and engaging with groups in the most appropriate format and setting.

71. Engagement work to inform the development of the new ASC Strategy focused on listening to residents' priorities through the use of interviews, surveys and focus groups. This included work to reach people who may need care and support in the future, or those who needed help now but may not be getting it for a range of reasons, to ensure their voices were also considered. Advice was sought internally and from the VCSE sector to identify communication channels, organisations, community spaces, and events to help engage with seldom heard groups.

72. The ASCH Policy Development Manager noted that an ongoing, co-production approach is important with seldom heard groups, in order to deepen engagement and to maintain connections, and that time and resource needs to be allowed within projects for this. The Board agreed that ongoing conversations with groups and partners would help tackle some of the barriers identified.

73. The Head of HH also noted the benefits of reaching groups in community settings; for the homeless community that means providing health services where people can also access food and shelter. By providing services in places where people feel safe, teams are able to build trust and learn about the wider needs of the community.

Recommendation 3

The Department to involve, engage and include communities by reaching out to them through community events with trusted partners in the communities in order to record, and disseminate feedback about effectiveness of services and policies within the Department to embed learning.

74. Case studies on work carried out by other local authorities and organisations also highlighted the success from community engagement projects using trusted intermediaries, including the use of 'community connectors' (residents with roots in their communities who were recruited to address issues which may be affecting the health and wellbeing of individuals), community forums, and community workshops and events in partnership with local organisations. The Board discussed the successful use of community connectors at Wirral Council and suggested that this model could support digital inclusion in the older population; using older people who were more confident with digital technology to advocate for it to older people who are less confident or unable to access online services.

75. The Department informed the Board of the current work of the People Bank (145 residents, clients, carers who give feedback on services), and it was suggested that there was potential to enable these volunteers to be part of ASCH's voice in the community. ESCC elected Members could also play a key role in sharing information about services to residents.

Recommendation 4

The Department to make use of links with people associated with ASCH including Members, volunteers, People Bank and Citizens Panel members and VCSE partners to support the sharing of information about ASCH services and programmes with wider residents.

76. Although community engagement work was noted as a key method to hear from seldom heard groups, the Council's Equality Manager informed the Board that it was important to note that these groups are often the most vulnerable, with limited resources, time and capacity to engage. Engagement work needs to be properly planned and funded, with groups being supported throughout the process and their needs considered at all times.

77. In response to evidence suggesting that engagement work should be ongoing, the Board enquired how engagement work across the Council could be shared to support continued engagement with groups in a systematic way. The ASCH Policy Development Manager informed the Board that findings and practical learning from the ASC strategy engagement could be shared with colleagues in other parts of the Council to help build wider understanding of needs and reduce the potential for duplication. In addition, the development of a community engagement framework could bring together good practice examples and advice for engaging with seldom heard groups as well as wider communities and partner organisations.

78. The Board concluded that effective community engagement was key to addressing barriers for seldom heard groups and people and that, where possible, this engagement should be based on shared learning and best practice to increase its impact, avoid duplication and best support the needs of vulnerable groups.

Recommendation 5

The Department to work closely with ESCC's Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Board to support broader approaches to community engagement across the Council through:

- a) co-ordinating mechanisms for engagement with communities identified as being seldom heard;**
- b) furthering best practice through the development of a community engagement framework, ensuring all communities, including seldom heard groups, are clear on how their feedback will be used and the outcomes of engagement work.**

Enhancing staff knowledge

79. In identifying solutions to barriers facing seldom heard groups, it was noted that staff play an important role in addressing some of these barriers. The Board explored ways in which staff can identify and break down barriers.

80. The Council's Equality Manager informed the Board that staff could develop their skills in this area using a variety of resources, including formal and informal learning. It is important to build understanding of why ESCC needed to hear people's voices and to develop a greater understanding of the impact cultural differences may have in how people access services. One approach was peer learning, where staff were able to share experiences and skills on, for example, how to ask equality, diversity and inclusion related questions, or engage with communities. The Board heard about communities of practice that are being developed across the Council, looking at a variety of topics and bringing colleagues together for peer learning practices. For example, a data monitoring group bringing together data analysts to share knowledge and experiences.

81. The impact of increasing staff knowledge was considered in the case study example from Greater Manchester where *Pride in Practice* work had been launched to improve LGBT friendly practices. Working with the LGBT Foundation and local NHS and councils in the region, staff were given one-hour training covering language and terminology, inequalities experienced by LGBT communities in healthcare and offered practical advice on how to develop inclusive services. Feedback from clients and LGBT champions since the launch of this programme had been very positive, with one woman reporting:

“staff may ask sensitive questions about marital status or next of kin as heterosexuality is not assumed. My wife is included in all my health care decisions and is recognised as a carer. This is very different than it was”

82. Work to develop staff knowledge and skills within ESCC is progressing: in ASCH and Children's Services (CS) equality champions and allies have been identified to share how teams are supporting equality work and responding to issues; an ASCH Equalities Allies Group, made up of equality leads in teams, provides an opportunity to raise questions to support their work; staff training now includes details of using peer learning; and there are Yammer groups across the Council to facilitate information and good practice sharing. However, it was noted that more could be done to share good practice amongst wider staff.

83. The Board concluded that increasing staff knowledge and skills on equality, diversity and inclusion would support the commitment to an inclusive service and would help to develop understanding of seldom heard groups and ways to overcome barriers to accessing services. This would particularly help staff to learn about and discuss emerging issues, for example recent increased media coverage of issues relating to transgender people.

84. Interviews with partners also highlighted the benefits of staff receiving specialised training to enhance their knowledge of client and family member needs

and their ability to provide compassionate care. For example, the Eastbourne Dementia Action Alliance suggested increased dementia awareness training amongst staff to build a holistic and person-centred approach to working with clients. The LGA guide '*Care and support and homelessness*' recommends councils ensure staff not only receive specialist training, but learn from each other to better understand each other's roles and responsibilities in order to provide appropriate care.

85. The Board discussed with the Department how equality, diversity and inclusion training could be incorporated into staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) plans. The ASCH Assistant Director for Planning, Performance and Engagement noted that training needs to be responsive to changing local need.

Recommendation 6

The Department to develop staff knowledge and skills through ensuring appropriate provision for:

- a) the development of peer learning opportunities to enable staff to share knowledge and experience;
- b) embedding knowledge and skills about working effectively with people from seldom heard communities into ESCC equality, diversity and inclusion training;
- c) developing the equality, diversity and inclusion training offer to staff through training by expert partners, incorporating this into staff CPD, and ensuring that training is responsive to changing local need;
- d) ensuring managers support and actively encourage staff to attend equality, diversity and inclusion training.

Effective and inclusive communication

86. The Board heard evidence of a lack of knowledge about the ASCH offer, and what support services may be available, amongst some seldom heard people. Some people may find language used in communication inaccessible and formats are not appropriate for people's varying needs. During the review, the Board identified some ways in which inclusive communication could be further developed, building on what is already in place.

87. The Board heard that the use of the Council's interpreting and translation service could be maximised by raising awareness of it amongst wider staff in the Department, to ensure effective communication between clients and staff. The ESCC Sensory Impairment and Reablement Team noted that interpreting and translation services need to be responsive and consistent, with staff understanding the importance of using translation and interpreting, as well as understanding the process better. The Refugee Buddy Project also highlighted the need to have clear, simple information in relevant languages to tell people what support is on offer.

88. This was also highlighted in feedback from staff engagement sessions where staff suggested that communication needs to be in plain language and clear about what services are and who they for; moreover, messaging needs to help breakdown stigma.

89. The Board heard there is a need for a consistent approach in ensuring best practice in communication and community engagement which can be delivered

through equality impact assessments and staff forums. Digital inclusion should also be included in staff inductions to raise awareness of these issues amongst new staff.

90. The Board heard that communication with adults with low levels of literacy was more challenging, with most written information inaccessible. The Librarian who delivers the Step into Reading programme highlighted the need for non-text versions of communication, for example through apps and social media or videos, such as a video ([click here for the link](#)) created to communicate the Step into Reading programme to learners.

91. Communication should not only be accessible, but reflective of the communities it is trying to reach. In the Greater Manchester LGBT case study, feedback showed that when LGBT friendly posters were displayed 24% of LGBT people were more likely to disclose their sexual orientation and 21% their trans status. In doing this they said services were much more likely to meet their needs.

92. The Board heard that when communicating with seldom heard groups, it was important for staff to listen to the views of groups, as well as informing them about services. This should be achieved through ongoing community engagement work outlined above.

Recommendation 7

The Department should ensure that it raises awareness about its services and that communication is accessible and inclusive by:

- a) undertaking further work to promote and support the use of ESCC interpreting and translation services to staff, and using this to respond to changing local need;**
- b) using a variety of all available and appropriate communication media and formats to target particular groups including non-text and translated versions, and including providing newsletters and information leaflets in different formats;**
- c) communicating clearly what the service and offer is in promotional material;**
- d) ensuring that the priorities identified in the Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care Review are considered in communications.**

Inclusive services

93. Although ASCH already adapts services to meet access needs of individuals, the Board explored how inclusion could be developed, including through the location for service provision, consideration of cultural differences and through building equality, diversity and inclusion considerations into service design and commissioning. Research by the Department suggested that some people would rather approach the VCSE sector for help as community organisations could be flexible and adapt their approach for different people's needs, whereas public services could be viewed as bureaucratic rather than relational, demonstrating the need to develop inclusive approaches and raise awareness of this.

94. The Board heard examples of flexible approaches working in practice. The Head of HIH highlighted the importance of offering services in inclusive spaces that are welcoming to everyone; he noted that support for homeless people was often situated in churches which could act as a barrier to people from another religion or none. However, offering services in community spaces where rough sleepers were accessing other services, including food, was very effective. This was reiterated by

the Gypsy and Traveller Team Manager who informed the Board of the need to work with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities outside of council buildings and bringing support, such as Wi-Fi and education, to traveller sites.

95. The Gypsy and Traveller team were providing a range of support, including a community room on a traveller site to support client appointments, as well as wider community work, which it was hoped would address the issue of some people not wanting to enter council buildings to access services. The Board heard that the community room was providing a crucial space to allow external agencies, as well as other council services, to engage with the community in their own space, building trust and allowing for ongoing conversations, for example with local police around hate crime.

96. The Board heard from Groundwork South the importance of taking time to learn about and understand cultural differences and adapting services to incorporate those differences. Examples included considering the location of and time of meetings, and a recognition of what may be considered culturally appropriate, such as in some cases women members of staff interacting with women clients, which would increase engagement.

97. The Board was keen to explore how the Department could not only adapt specific services to meet the needs of seldom heard groups, but how it could embed equality, diversity and inclusion thinking into all areas of work. The Council's Equality Manager highlighted that it is important for these considerations not to be viewed as separate but integrated into day-to-day business. Elected Members could support this process by asking questions about accessibility and outcomes, ensuring that equality impacts have been considered in decision-making, and modelling inclusive approaches and respect for difference in their meetings and engagement.

98. The Board concluded that work was already in place to further develop the integration of equality considerations into day-to-day business in ASCH and across the Council. In terms of specific services, the Board noted that, where possible, the Department should adapt service delivery and maximise flexibility as there was evidence that could help meet the needs of users and increase engagement with seldom heard groups.

Recommendation 8

The Department to increase inclusivity at initial contact by adapting services to support the needs of communities and individuals, considering:

- a) how to support people to access services;**
- b) the location, timing and staffing at meetings to support different needs, including being sensitive to cultural and religious values;**
- c) how information is presented to and gathered from people.**

Relationships with external partners, including knowledge and data sharing

99. Effective working with partners was discussed at all meetings with most witnesses and evidence suggesting that this is critical to help build trust with seldom heard groups and to continue to develop engagement. As described earlier, ASCH works with a wide range of external partners to engage with and support seldom heard groups.

100. The Board explored the challenges of supporting transient groups through sharing information with other local authorities. The Gypsy and Traveller Team Manager acknowledged the difficulty with this in relation to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, as there is minimal national support and the role of councils in supporting these communities varies across authorities; many only provide provision for sites and enforcement and do not support with health and wellbeing. However, ESCC works positively with councils in Brighton & Hove and West Sussex to provide support to people coming in and out of the county from these areas.

101. The Board heard that there was no formal arrangement for local authorities to connect and share information in relation to homeless people moving between areas. However, work was ongoing with other authorities and the Local Government Association to improve support to transient communities. The Being Digital Delivery Manager informed the Board that ESCC will be taking part in a pilot on developing the use of Plexus, a data tool which will provide relevant staff with access to a person's Shared Care Record. However, there is currently no function allowing other local authorities to view information about clients moving in and out of the county.

102. The Board explored the opportunity to increase joint working with partners. The ASCH Policy Development Manager informed the Board of the importance of strong relationships with VSCE groups and partnership boards to maintain conversations with seldom heard communities. The Council's Equality Manager noted the successes of good partnership work in supporting vulnerable people, citing the work of the cross-sector Financial Inclusion Group which is responding to cost-of-living.

103. The Board heard evidence that to engage with adults with low levels of literacy, relationships with external partners, as well as communication to friends and family, was key to gaining referrals and building trust. However, it was important to raise awareness of this issue with partners first, as many adults were able to mask problems with literacy, making it more difficult to identify the need for support. Guidance has been created by the Library Service to increase staff awareness of the potential complex needs of learners and to increase staff confidence in talking about literacy needs.

104. The Board also learned of the potential to use partner volunteers to signpost and refer people to services as described by the Lewes District Food Partnership. A suggested script, or training package, could support volunteers who come across a safeguarding case, and enable them to refer for support.

105. Case Studies considered by the Board also highlighted the value of working with partners. Nottingham City Council for example, explored a place-based approach to engaging with ethnic minority people, working with community groups, networks, and charities to host a series of workshops to identify which ethnic minority networks, groups and organisations existed in the area and to understand the key issues for each community. Gateshead County Council also worked with partners to communicate with refugees and asylum seekers. This partnership not only built trust with the refugee community, but also aided with translation needs.

106. The Board recognised the importance of strong working relationships with a range of partners and agreed that the Department does this very well. It was noted that this engagement needs to be ongoing so the Department would need to continue

to build new, and develop existing, partnerships so partners can continue to provide much needed services and support to seldom heard East Sussex residents.

Recommendation 9

The Department to develop a systematic way of working with a range of partners in relation to seldom heard groups by:

- a) building upon existing relationships and exploring new partnership work by regularly reviewing and expanding the list of identified VCSE partners to help build trust with seldom heard groups;**
- b) supporting partners to facilitate equality, inclusion and diversity conversations through guidance;**
- c) where possible, sharing data with other local authorities and groups to support people moving in and out of East Sussex.**

Conclusions

107. The Review has considered a broad range of evidence and Members concluded that there is a strong commitment to providing an inclusive and equitable service, and that the Department is working hard to expand its reach to seldom heard groups. The Review Board recognised that this work needs to adapt constantly to respond to changing need, including who is identified as seldom heard, and therefore work on this needs to be ongoing and sustainable.

108. The Board heard that lack of trust, stigma around using services, and a lack of complete understanding of what services ASCH offers are the biggest barriers for seldom heard people and communities. The Board has made a number of recommendations to support ongoing work to help overcome those barriers.

109. The Board considered that, where possible, data, experience, and best practice should be shared with colleagues across the Department and Council to maximise its impact and make best use of resources. This joined up approach will also protect vulnerable groups from being asked to engage multiple times unnecessarily.

110. There are a number of positive initiatives and projects already underway, including good examples of peer learning and relationships with external partners; this should be developed where possible. Learning from partners, as well as case studies of work carried out by other local authorities, provides new opportunities to consider how to engage with seldom heard groups and encourage them to use services.

Appendix

Scope and terms of reference of the review

Terms of Reference

On the recommendation of the Scoping Board, the People Scrutiny Committee agreed that this review should explore how the Department engages with seldom heard communities and whether residents of all backgrounds know how to access ASCH services.

Members agreed that this would be explored through the following **key lines of enquiry**:

1. Defining and engaging with seldom heard groups

- a) Who are the key communities in East Sussex that ASC seldom hears from in its engagement but should?
- b) How could the Department improve its engagement with those groups?

2. Accessing services

- a) Building on previous research, what is the level of understanding and awareness of ASC services among residents, including those from seldom heard groups, and are there ways this can be improved?
- b) If residents, including those in seldom heard groups, are aware of ASC services but choosing not to access them, why is that?
- c) Are there barriers preventing residents, including seldom heard groups, approaching ASC services?
 - i. Is lack of trust or confidence in services a barrier?
 - ii. Is use of digital communication and services a barrier?
 - iii. If there are barriers, how could they be addressed?

Board Membership and project support

Review Board Members: Councillors John Ungar (Chair), Penny di Cara, Nuala Geary and Trevor Webb.

The Project Manager was Rachel Sweeney, Senior Policy and Scrutiny Adviser with additional support provided by Kaveri Sharma, Strategic Commissioner (Equality and Inclusion), and Lucy Owen, Policy Development Intern.

Paul Hussey, Interim Assistant Director, Planning, Performance and Engagement, Sarah Russell, Assistant Director, Planning, Performance and Engagement, and Justin Foster, Team Manager Waste Services provided ongoing support to the Board throughout the review.

Review Board meeting dates

Scoping Board meeting - 1 July 2022

First Review Board meeting - 28 February 2023

Second Review Board meeting - 22 March 2023

Third Review Board meeting - 3 May 2023

Fourth Review Board meeting - 13 June 2023

Final Review Board meeting - 26 June 2023

Witnesses providing evidence

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

ESCC officers

Alex Callaghan, Being Digital Delivery Manager

Bill Hargood, Policy Development Manager ASCH

Sarah Tighe-Ford, Equality Manager

Mark Hendricks, Head of Partnerships ASCH

Jim Alexander, Manager Gypsy and Traveller team

Emily Taylor, Librarian

External Witnesses

Dr Neil Singh, GP (Homeless Inclusion Health Service)

Jennifer Twist, Chief Executive, Care for the Carers

Pierre Matate, Outreach and Engagement Officer, Groundwork South

Lin Neeve, East Sussex Seniors Association

Evidence papers

Item	Date considered
Overview of ASCH Equality and Inclusion strategy	01/07/2022
ASCH Equality and Inclusion strategy	01/07/2022
ASCH Equality and Inclusion Action Plan	01/07/2022
Seldom heard people: What do we know about them in East Sussex?	17/02/2023
Executive summary - Activmob research	17/02/2023
ASCH presentation on barriers and community engagement	22/03/2023
Insights into barriers facing GRT community	22/03/2023
ESCC Equality Work presentation	03/05/2023
The Health Foundation Understanding unpaid carers and their access to support	03/05/2023
ESCC Digital Inclusion presentation	03/05/2023
National Research (Case Studies)	13/06/2023
ASCH presentation on potential solutions to barriers	13/06/2023
Interview with Emily Taylor (Step into Reading)	13/06/2023
LGA Care and support and homelessness	13/06/2023
ASCH Report Seldom Heard People interviews with partners	13/06/2023
Centre for Public Scrutiny Men Behaving Badly Report	13/06/2023

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Report to:	People Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	17 July 2023
By:	Director of Adult Social Care & Health
Title:	The use of digital and technology in Adult Social Care
Purpose:	To provide the Committee with a six-month update in respect of the action plan agreed upon the publication of the original Scrutiny review of the use of digital and technology in Adult Social Care

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Comment on consider the progress being made against the agreed actions at Appendix 1.**
 - 2. Agree to receive a further update report in six months time.**
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1. Background Information

- 1.1.** Being Digital is the digital transformation programme in Adult Social Care and Health, which commenced in April 2021 and is due to run until the end of March 2024.
- 1.2.** It is an ambitious and wide-ranging programme that was developed upon the publication of the department's digital strategy (published February 2021), also called Being Digital.
- 1.3.** There are four 'P's' that the programme delivers against:
 - People (clients and carers),
 - Practice (internal business improvements),
 - Partners (local and national NHS trusts, neighbouring local authorities, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, etc.)
 - Providers (services that we contract with to deliver care and support on our behalf).
- 1.4.** Commencing with the Scrutiny Committee Scoping Board held on 5 July 2022, the Being Digital programme was the principal subject of The use of digital and technology in Adult Social Care Scrutiny Review.
- 1.5** The final report was agreed by the Scrutiny Committee on 16 December 2022 and full Council agreed the report and the action plan on 7 February 2023.

2. Community Engagement

- 2.1** In recommendations five, eight, nine and eleven, explicit reference was made to 'digital by default', which is a strategic direction the Being Digital programme hopes to lead within the department.
- 2.2** This direction is not designed to remove any existing communications routes. Rather, as the Government Digital Strategy defines it: "digital by default means digital services which are so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use digital services will choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded".

2.3 The Being Digital programme is actively engaging with members of our community on 'digital by default' to ensure that the associated Equality Impact Assessment is as comprehensive as possible. These groups include:

- Disability rights reference group - 17 February 2023
- Inclusion Advisory Group - 24 April 2023
- East Sussex Seniors' Association (at ESSA's request, this was delayed from 10 March to a meeting at a later date)
- Ongoing dialogue with TechResort (a Community Interest Company based in Eastbourne that delivers digital skills training) around targeted interventions to combat digital exclusion amongst vulnerable members of the community

2.4 In addition, the Being Digital Programme is also actively engaging with community forums separately about the Technology Enabled Care (TEC) projects (mentioned in a response to recommendation seven):

- Inclusion Advisory Group - 10 October 2022
- Disability Rights Reference Group - 21 October 2022
- East Sussex Senior's Association - 13 January 2023
- Workshop at the 'Voices for Carers' conference - 8 June 2023
- People Bank focus group on Amazon Alexa project - 15 June 2023

2.5 Corporate social media accounts published an update to the 'linked smoke alarms' project in June 2023, advising that since April, 57 web-enabled alarms had been installed by East Sussex County Council in partnership with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.

3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

3.1 Maximising the use of digital and technology to interact with, and respond to, our resident's needs, meets increasing demand and ensures the best use of public resources. The Being Digital programme provides structure and oversight to ensure that the benefits of each of the digital projects are maximised in a timely manner, and reflect the needs of clients and their carers.

3.2 The recommendations from the Scrutiny Review have been embedded within the programme and the Committee will continue to be provided with updates as the projects progress.

3.3 A full update of the progress made on the Review recommendations are outlined in the Action Plan at Appendix 1.

MARK STAINTON

Director of Adult Social Care & Health

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PEOPLE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF USE OF DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGY IN ASCH – ACTION PLAN 6 Month Review					
SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION		DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	Update Notes	TIMESCALE	RAG (red, amber green) rating
R1.	The Department should ensure the planned implementation of Online Financial Assessments being the default route for financial assessments collects feedback from users on the form, including on any barriers to completing it, and why those who were asked to complete an online assessment and did not, chose not to.	<p>The department will continue to ensure that feedback is collated on usage of the online forms for financial assessments (and other transactional forms).</p> <p>For our digital offer to be successful it is important that we take an approach of iterative improvement. One advantage of digital is the range of measurable data that can be captured passively - so we will explore how we can look at the statistics around how many people started a form, how many completed, at what stage they dropped out, etc.</p> <p>Likewise, we have already added in active feedback mechanisms to our assessment pages by way of</p>	<p>A new operating model for financial assessments went live on the 12th of June 2023. In this new model the Online Financial Assessment (OFA) will be offered as the default by which clients share information about their finances with ASC&H. Crucially, it will not be the only option - merely the first one offered.</p> <p>Uptake statistics will continue to be captured on our portals dashboard, where we expect to see a marked shift towards more Online Financial Assessments being commenced and completed.</p>	Ongoing as of December 2022	Green

		<p>‘customer thermometers’. These widgets enable users to rate their experiences and, should they choose to do so, leave free-text comments.</p> <p>We will continue to use these methods to monitor performance of assessment forms and will explore how monitoring can be enhanced to understand any barriers to their completion. For example, we will look at opportunities to collect qualitative data from clients around the barriers to usage or completion of the OFA forms.</p>	<p>We continue to monitor feedback through customer thermometers, complaints and compliments; and responses will be used to make changes to tools and processes as needed to ensure that our digital tools and processes are user friendly and being appropriately utilised.</p>	March / April 2023	
R2.	<p>The People Scrutiny Committee should be informed of the progress of take up of Online Financial Assessments, and feedback received, as part of the monitoring of this Scrutiny Review.</p>	<p>Data on take-up of the Online Financial Assessments (OFAs) and related feedback is currently captured and routinely circulated within the department via a portals dashboard.</p> <p>We will update the People Scrutiny Committee in monitoring reports of this review with this data and</p>	<p>As both a proportion of total incoming forms, and as a proportion of all financial assessments, those received via online portals has been low.</p> <p>A change in process, in December 2022 saw these forms removed from the public section</p>	Ongoing as of December 2022	Green

		<p>commentary to assist with interpreting the information.</p>	<p>of the portal pages. Instead they became accessible only via a link sent out by practitioners. This is because for an OFA to be meaningful, eligibility for services needs to have been established first.</p> <p>In the year to date, 290 links have been sent to clients and 86 returned, representing a completion rate of 30%. Recent insight has shown that the vast majority of OFC submissions take place between 11am and 5pm on weekdays - although almost one-third of all submissions take place outside of this time frame.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the new operational process for financial assessments that went live on 12 June 2023, which places</p>		
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			much greater emphasis on asking clients whether they are able to provide their financial information through the portal, will see this figure increase further. We will continue to monitor this through our dashboard and customer feedback.		
R3.	The Department should continue implementation of learning from other local authority Adult Social Care departments to improve take-up of Online Financial Assessments and turnaround time of financial assessments, particularly considering introducing Robotic Process Automation.	<p>The department will continue to follow the best practice of learning from the successes and challenges of other local authorities who have implemented similar improvements.</p> <p>Where Online Financial Assessments (OFA) in particular are concerned, we have looked into the detail of other local authorities' improvements to financial assessment protocols. Our focus will be to look at areas for improvement where the other authorities use the same case management and payment systems as us.</p>	<p>In developing the new financial assessment operating model (referenced earlier), work was completed to explore how OFAs are processed by other authorities, and we will continue to explore opportunities for wider learning moving forwards.</p> <p>In terms of seeking to emulate local authorities, Surrey County Council have initiated some reforms in terms of their processes which they</p>	Ongoing as of December 2022	Green

		<p>Robotic Process Automation (RPA) opportunities are being explored in relation to online financial assessments, including the automation of tasks such as accepting assessments, matching submissions with client records, managing workflows for staff and sending reminders to clients to send further documentation where a submission is incomplete.</p>	<p>report has brought down assessment wait times significantly. We have attended information sessions and demonstrations about what they have put in place, which includes a series of automations that have introduced efficiencies into their workflows. Specifically, these have reduced the need for human intervention to move submissions into correct work-trays, and to automatically send reminders to clients who have submitted incomplete supporting evidence.</p> <p>As part of the new financial assessment process that has been implemented options for robotic process automation have been explored. For these to be successful they need to build on an</p>	<p>July to September 2023</p>	
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			<p>established workflows and as such we will need to allow some time for the new process to embed before any automations are put in place; however, opportunities for RPA will continue to be a focus moving forwards.</p> <p>As of June 2023 the same checks apply whether we complete the financial assessment online, on the telephone or a paper form sent in the post:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-reference with data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) • Where we cannot complete a financial assessment from DWP info only, we will ask for three months' worth of bank 		
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			<p>statements or statements for all investments, and potentially more where we believe the client may have given money away to avoid paying for care or a client has told us they've made gifts from capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete land registry searches with HM Land Registry regarding property ownership, where required• Ask to see evidence of legal authority held, Lasting Power of Attorney / deputyship• Client or their representative signs, agrees or is read out a declaration about providing true		
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			<p>and accurate information.</p> <p>If we have concerns about the legitimacy of the information being provided, we will escalate the case to our internal counter fraud team.</p>		
R4.	The Department should continue to explore opportunities to simplify operational processes alongside implementing the Being Digital programme.	The department will continue to ensure that digital developments are informed by and support operational requirements, and are implemented alongside improvements to operational processes.	<p>The programme priorities are led by operational requirements, and any digital developments being taken forwards need to have a clear operational business case and operational sponsor / lead in order to be considered.</p> <p>It is important to ensure that there are realistic expectations about where digital can be used and where practice or process changes are needed, often it is a combination of both of</p>	Ongoing as of December 2022	Green

			<p>these things that is needed.</p> <p>The Being Digital team continues to work with operational teams to understand their current priorities and how and where digital developments can support practice and processes through continued engagement and communication.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement with services is critical to ensure that any digital developments are driven by and can meet their needs, although it is also important to recognise that there is no guarantee that automation or digitisation will solve problems they face; and there may be a need for business process improvements before and digital</p>		
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			developments can progress.		
R5.	The People Scrutiny Committee should be informed of progress against Being Digital programme targets as part of the monitoring of this Scrutiny Review.	<p>The Departmental Management Team (DMT) have agreed a number of targets relating to the strategic decision to go 'digital by default'.</p> <p>Each of these targets will be reported against and progress will be presented back to DMT on a quarterly basis. We propose that the progress against targets can also be submitted to the People Scrutiny Committee at times aligning with reporting to DMT.</p>	<p>Progress against targets are below:</p> <p><i>50% of all online financial assessments done online, and 100% of eligible clients offered an Online Financial Assessment:</i></p> <p>The new operating model embedding online financial assessment as the first option to clients went live on 12th of June 2023, when we expect to see an increase in the volume of OFAs being submitted. An update will be provided in the next report.</p> <p><i>Online form is default route for members of the public to raise a safeguarding alert:</i></p> <p>Currently, the safeguarding form is the most used online form,</p>	Quarterly basis from March 2023	Amber

			<p>accounting for 44% of all submissions in April 2023. Usage is up by 34% on April 2022's figures.</p> <p>However, through engagement with Health and Social Care Connect, our thinking on placing an emphasis on members of the public raising online safeguarding alerts has changed.</p> <p>Professionals remains the single highest user of the form: of the 688 safeguarding alerts raised since the beginning of January 2023, 665 came from a professional.</p> <p>It is pleasing to see this form being used so widely (and its take-up mirrors a wider trend of professionals becoming the dominant users of online forms).</p>		
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			<p>Initially we had wished that more members of the public would use this form. Nonetheless, professionals are most comfortable reporting safeguarding concerns this way as they are more likely to have knowledge and guidance as to what information is needed within an alert. Members of the public are generally less aware, so a guided conversation with an HSCC colleague - most likely a telephone call - remains the best guarantee of a good quality of alert.</p> <p><i>25% year-on-year increase of occupational therapy referral form:</i> Occupational therapy referral form submissions are up by 45% compared to May 2022, averaging 28 a month in the year to date.</p>		
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			<p>In addition to support a Being Digital approach targets were set around active records that have an email address and mobile phone number attached to them. To support this significant system cleansing has been required and is currently underway, as such the percentages will be subject to change whilst this work is completed.</p> <p><i>75% of active records have an email address attached to them: 43% as of April 2023</i></p> <p><i>85% of active records have a mobile phone number attached: 60% as of April 2023</i></p>		
R6.	The People Scrutiny Committee should be informed of the outcome of the third	Work is currently underway with UCL to identify potential areas of change to support new ways of working.	Work continues with UCL to put together a set of interventions that are designed to	September 2023	Green

	phase of the Department's Behavioural Change work with the UCL as part of the monitoring of this Scrutiny Review.	This requires application of the behaviour change model that typically takes six months to generate recommended interventions; as such it may not be possible to report on the outcome, however we will ensure that the progress is fed back as part of the monitoring.	empower practitioners and frontline workers to promote the use of online resources. An intervention plan is being developed at the time of writing.		
R7.	The Department should reflect feedback from residents who have benefited from digital and self-service options in communications to staff.	We are currently collating information through customer thermometers and analytics on our forms and as additional self-serve options are implemented, we will evaluate the impact of these developments through residents' feedback and share this with staff as appropriate (see R9).	<p>Feedback in terms of usage and satisfaction continues to be gathered in the form of analytics and customer thermometers; the latter are administered in the Department by the Information, Guidance and Insight Team, and are sent to service managers for information and/or when a response is required.</p> <p>In addition, where achievable, Being Digital is collating feedback</p>	From March 2023	Amber

			<p>from individual projects. For example, we are, as of May 2023, beginning to receive qualitative feedback from carers and practitioners involved in the TECS robotic pet pilot trial.</p> <p>A new communication plan for Being Digital is being developed based on feedback received.</p>		
R8.	Information on Being Digital and the digital and self-service platforms on offer in ASCH, should be included in all new ASCH staff inductions.	The Being Digital Team will work with the Training, Workforce and Organisational Development Team to explore how the training offer can be enhanced to include reference to digital practice and self-service; this will include our 'digital by default' direction of travel being reflected in the appropriate induction e-learning modules.	<p>Discussions are underway with the Training, Workforce and Organisational Development Team as to whether it will be possible to include any information about 'digital by default' in e-learning induction modules.</p> <p>Being Digital, and 'digital by default', now forms part of the quarterly Welcome Morning session for all new starters in ASC.</p>	From March 2023	Amber

R9.	<p>Digital transformation should be included as a discussion point in team and 1-2-1 (where appropriate) meetings within areas undergoing rollout of a new digital or self-service platform; and in ongoing departmental communications (such as Yammer, To The Point and Brief Encounter).</p>	<p>The department is planning on circulating positive messages and case studies to demonstrate the value of clients, partners and providers taking advantage of our digital offer.</p> <p>In the majority of instances, 1-2-1s and supervisions for practice staff are given over to discussions about caseloads. However, in discussions where wider departmental issues are discussed - for example, in team meetings - it would be appropriate to discuss 'digital by default'. Guidance will be created by the Being Digital team for managers of teams and services to help shape discussions.</p>	<p>Business Development & Insight's work with UCL on behaviour change has affirmed that, for the vast majority of instances, 1-2-1s are not the appropriate time to talk about digital transformation.</p> <p>However, the circulation of positive messages and case studies is an activity that has been highlighted as potentially useful in the work taking place with UCL, and a more formal framework for embedding digital transformation within departmental communications is being developed within Being Digital.</p> <p>For now, Being Digital continues to publish messages about individual projects in publications such as To</p>	From March 2023	Green
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			The Point and Brief Encounter.		
R10.	The Department should continue to work with colleagues through the One Council Digital Inclusion programme to map the digital inclusion offer in East Sussex, and, where appropriate, share this with adult social care and health staff and partners.	<p>The department will continue to work with the One Council Digital Inclusion Programme, which Being Digital is involved with through membership of the programme management group.</p> <p>Information around digital inclusion resources will be shared with appropriate services both within ASC and with external partners, such as the NHS Digital First programme, which concerns itself with Sussex-wide digital transformation in primary care.</p>	<p>At the time of the initial recommendations report, ASC continued to work closely with the One Council Digital Inclusion programme - the Being Digital Delivery Manager was a member of the working group and regularly attended programme board meetings.</p> <p>However, in March 2023, the One Council Digital Inclusion programme has discontinued. Funding had only been agreed up until October 2023, but the programme manager's decision to move on to another role hastened its conclusion. Therefore, further consideration needs to be given as to how digital inclusion can be taken forwards within ASC&H.</p>	January - March 2023	Green - closed

R11.	The Department should ensure it is promoting to staff, and utilising, the range of national and local digital inclusion resources and schemes available in moving to being digital by default.	<p>Once the mapping of digital inclusion activity has been completed, the department will ensure that digital inclusion resources will be made available.</p> <p>Promotion will be through the department's communications media. In addition, the department will explore the possibility of updating the digital inductions for Health and Social Care Connect and if there is scope for additional entries on digital inclusion to be added into East Sussex 1Space.</p>	<p>As per the answer to recommendation 10, the One Council Digital Inclusion Programme has been concluded.</p> <p>However, there are still local and national digital inclusion resources to which clients and carers can be signposted and work is underway to make these resources easier to search and find on directories such as East Sussex 1Space and ESCIS.</p>	Ongoing - commencing March 2023	Amber
R12.	The Department should explore opportunities for partners, including voluntary sector organisations, to support engagement with and signposting to ASCH's digital offer.	<p>The department will continue to work closely on shared aims and outputs with NHS-led programmes such as Our Care Connected and Digital First.</p> <p>The department acknowledges that more can be done in this area. The One Council Digital Inclusion Programme will lead on some</p>	<p>Again, the conclusion of the One Council Digital Inclusion Programme means we cannot fulfil all our ambitions in this area.</p> <p>One output of the OCDIP has been a digital inclusion checklist for anyone starting up any project with any</p>	Ongoing as of December 2022	Amber

		<p>of this work. Project managers will be asked to include voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in communications plans to enable more proactive promotion of ASC's digital offer.</p> <p>We will also explore the option of resurrecting the digital engagement sessions which began prior to the covid-19 pandemic but were put on hold shortly thereafter.</p>	<p>significant focus on digital. Amongst the considerations are the role that VCSE organisations could perhaps play in supporting clients to access</p> <p>No headway has yet been made in re-starting the digital engagement sessions with partners that took place pre-covid; time, prioritisation of other activity and capacity to organise have proved barriers to this work taking place.</p>		
R13.	<p>The Department should consider whether a Digital Ambassador Scheme could provide added value to Being Digital, informed by learning from the NHS Digital First Digital Ambassador pilot when it concludes, and consideration of other models.</p>	<p>The department will continue to monitor the NHS Digital First programme's Digital Ambassador Pilot alongside consideration of other models.</p> <p>Once the pilot has concluded we will request closure, benefit realisation and evaluation reports. We will use the conclusions from NHS</p>	<p>The pilot of the NHS Digital First's Digital Ambassador project has now finished and an evaluation was published in May 2023.</p> <p>Digital First have made the decision not to continue funding the project; however there will be resources in</p>	March 2023	Green - closed

		<p>Digital First to help inform any decisions that Being Digital makes around a similar scheme.</p>	<p>place and a toolkit planned to support practices to implement the role and to find other funding streams.</p> <p>The Digital Ambassadors were contactable either face-to-face, over the telephone or in group sessions. Between August 2022 and March 2023, DAs recorded a total of 1,382 contacts with patients.</p> <p>By far their biggest involvement was with the NHS App, with 533 instances of helping to set it up on people's devices, 80 requests to help with proxy access to the app, and 175 instances of helping with the NHS App Access Record. Another task the DAs assisted with were repeat prescriptions, totalling 122 interventions.</p>		
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			<p>In terms of lessons learned, the Digital First programme have noted that if a DA was not based within a GP practice it took longer to build relationships with receptionists and practice managers than those who were connected to practices. Another observation was that, as DAs performed their roles part-time, and fitted it around other duties, sometimes they lacked sufficient capacity to deliver as planned.</p> <p>Being Digital would recommend that ASC do not pursue a similar scheme for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NHS serves a far larger proportion of the local community than ASC - if our offer was social- 		
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			<p>care focused the take-up would be nowhere as high</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be difficult to ascertain exactly where ASC DA resources would be located • There is currently no evident route for funding such a resource <p>Instead, the Being Digital recommendation would be to potentially utilise existing or planned NHS Digital Ambassador resource, with an offer to upskill them on signposting to ASC resources.</p>		
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