

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 July 2025 at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes

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

Members spoke on the items indicated

Councillor Cross	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Glazier, OBE	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Maynard	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Stephen Shing	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Shuttleworth	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Swansborough	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Tutt	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Ungar	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Webb	- item 5 (minute 10)
Councillor Wright	- item 5 (minute 10)

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 JUNE 2025

7.1 The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 24 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

8.1 Apologies for absence were received for Councillor Bob Standley.

9. REPORTS

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

10. LINDEN COURT DAY SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY

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

10.2 It was RESOLVED to:

1) note the significant work that has been undertaken in relation to Linden Court, and thank the relatives and carers of adults attending Linden Court for their involvement;

2) agree to retain a day service at Linden Court for Adults with Learning Disabilities, capped at the current, actual maximum occupancy level of 25 adults per day; and

3) delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to agree revised session times (if required) for the Linden Court Day Service.

Reasons

10.3 The Council is legally required to set a balanced budget. As part of the 2025/26 Reconciling Policy Performance and Resources process, a proposal to close and re-provision day services at Linden Court in order to contribute towards the required savings was subject to

public consultation (from 3 October to 28 November 2024). As a result of the feedback received through the consultation period, the initial proposal was amended to include a satellite service to be provided in Eastbourne.

10.4 On 25 February 2025, Cabinet agreed to close the current provision at Linden Court, to re-provision the service at an alternative Council-run day service at Beeching Park in Bexhill (or, where more suitable, alternative independent sector provision) and to continue to provide a day opportunity in Eastbourne via the satellite service, which would help to minimise the impact of the proposal.

10.5 Since February 2025, significant additional activity has been undertaken, both internally and with the relatives and carers of adults attending Linden Court, in order to ensure that the amended proposal would deliver the expected savings. This included answering the key questions:

- Were we confident that the proposal for Linden Court could deliver the projected savings?
- Could we continue to meet eligible needs if Linden Court's current provision closed, in ways that were feasible and without incurring additional costs such that it would negate the savings?
- Was there an alternative option that could deliver the required savings?

10.6 Although it would not be possible to have a definitive view until all adult and carer reviews are completed, recent work with relatives and carers highlighted that the planned proposal for Linden Court might not achieve the required savings. Although the closure of Linden Court would not of itself change eligible needs, relatives and carers had clearly stated that the extended period of uncertainty and the potential significant disruption to current care and support arrangements had caused them to re-evaluate their ability to continue to provide full-time care at home. Three families stated that they would not be able to continue to provide full-time care at home if Linden Court were to close. Several other families informed the Council that they might not be able to continue to provide full-time care if Linden Court were to close. It was recognised that these were very difficult decisions for families to make.

10.7 The actual cost of residential care would be dependent on the specific needs of the adult. However, using an estimated cost of £75,000 per annum for full-time residential care for adults with a learning disability, it was clear that the forecast saving for Linden Court might not be realised as the costs of alternative service provision might be higher than in current modelling. The estimated full-year saving of £327,000 could be reduced by approximately £225,000 if three people moved into residential care earlier as a result of Linden Court closing.

10.8 Cabinet were recommended to note the work that had been carried out in relation to Linden Court and agree to retain a day service at Linden Court, but with a reduced capacity, so that Linden Court accommodated a maximum occupancy level of 25 people per day. There is potential that slight revisions to session times would be required, but the service would continue four days per week, as per existing provision. The recommended approach closely aligned with the proposal put forward by relatives of adults using the service and addressed the concerns that had been raised.

11. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND OPINION 2024/25

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

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

Reason

11.3 The report gives 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 2024 to 31 March 2025 in accordance with the Internal Audit Strategy for 2024/25.

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

12.1 There were no items to report to the County Council.