

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 16 July 2024.

PRESENT Councillors Keith Glazier (Chair), Nick Bennett (Vice Chair), Bob Bowdler, Penny di Cara, Claire Dowling and Bob Standley

Members spoke on the items indicated:

Councillor Cross	- item 6 (minute 12)
Councillor Claire Dowling	- item 5 (minute 11)
Councillor Field	- item 5 (minute 11)
Councillor Scott	- items 5 and 6 (minute 11 and 12)
Councillor Stephen Shing	- item 5 (minute 11)
Councillor Tutt	- items 5 and 6 (minute 11 and 12)
Councillor Ungar	- item 6 (minute 12)
Councillor Webb	- item 6 (minute 12)
Councillor Wright	- item 5 (minute 11)

8. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2024

8.1 The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 25 June 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

9.1 An apology was received from Councillor Carl Maynard.

10. REPORTS

10.1 Copies of the reports referred to below are included in the minute book.

11. CARRIAGEWAY PATCHING REPORT

11.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

11.2 It was RESOLVED to agree to increase the carriageway patching funding allocation by a further £1m for 2024/25, to be focussed on the A and B road network, with this additional expenditure to be funded through the unallocated element of the climate change capital budget.

Reasons

11.3 The winter of 2023/24 had a significant impact on the condition of the highway. The number of potholes increased significantly as a result of the prolonged wet weather combined with periods of freezing temperatures. During the winter period the road condition declined resulting in a large number of defect reports.

11.4 The A and B road network are the most heavily used sections of the overall road network and therefore should be the focus of any additional expenditure. Work on the unclassified network will continue with our jet patching work which is proving successful in dealing with defects on these roads. The condition of our A and B roads would be improved by an increase

in the patching budget. A £1m increase in the patching budget would provide for approximately 11,000 square metres of improved road surface on these sections of the network.

12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) PEER CHALLENGE OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

12.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care and Health.

12.2 It was RESOLVED to:

- 1) Note the findings from the LGA Peer Challenge of Adult Social Care (ASCH);
- 2) Approve the ASCH Priority Development Plan in response to the LGA challenge and note how the plan aligns with and contributes to existing Council priorities; and
- 3) Agree arrangements for monitoring progress against the Development Plan through a sub-group of the People Scrutiny Committee.

Reasons

12.3 The process of, and product from, the LGA Peer Challenge has proven immensely beneficial in terms of our preparation for the CQC Assurance process by confirming the current priority areas for development as part of our journey of continuous improvement.

12.4 External assurance of Local Authority Adult Social Care duties has recently been reintroduced after an absence of 14 years. The LGA Peer Review has provided the opportunity to refresh our skills in clearly and concisely identifying and articulating our strengths and also our areas for development. It has been an invaluable 'dress rehearsal' for organising and managing a multi-faceted, on-site inspection, in order to ensure an accurate and fair outcome for the Council.

12.5 The product of the Peer Challenge has confirmed that we know our strengths and areas for improvement and has provided us with validation of the priority areas for development to improve our service and support to our residents, contribute to the delivery of Council Plan and ASC Strategy priorities as well as better prepare for the new assurance process.

13. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND OPINION 2023/24

13.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer.

13.2 It was RESOLVED to note the internal audit service's opinion on the Council's control environment.

Reason

13.3 The report is to give an opinion on the adequacy of East Sussex County Council's control environment as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources. The report covers the audit work completed in the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 in accordance with the Internal Audit Strategy for 2023/24.

14. ASHDOWN FOREST TRUST FUND 2023/24

14.1 The Cabinet received a report by the Chief Operating Officer.

14.2 It was RESOLVED to note the report and the Ashdown Forest's Trust Income and Expenditure Account for 2023/24 and Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024.
Reason

14.3 The trust made an operating surplus of £7,196 during 2023/24. The General Reserve as at 31 March 2024 amounts to £179,284. This fund is available to finance expenditure which meets the Trust's objectives.

15. TO AGREE WHICH ITEMS ARE TO BE REPORTED TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL

15.1 It was agreed that item 8 should be reported to the County Council.
[Note: the item being reported to the County Council refers to minute number 14]