



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2025

10.30 AM, OR AT THE CONCLUSION OF CABINET, WHICHEVER IS LATER, IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, AT COUNTY HALL, LEWES

MEMBERSHIP - Councillors Keith Glazier, OBE (Chair), Nick Bennett, Bob Bowdler, Chris Collier, Johnny Denis and David Tutt

A G E N D A

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2025 (*Pages 3 - 4*)
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. Pay Policy Statement (*Pages 5 - 14*)
Report by the Chief Operating Officer
6. Reimbursement for electric vehicle mileage (*Pages 15 - 30*)
Report by the Chief Operating Officer
7. Scrutiny Activity Update (*Pages 31 - 66*)
Report by the Deputy Chief Executive
8. Any other items previously notified under agenda item 4

PHILIP BAKER
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8 December 2025

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GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Governance Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 11 November 2025.

PRESENT: Councillors Keith Glazier, OBE (Chair), Nick Bennett, Bob Bowdler, Chris Collier, Johnny Denis and David Tutt.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Beaver, Cross, Daniel, di Cara, Hollidge, Maples, Redstone, and Robinson.

31. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2025

31.1 RESOLVED – that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 21 October 2025 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

32. REPORTS

32. 1 Copies of the reports referred to below are included in the minute book.

33. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER FOR MAYORAL COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY (MCCA) ELECTION

33.1 The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive regarding the appointment of a returning officer for the MCCA election due to be held in May 2026.

33.2 The Committee RESOLVED to recommend the County Council to agree to appoint the Chief Executive of Brighton and Hove City Council as the Returning Officer for the Mayoral election for the Sussex and Brighton Combined County Authority.

34. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME

34.1 The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive regarding the review of the Scheme of Member Allowances.

34.2 The Committee RESOLVED to recommend the County Council to:

1) agree to postpone the full review of the Member Scheme of Allowances scheduled for 2026, with a view to the process commencing in 2027 ahead of the implementation for the Vesting Day in 2028. However, should Government not proceed with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), to agree that a review be carried out and reported to Council in the autumn of 2026; and

2) note that the review of the annual adjustment mechanism will take place.

35. MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT

35.1 The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive regarding an update on the training and development activities offered to Members.

35.2 The Committee RESOLVED to note the programme of training and development activities offered to Members.

36. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - SPEAKING TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

36.1 The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive regarding proposed amendments to Part 4 (Rules and Procedure) of the Council's Constitution to update the speaking to the Planning Committee procedure rules.

36.2 The Committee RESOLVED to:

1) recommend that the County Council agree to amend the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;

2) agree that the reason for a member standing in for the local member should be recorded in the official minutes of the meeting; and

3) agree that a monitoring report setting out the use of the provision be brought back to the Committee in six months' time for review.

Report to: Governance Committee

Date of meeting: 16 December 2025

By: Chief Operating Officer

Title: Pay Policy Statement

Purpose: To consider the pay policy statement for 2026/27

RECOMMENDATION:

The Governance Committee is recommended to recommend to the County Council to approve the updated pay policy statement for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

1 Background

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

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

2 Pay Policy Statement

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

2.2 The Hutton report on Fair Pay in the Public Sector recommended the publication of an organisation's pay multiple as a means of illustrating the relationship between the remuneration arrangements for Chief Officers in comparison with the rest of the non-schools' workforce. This is a calculation in the form of a ratio between the median average earnings across the organisation and the highest paid employee. In addition, in 2021, revised guidance on the publication of fair pay disclosures was issued, requiring the publication of additional data; the top to median, lower quartile and upper quartile staff pay multiples (ratios) as set out below.

2.3 Fair Pay disclosures (pay multiples) March 2025 compared with March 2024:

Date of Calculation	Pay Multiple (median)	Pay Multiple (25 th Percentile)	Pay Multiple (75 th Percentile)	% change in highest paid director's salary & allowances	% change in all employees' salary & allowances
March 2024	5.94:1	7.95:1	4.75:1	3.5%	7.3%
March 2025	5.88:1	7.71:1	4.65:1	2.5%	9.52%

The fair pay disclosures data is published on our website with the Pay Policy Statement and will be updated again in March 2026.

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

2.5 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 placed a new requirement on all employers with 250 or more employees to publish gender pay data on the gov.uk website by 30 March each year. The median gender pay gap for 2024 is 6.1%, compared to 6.69% for 2023; the gender pay report for East Sussex County Council is published annually on our website, along with the Pay Policy Statement. The report and figures for 2025 will be uploaded before 30 March 2026.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Governance Committee is asked to recommend to the County Council to approve the updated pay policy statement for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

ROS PARKER
Chief Operating Officer

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Pay Policy Statement

Date: February 2026

Approved by East Sussex County Council at its meeting on xxxxx.

Document summary

Policy on the pay of Chief Officers, Deputy Chief Officers and Assistant Directors in relation to the rest of the local government workforce, excluding schools.

Enquiries

Pay and Reward Team, 01273 481867

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Key points

- The annual pay policy statement will be approved by full Council each year and published on the Council's website by 31 March.
- Elected members will take decisions on all matters concerning the pay of Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers through the Governance Committee including approval of any annual pay award. This Committee also approves any annual pay award offered to managerial staff employed on local pay and conditions.
- The Chief Officer salary bands are published on the County Council's website, along with the salary scales for all other staff groups.
- The County Council uses job evaluation to determine the grade of its posts and has adopted two schemes: the Korn Ferry HAY scheme for managerial posts and the NJC (local government) Single Status scheme for staff below management level.

1. Background to the pay policy statement

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to prepare a pay policy statement for each financial year. This statement must be approved by the full County Council, annually.
- 1.2. The statement must set out the authority's policies for the financial year relating to the remuneration of its Chief Officers, the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Chief Officers:** Statutory and non-statutory Chief Officers of the County Council, all of whom report to the Chief Executive as the Head of the Authority's paid service. This definition is based on the interpretation provided in the Localism Act with reference to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 2.2. The Localism Act specifies that the **Monitoring Officer** is also included. This Officer is paid at Chief Officer level. (See paragraph 2.1, above).
- 2.3. **Deputy Chief Officers:** All posts reporting directly to a Chief Officer, whether paid on Deputy Chief Officer pay bands or Assistant Directors paid on Local Managerial Grades. This definition is based on the interpretation provided in the Localism Act with reference to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 2.4. **Lowest paid employees:** all staff paid on the lowest salary point of the local single status pay spine; currently £24,413 per annum (April 2025) for full time staff. This will increase to £24,796 per annum from 1 April 2026 pending the 2026/27 pay award. All non-managerial employees are paid on a pay spine which commences at this level, hence the selection of this point as the lowest salary point.
- 2.5. The Localism Act defines **remuneration** as including; salary under a contract of employment or payments made under a contract for services, bonuses, charges, fees or allowances, any benefits in kind, any enhancement to pension entitlement and any amounts payable on the Chief Officer ceasing to hold office.

- 2.6. The publication of the ‘**pay multiple**’ as a determinant of the relationship between the pay of Chief Officers and that of the rest of the workforce was recommended by the Hutton report on Fair pay. This is a calculation in the form of a ratio between the median average earnings across the organisation and the highest paid employee. In addition, in 2021, revised guidance on the publication of fair pay disclosures was issued, requiring the publication of additional data; the top to median, lower quartile and upper quartile staff pay multiples (ratios).
- 2.7. The fair pay disclosures (pay multiples) are published on the County Council website and monitored annually.

3. Remuneration of Chief Officers

- 3.1. The Chief Executive, Directors and Deputy Directors of the County Council are paid on local pay bands for Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers. These posts are evaluated using the Hay job evaluation scheme and are paid on the relevant band according to the size of their job as determined on the job evaluation scheme.
- 3.2. Assistant Directors are defined as ‘Deputy Chief Officers’ for the purposes of the Localism Act as they report directly to Chief Officers. These posts are also evaluated using the HAY job evaluation scheme and paid on the County Council’s Local Managerial Grades (LMG). All the County Council’s managers are paid on these scales and have a common scheme of terms and conditions of service.
- 3.3. The County Council’s salary scales are published on the County Council website <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/jobs/benefits/pay/>
- 3.4. In accordance with standard council policy, new employees are normally appointed to the minimum point of the pay scale unless there is a good reason for appointment at a higher point on the scale. This would be approved at a senior level and, in the case of Chief Officer appointments, by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Lead Member.
- 3.5. Incremental progression within a salary band would normally take place on 1 April each year until the maximum point of the scale is reached and is subject to the achievement of agreed operational targets. This is standard policy for all managers across the County Council.
- 3.6. Annual pay awards for Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers are subject to local pay determination by the Governance Committee. Annual pay awards for managers paid on Local Managerial Grades, including Assistant Directors, are negotiated with UNISON annually and approved by the Governance Committee. These pay awards are determined with reference to economic indicators including the rate of inflation (including owner occupier’s housing costs - CPIH), turnover rates, level of other public sector pay awards and market position. The local pay awards for these staff groups in 2025/26 mirrored the national NJC pay award.

4. Remuneration of employees who are not Chief Officers

- 4.1. The remuneration of employees below management level is subject to the ‘National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services’ commonly known as the ‘Green Book’.

- 4.2. The 'Green Book' contains a national basic framework for conditions of service but also allows for local variation on certain specified conditions of service, including the pay structure. The County Council and the local trade unions have been working closely together over a number of years to implement these local variations via Local Collective Agreements. In broad terms, these have provided for a range of changes to terms and conditions of employment, including the following:
- the adoption of the National Joint Council Job Evaluation Scheme for determining the grade of posts on the local single status pay spine;
 - the implementation of local East Sussex Single Status pay scales containing 13 non-overlapping grades. A copy of the current set of pay scales is published on the County Council's website.
 - a harmonised arrangement of paying up to two additional increments for work undertaken at weekends within the normal working week.
- 4.3. The locally negotiated pay awards, which mirror the nationally negotiated pay awards, have been applied to the local single status pay scales since their introduction in 2003.
- 4.4. Staff, who are not Chief Officers, working in Education Advisory roles or as Educational Psychologists are paid according to the national salary framework for Soulbury staff with associated terms and conditions.
- 4.5. Staff, who are not Chief Officers, working in youth and community roles are paid according to the national salary framework for JNC Youth and Community Workers with associated terms and conditions.
- 4.6. Staff, who are not Chief Officers, working as Qualified Teachers are paid according to the national Teachers' Pay Scales with associated terms and conditions as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD).

5. Other elements of remuneration

- 5.1. The County Council does not operate a formal performance-related pay system and therefore there are no bonus payments, earn back systems or other regular payments paid to Chief Officers beyond the annual increments referred to in paragraph 3.5 above.
- 5.2. The County Council's honorarium scheme applies to all staff, including Chief Officers, and rewards the performance of additional duties and responsibilities over and above an employee's normal workload for a temporary period. It includes reward for an exceptional contribution to a project or piece of work and for high standards of personal achievement and quality of work. There are three levels of payment against specified criteria and a payment of 2.5%, 5.0% and 7.5% of salary may be awarded for the period during which the additional duties/responsibilities were undertaken. The decision to award an honorarium payment to a Chief Officer would be taken by the Chief Executive and in the case of the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council.
- 5.3. The County Council does not award additional fees to Chief Officers for undertaking local election duties.

- 5.4. The County Council's special merit payment scheme, which allows a flat rate payment of up to £1000 in recognition of a particular "one-off" contribution or a substantially increased workload, applies to all staff, including Chief Officers. The decision to award a merit payment to a Chief Officer would be taken by the Chief Executive and in the case of the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council.
- 5.5. Out of pocket expenses incurred during the course of employment will be met by the County Council provided that the expenses are directly related to employment and are approved as reasonable. This is in line with standard County Council policy.
- 5.6. The standard County Council mileage payments are also paid to Chief Officers for mileage travelled on Council business. These are 45p per mile for contracted car users, 25p per mile for optional car users, 20p for travel in connection with training and 12p per mile for leased car users.
- 5.7. The County Council operates a car leasing scheme which is open to all employees but only attracts an employer contribution for staff who are expected to travel at least 4000 business miles per annum and leased car users are then reimbursed the 'fuel' element of their business travel. The employer contribution is £1600 per annum and the higher contribution for travel in excess of 7500 miles per annum is £2675.
- 5.8. The County Council has a Recruitment and Retention Incentives policy that provides options for additional payment/s by way of recruitment incentives, retention incentives and/or market supplements to aid the recruitment and retention of staff that work in areas where there is evidence of a skills shortage. These are rarely applied and have to be approved by the Corporate Management Team.

6. Relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and that of the wider workforce

- 6.1. Apart from the differences in pay scales as described in paragraph 3 above, there are minimal differences in entitlement to remuneration between Chief Officers, Deputy Chief Officers and the rest of the workforce as the County Council is working towards harmonisation of terms and conditions of service between staff groups. The main differences between the remuneration of employees below managerial level and the local managerial grades are:
 - i) Managers employed on local terms and conditions are not entitled to payment of any additional allowances beyond the basic rate of pay whereas employees below management level are able to claim for regular working outside standard working hours, for example, overtime or weekend working increments.
 - ii) Managers employed on local terms and conditions have their annual pay award approved locally by the Governance Committee, as described in paragraph 3.6, whereas employees below management level usually receive an award in line with the national pay award.
- 6.2. The fair pay disclosures ('pay multiples') will be calculated each year and published on the County Council's website with other pay information suggested in the code of recommended practice on data transparency. Historical information will be retained in order to monitor this over time.

7. Tax Avoidance

- 7.1. The Council is committed to tackling all forms of tax avoidance and therefore encourages the direct employment of staff paid via the payroll system. In a few circumstances where it is more appropriate to engage people on a self-employed basis, the Council offers a contract for services and follows guidelines to ensure that the correct employment status is identified. When a need arises for an 'interim' appointment, recruitment is normally secured using the Council's agency contract arrangement.

8. Appointment or Re-engagement of Chief Officers

- 8.1. Posts with proposed salary packages greater than £100,000 will be approved by the Governance Committee prior to appointment, provided the salary package being considered is in line with existing pay scales that also apply to other Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers undertaking similar duties and responsibilities. Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers will be appointed on one of the established grade bands appropriate to the post. Any proposed exceptions to this would require the approval of the full County Council.
- 8.2. The policy for appointing or re-engaging any member of staff who has previously been made redundant by this authority, and is, as a result of this, in receipt of a local government pension, is that there should be a presumption against re-employment of employees for a period of 12 months following the end of their employment. However, in exceptional circumstances employees may be re-employed by the Council.
- 8.3. In approving the re-employment of a Chief Officer, Members will need to be satisfied that:
- the employee is not being re-employed in a role or capacity which is broadly similar to the role from which they were made redundant;
 - the rate of pay applied to the work undertaken by the re-engaged employee should be appropriate to the work to be done and not the grading which applied to the employee prior to the end of their current contract;
 - the employment should be for a fixed term, not exceeding one year, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and the arrangement must provide financial / operational advantage to the Council. These criteria apply to re-engagement of any staff member.

9. Termination of Employment of Chief Officers

- 9.1. Any compensation payments made to Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers on ceasing to hold office or to be employed by the authority will be made on the same basis as any other employee in line with the County Council's 'managing change' policies.

- 9.2. The Local Government Early Termination of Employment (Discretionary Compensation) England and Wales Regulations 2006 require local authorities to formulate and publish their policy on making discretionary payments on early termination of employment within the parameter of up to 104 weeks' pay. In the event of an employee being made redundant or applying for voluntary severance, the County Council's managing change policy contains details of the circumstances in which a redundancy payment is payable. The payment is calculated on the basis of the statutory redundancy payment multiplied by 1.75. This equates to a maximum of 52.5 weeks' pay. For the purposes of calculating the enhanced (non-statutory) proportion of this payment, the employee's gross weekly salary will not be considered to include pension contributions made by the employer, or any other payments that are not normally made direct to the employee.
- 9.3. The Local Government Pension Scheme regulations provide for access to pension benefits without reduction from the age of 55 in the event of an employee being made redundant.
- 9.4. Where a severance package for an individual employee exceeds £30,000 it must be approved by the Chief Executive. A severance package that exceeds £100,000 must be approved by the Governance Committee with the components of the package listed separately.
- 9.5. Special Severance Payments are payments made to employees, workers, or others outside of statutory, contractual or other requirements when leaving employment in public service.
- 9.6. Where a 'special severance payment' is included as part of a severance package and where the total payment exceeds £20,000, it must be approved by the Chief Executive and Leader of Council. Payments of £100K and above must be approved by a vote of full council.

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Report to: Governance Committee

Date: 16 December 2025

By: Chief Operating Officer

Title: Reimbursement for electric vehicle mileage

Purpose: To seek the Governance Committee's approval that, where applicable, electric vehicle mileage is reimbursed at the HMRC advisory fuel rate for home chargers as standard.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Governance Committee is recommended to approve the following changes to the Travelling on County Council Business Policy:

- 1) where applicable, electric vehicle mileage is reimbursed at the HMRC advisory fuel rate for home chargers as set out in paragraph 2.1 of this report; and
 - 2) where applicable, exceptions as set out in paragraph 2.2 of this report will apply.
-

1 Background

1.1 The Council has a Travelling on County Council Business Policy (Appendix 1), which contains the reimbursement rates for employee business travel, as well as the rules for claiming and authorising business travel. Under the policy, employees who own their own vehicle are reimbursed for business mileage at a rate of 45 or 25 pence per mile (ppm), depending on whether they are a contracted or optional car user. Reimbursement at up to 45ppm is not subject to tax.

1.2 However, the Council also operates two car leasing schemes: a salary sacrifice scheme just for electric cars, and a standard leasing scheme which can provide both standard and electric vehicles. The mileage reimbursement arrangements are different for these schemes as outlined below. Both are impacted by the HMRC (His Majesty's Revenue and Customs) advisory rate for fuel. This is the maximum amount that a leased or company car can be reimbursed per mile before tax is due:

- Employees taking part in the standard leasing scheme are reimbursed between 12 and 45ppm depending on their business mileage, and tax is applied to the difference between the rate reimbursed and the HMRC advisory rate for the vehicles fuel type and engine size. This reflects that the maintenance of the vehicle is already included in the leasing fee and is the responsibility of the lease provider.
- For salary sacrifice schemes, employees are just reimbursed at the HMRC advisory rate. This reflects HMRC's position that as the employee is already receiving tax relief on the vehicle, they should not receive any additional mileage reimbursement on top of that.

1.3 Until recently, HMRC published a single advisory rate for electric vehicles which was 7ppm. However, [HMRC have now published](#) two rates – as of 1 December, 7ppm for vehicles charged at home, and 14ppm for vehicles charged using a public charger.

1.4 HMRC have provided no guidance on what evidence should be used to verify that a vehicle was charged using a public charger. Also, where someone charges their car battery with a combination of both home and public chargers, there is no practical way to distinguish between travel fuelled by the home charge, and the public charge.

1.5 It is reasonable to assume that employees who choose to lease an electric vehicle will have access to home charging. This is particularly true under the salary sacrifice scheme, where a free home charger is provided as standard, subject to living arrangements.

2 Conclusion and recommendations

2.1 Based on the above, it is recommended that the as standard, for leased electric vehicle (EV) mileage:

- Under the salary sacrifice scheme, employees will be reimbursed at the lower advisory rate, of 7ppm, for home charging.
- Under the standard leasing scheme, employees' tax for electric vehicle mileage will also be based on this lower home rate.

2.2 The higher advisory rate for public charging would only be applied under exceptional circumstances, for example if the employee needed to charge their vehicle in order to complete a particularly long business journey. This would be authorised by the line manager and requested via the Payroll team.

2.3 It is therefore recommended that the Travelling on County Council Business Policy is updated to reflect the agreed rates as set out above.

ROS PARKER
Chief Operating Officer

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Travelling on County Council Business Policy



Date: April 2025

Document summary

Guidance about business travel, expenses and reimbursement.

Content in [blue](#) is available on the Intranet/Webshop. [Underlined blue text](#) links to elsewhere in this document.

Enquiries

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1. Introduction and key principles

- 1.1. Employees of the County Council are likely to need to travel as part of their work, whether inside the County or beyond. For some it will be a regular part of their work and for others it will be more of an exception. This policy sets out the principles governing such travel, including arrangements for payment and/or reimbursement of the associated expenses.
- 1.2. Any travel must be for legitimate Council business purposes as determined by an employee's line manager. See the examples of business journeys at [Appendix 2](#).
 - All employees are expected to consider whether travelling is the most efficient use of resources. For example, they could join a meeting remotely by using phone or video technology rather than spending time and money travelling. The Council commits to setting clear guidance for meeting protocols, including when virtual, face to face or hybrid meetings are most suitable, with an emphasis on meeting virtually where suitable.
- 1.3. If it is determined that travel is necessary, managers and claimants are also expected to use their judgement to discuss and agree the appropriate means of travel before travelling (e.g. car, bus, rail or plane).
- 1.4. Employees authorised by their manager to travel on Council business are entitled to claim reimbursement of the costs associated with their business journeys.
- 1.5. Claims must be submitted to the relevant approver, normally the employee's line manager. Claims should only be approved by somebody who can verify the claim in terms of the journey being necessary and the distance claimed being appropriate. Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff know who to send claims to, including when the normal approver is absent. A substitute approver should be someone of comparable seniority to the normal approver.
- 1.6. Claimants, approvers, budget holders and everyone else associated with business travel and expenses are reminded that the funds used for such purposes are public money. As such, they are reminded of the expectations around the standards of behaviour and ethical conduct as set out in the [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#).
- 1.7. It is jointly the responsibility of the claimant and the approver to ensure that any mileage or expenses claimed have been properly and necessarily incurred on Council business. Making false or inflated claims is a serious matter which may constitute fraud and is likely to result in disciplinary action, including the possibility of dismissal and criminal charges.

2. Claiming reimbursement of expenses

- 2.1. Employees should submit claims for reimbursement using the relevant form available on the intranet.
- 2.2. Reimbursement will only be paid via the payroll system.
- 2.3. Reimbursement will always be retrospective. For example, where hotel accommodation has been purchased, the stay must have happened not just been paid for, before it will be reimbursed.

- 2.4. All claims must be submitted within three months. Payment for claims received outside of 3 months is not guaranteed.
- 2.5. If claimants miss the three month deadline, they must discuss the reason for delay with their authorising manager. Authorising managers must forward the claim with reasons for delay to their Assistant Director. The Assistant Director must consider the delay and authorise the claim form if in agreement.
- 2.6. Claims should be supported by a receipt.
- 2.7. Managers approving claims should be alert to the possibility of falsely generated receipts which can appear very genuine. Be prepared to seek additional information relating to the receipt or expense claim where necessary.
- 2.8. Employee services will return any claims not completed appropriately or submitted without manager approval, leading to delays in reimbursement.

3. Eligible journeys and calculating distances

- 3.1. In principle, journeys that are eligible for reimbursement are those made 'on the job' rather than 'to the job'. Some types of journey are specifically not eligible for reimbursement, such as an employee's home to work travel also known as their ordinary commute.
- 3.2. As part of considering what is an eligible journey, it is important to understand the following key terms:

Ordinary commuting

- Is travel in either direction between (a) a permanent workplace and (b) any other place that is not a workplace (e.g. home).
- Is not a business journey and cannot under any circumstances be included in a claim for business travel.
- Is sometimes also referred to as 'normal commuting' or 'home to work travel'
- Applies equally to employees with multiple permanent workplaces.

Permanent workplace

A permanent workplace is a place that an employee attends regularly for the performance of their duties of employment. Even if an employee attends a workplace on only one or two days per week, if it is on a regular basis, then the workplace is a permanent workplace. It is possible for an employee to have two or more permanent workplaces at the same time.

Indicators that would point to a workplace being a permanent workplace include:

- the employee regularly performs a significant part of their duties there;
- colleagues or clients would expect to be able to contact the employee at the workplace;
- the employee has a workspace and/or support services at the workplace;
- attendance at the workplace is regular or follows a pattern;
- the employee does not attend the workplace solely to undertake specific tasks such as attendance at a specially arranged meeting;
- is for all or almost all of the period for which they hold or are likely to hold that employment;
- if it is a temporary re-location, the duration is expected to or does exceed 24 months.

Temporary workplace

- A workplace is a temporary workplace if an employee goes there only to perform a task of limited duration or for a temporary purpose even if they go there regularly. Examples might include attendance at a monthly meeting, taking quarterly meter readings or fixing a broken machine.
- An employee might undertake some of their regular work at the temporary workplace (e.g. emails using laptop or mobile phone) but their attendance at the location is not a required part of those tasks.

3.3. A series of examples designed to help clarify eligible journeys can be found at [Appendix 2](#). Some principal situations are described in the table below.

Eligible	Not eligible
From a permanent workplace to a temporary workplace (or vice versa)	Ordinary commuting
From a temporary workplace to any other temporary workplace	Travel to or from work that is not with the Council (e.g. another job)
From home to a temporary workplace (ordinary commuting distance must be deducted)	Part of a business journey undertaken for a private purpose (e.g. a detour to the supermarket made during travel from one workplace to another)

- 3.4. When an employee travels to or from home on a business journey, they must deduct the distance of their ordinary commute from the total of any mileage claimed for that day. This deduction must also be made if they start from any other location that was not somewhere they were required to be for work, if they had stayed at a friend's house rather than at their own home for example.
- 3.5. When planning their journeys and in determining what is eligible for reimbursement, claimants and approvers are expected to use their judgement to balance the distance travelled and the time it will take. For example, in some circumstances it may be more efficient to travel a few extra miles to join a faster road in order to arrive sooner. Managers are expected to explain to their staff what approach which should be taken in their service area.
- 3.6. The AA Route Planner should be used to determine distances.

- 3.7. The eligible mileage will be the distance between identifiable locations directly linked to the need to attend for work purposes (e.g. from County Hall to St Mary's House). If the employee drives additional miles (e.g. in search of parking) this is not part of the eligible mileage distance.
- 3.8. An employee's commuting journey cannot be transformed into a business journey by arranging a meeting somewhere en route. To qualify as a business journey, attendance at the place must be required as part of the employee's duties. This applies equally to employees with multiple permanent workplaces.
- 3.9. In addition, an employee with more than one contracted position at different work bases cannot claim for travel between the two work bases. This travel should be considered part of the employee's normal commute.

4. Summary of responsibilities

Claimant responsibilities	
Share licence information with line manager using the online checking tool https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence see Safe Use of Motor Vehicles Policy within 12 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scan/copy and share insurance policy details showing appropriate business use cover and correct home address with line manager within 12 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Before travelling or spending, ensure they have manager approval for the journey or expense	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any vehicle used is roadworthy and has a valid MOT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Claims are submitted using the current form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Claims are submitted within 3 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any claims for mileage in a car or motorcycle (except for electric vehicles) are supported by VAT receipts that meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are a VAT receipt, not just a till receipt; dated no later than the month of the claim; represent enough fuel for the journeys claimed for (e.g. a £5 receipt for 500 miles would not be enough) 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If claiming for electric vehicle mileage, add a note to the claim form to indicate that no VAT receipt is supplied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any claims for costs like parking or tolls are supported by receipts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any mileage claimed represents a true representation of the journeys made for business reasons, verifiable using the AA route planner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A deduction is made from the mileage claimed that corresponds to commuting distance where necessary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Approver responsibilities	
Inspect the claimant's licence details and insurance within 12 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Confirm that any journeys or expenses claimed for are genuinely for business reasons and actually happened	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Confirm that the distances claimed correspond to the agreed/required journeys	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ensure a deduction for commuting has been made where necessary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ensure Claim forms are completed in full and signed before being sent for processing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ensure sufficient VAT receipts for fuel are attached for any claim for mileage using a car or motorcycle (except for electric vehicles).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Once signed by the approver, ensure claim forms are sent for processing and not returned to the employee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5. Travel by car or motorcycle

- 5.1. Any employee who drives as part of their work must read the [Safe Use of Motor Vehicles Policy](#).
- 5.2. As noted in the summary of responsibilities, claimants must have a valid driving licence for the vehicle used and insurance for correct type of use. The driving licence and insurance policy reflects their current home address. They must also ensure that their vehicle has a valid MOT where required. Approvers are expected to verify these details annually.
- 5.3. All claims for business mileage made by car or motorcycle must be accompanied by VAT receipts that meet the criteria described in the summary of responsibilities section. There are two key reasons for this:
 - (1) it is required by HMRC;
 - (2) it enables the Council to reclaim the VAT on reimbursement which is worth tens of thousands of pounds annually.
- 5.4. For the purposes of claiming mileage, car or motorcycle users will be designated as either an Optional User or a Contractual User and will be reimbursed at the corresponding rate. These are defined in [Appendix 1](#).
 - 5.4.1. A small number of employees on specific terms and conditions (e.g. Soulbury) will be subject to alternative schemes. Further information can be obtained from the Payroll Governance Team.
- 5.5. Employees who lease vehicles through the Council's leased car schemes receive a different rate per mile for reimbursement.

6. Travel by bicycle and electric vehicles

- 6.1. Procedures for claiming are the same as for cars and motorcycles, except that no VAT receipt is required.

7. Passenger payments

- 7.1. Employees may claim an additional mileage supplement for business journeys where they also transport another ESCC employee as a passenger.
- 7.2. The supplement may not be claimed for transporting service users or clients, or for transporting ESCC employees where their journey is not a business journey. For example, dropping another employee off at their home while you travel to a business meeting would not be claimable. The Passenger payment rate is included in Appendix 1.

8. Travel by train, hotels, parking and other costs

- 8.1. Where possible, team purchasing cards (P-cards) should be used to book travel in advance, taking advantage of off-peak or advance fares where available. Where this is not possible, travel warrants should be issued. Alternatively, employees may buy a standard class ticket and seek reimbursement.

- 8.2. P-cards should also be the first choice when paying for other tickets, hotel accommodation and similar costs. This helps limit staff being out of pocket and reduces the number of claims to process.
- 8.3. Expenses incurred from travel on other forms of public transport or taxis as well as incidental costs like parking and toll fees will normally be reimbursable but must be evidenced by a receipt.
- 8.4. Overnight accommodation may be used but should always be approved before booking. Approvers are expected to use their judgement to determine when it is reasonable to do so. As a guideline, any journey which might represent a reasonable commute (e.g. to London for 09:00) probably wouldn't justify additional spend on accommodation.
- 8.5. Tariffs for travel or accommodation that don't allow for refund in case of cancellation should be used with care. While they may look like better value, it is important to remember that plans and availability change. Purchasers are expected to use their judgement and minimise the chance of money being wasted, so these kinds of deals should only be bought where there is a high degree of certainty they will actually be used.
- 8.6. When at their normal place of work, employees are expected to pay for their own meals and refreshments. As such, this same principle will apply when they are working elsewhere. However, in exceptional circumstances managers have the discretion to agree reimbursement, where the employee is required to accompany clients or customers for a meal for example. Employees are expected to seek approval in advance for this as far as possible.
- 8.7. Expenses that are not incurred in the performance of an employee's duties will not be reimbursable. A non-exhaustive list of examples includes:
 - fines or penalty notices associated with parking fees (e.g. not having a valid ticket) or with motoring offences (e.g. speeding);
 - fines or excess charges for travelling on public transport without a valid ticket;
 - excess leased car charges;
 - cost to upgrade motor insurance to cover business use;
 - cost of any fuel used for private purposes;
 - alcoholic drinks.

9. Season tickets and other multi-use tickets

- 9.1. Season tickets and other unlimited usage multi-day tickets should not be purchased or reimbursed for business travel. However, single day multi-use tickets (e.g. London Travelcards) may represent good value and therefore can be bought where appropriate.
- 9.2. Where an employee has a personal season ticket used for commuting that would cover part of a journey made for business reasons, a ticket for the excess part of the journey may be bought/reimbursed (e.g. where an employee has a personal season ticket for their commute from Lewes to Eastbourne and needs to attend a meeting in Hastings).

10. Flexible working and working from home

- 10.1. While technology will help many employees to work flexibly in terms of location, everyone should have a single location identified as their primary or permanent workplace. Normally this will be the place they are expected to do the bulk of their duties or the office they work out of. See [Section 3](#) for further details.
- 10.2. Working from home on occasion as part of flexible working practices does not equate to being a home based worker. Business mileage cannot be claimed from home an employee just works there occasionally, the usual rules around deducting commuting distance still apply.
- 10.3. A small number of employees have their home as their designated permanent workplace. In such circumstances, line managers must ensure the employee is aware of the implications and requirements of their home being their workplace, as set out in the [Work Styles policy](#).
- 10.4. The [Flexi-time policy](#) and [Time off in Lieu \(TOIL\) guidance](#) provide further information on when flexi-time or TOIL applies to business travel.

11. Exceptional arrangements for employees with multiple permanent workplaces

- 11.1. Existing employees whose contractual work arrangements require them to have two or more permanent workplaces concurrently may be entitled to receive a workplace travel allowance for reimbursement of additional ordinary commuting costs associated with attendance at a secondary workplace, where an employee would otherwise suffer a significant financial detriment.
- 11.2. The additional ordinary commuting journey must be significant to enable the travel allowance to apply. For example, employees who are required to attend offices in East Sussex and Surrey as permanent workplaces may satisfy the criteria.
- 11.3. The amount paid is not business mileage and the workplace travel allowance will be subject to income tax and national Insurance.
- 11.4. Employees who are contractually obliged to work at two more permanent workplaces and are approved by their manager to receive the travel allowance will receive the payment monthly via the payroll.
- 11.5. A significant additional journey is defined as a journey that is to the employee's secondary workplace. The value of the travel allowance for each attendance at the secondary workplace will be determined as the cost of the significant additional ordinary commuting journey, this being the difference between the ordinary commute to the employees secondary permanent workplace, less the ordinary commute to the primary workplace. The additional journey will normally be determined as the vehicle mileage for the additional journey according to the AA route planner and calculated at the HMRC approved mileage rate, currently 45p per mile. In exceptional circumstances where an employee is unable to travel by vehicle managers can approve the allowance based on the cost of the additional journey to the secondary workplace by public transport.

- 11.6. The value of the workplace travel allowance will be determined as an annual value, calculated by the number of anticipated attendances at the secondary permanent workplace reduced by expected periods of absence from work to account for annual leave or public holidays. The value will be “grossed up” to account for the tax and National Insurance due and divided by 12 to determine a flat rate allowance payable monthly.
- 11.7. Employees entitled to the workplace travel allowance who choose to travel by public transport can do so but are required to purchase travel tickets themselves. Rail warrants cannot be utilised for the journeys.
- 11.8. Employees in receipt of the workplace travel allowance are not entitled to submit claims for mileage reimbursement in respect of these additional commuting journeys or claim for reimbursement of the expense of travelling by public transport.
- 11.9. Entitlement to the workplace travel allowance will be reviewed annually or from the date of any significant change to working arrangements applies.

Appendix 1 - Mileage reimbursement rates

Designation and/or vehicle	Reimbursement rate (per mile)
Contracted User - Car or Motorcycle (all fuels)	45p
Optional User - Car or Motorcycle (all fuels)	25p
Leased Vehicle	12p
Bicycle	15p
Sessional Workers (Adult Social Care only)	33p
Passenger supplement	5p
Leased Electric Vehicle (Salary Sacrifice Scheme)	HMRC Advisory rate for home charging (7p as of 1 March-Dec 2025). *

[*Please note that the separate HMRC Advisory rate for Public Charging, 14ppm as of December 2025, can only be reimbursed with manager approval, and in exceptional circumstances. If you need to claim for mileage at the Public Charging rate, please contact the Payroll team.](#)

Definitions of Users

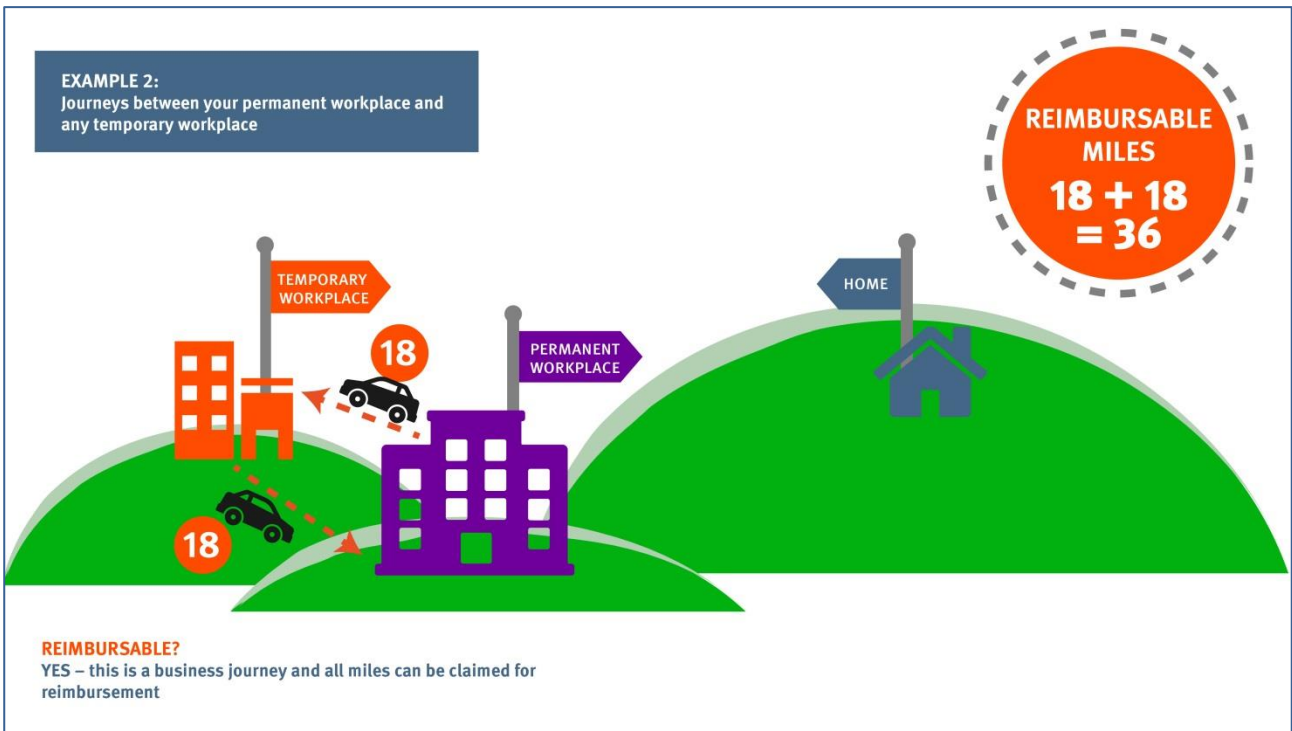
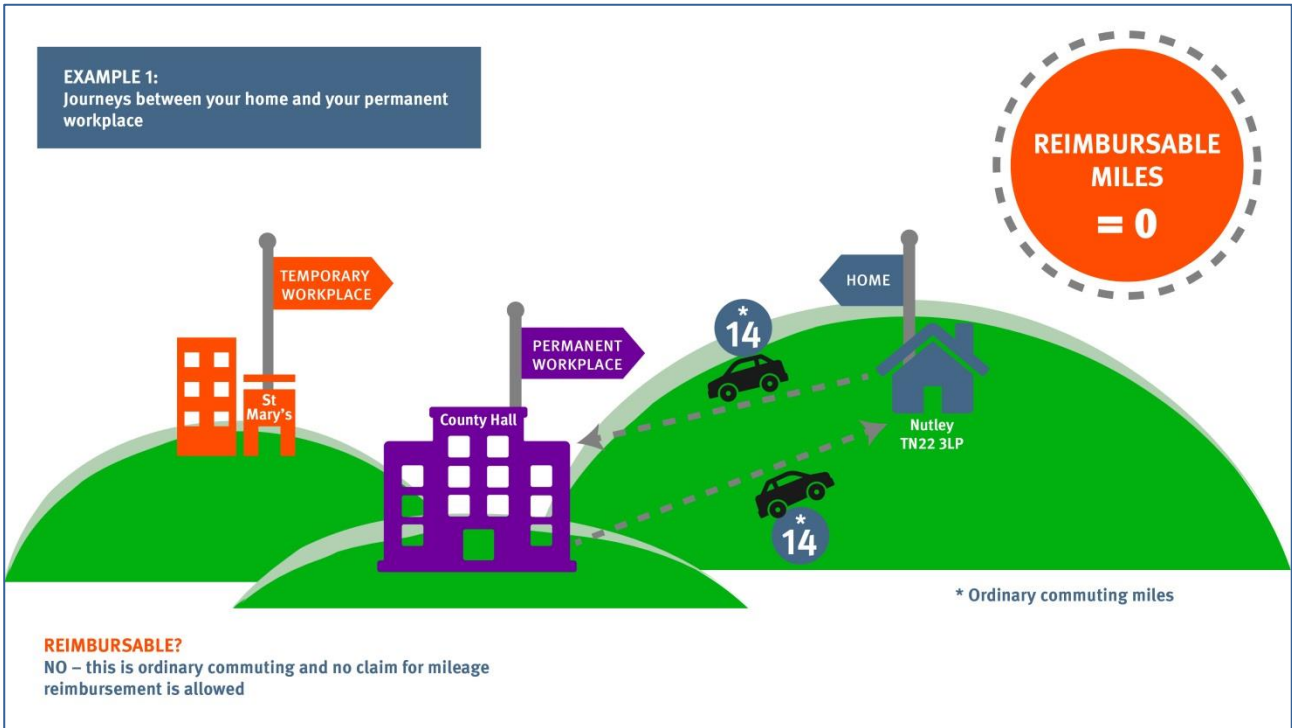
The definition of an **Optional User** is:

An employee who may need to use their car from time to time on County Council business (for example during a short period at a set time in the year e.g. assisting with the main exercise undertaken each year for education admission appeals) but for whom it is not contractually required that they do so in order to carry out their duties and responsibilities and for whom other forms of transport are usually available.

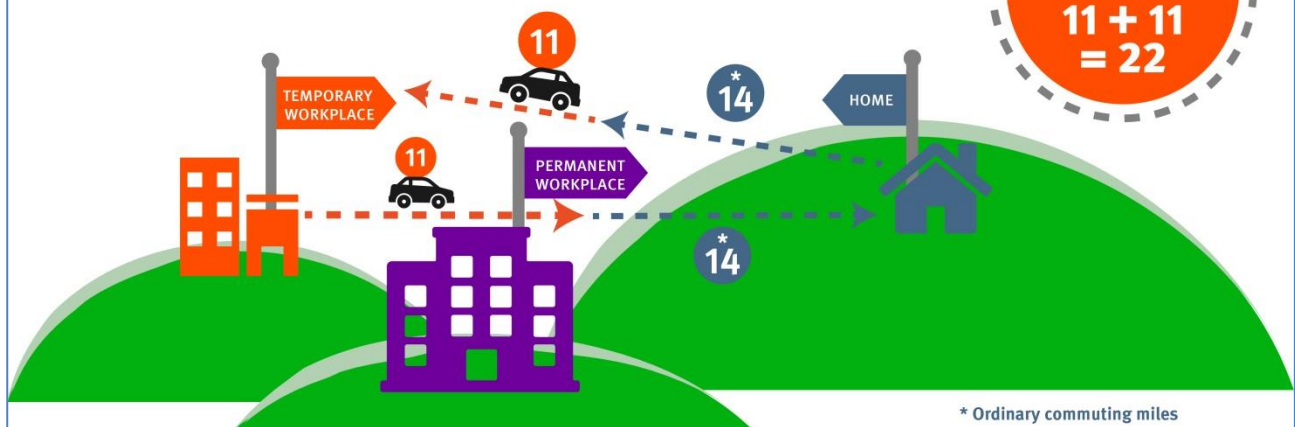
The definition of a **Contracted User** is:

An employee who could not realistically do the job without having a car because (i) the work requires them to travel frequently, on average at least 3 times a week every week whilst at work; and (ii) *either* they often have to travel to parts of the County which are inaccessible by public transport *or* where their work requires them to travel to and within areas where, for reasons of business efficiency, management consider that using a car is the most effective method of travelling between appointments.

Appendix 2 - Examples of business journeys



EXAMPLE 3:
Journeys between your home and a temporary workplace



REIMBURSABLE?
YES – this is a business journey and miles reduced by the ordinary commuting miles can be claimed for reimbursement

EXAMPLE 4:
Journeys between your permanent workplace and more than one temporary workplace



REIMBURSABLE?
YES – these are business journeys and all miles can be claimed for reimbursement

The diagram shows a route starting from a home (blue house) and ending at a workplace (St Mary's). The route is divided into segments with distances in miles:

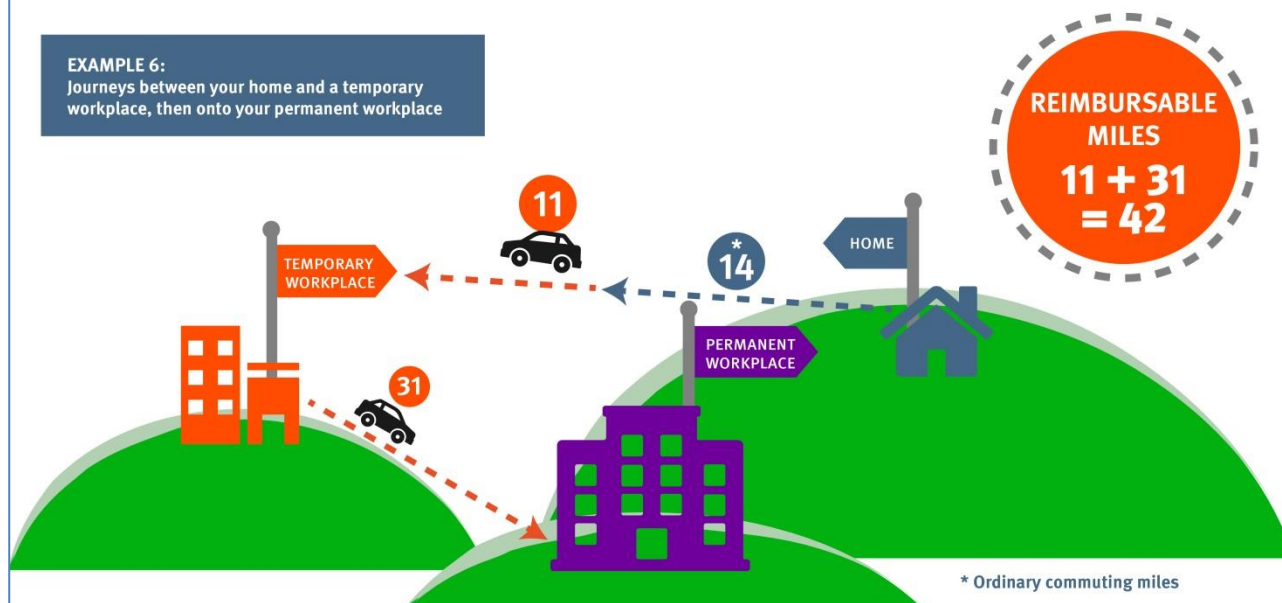
- Home to Temporary Workplace 1: 11 miles (indicated by a red circle with '11' and a red arrow).
- Temporary Workplace 1 to Temporary Workplace 2: 20 miles (indicated by a red circle with '20' and a red arrow).
- Temporary Workplace 2 to Home: 22 miles (indicated by a red circle with '22' and a red arrow).
- Home to St Mary's: 14 miles (indicated by a blue circle with '14' and a blue arrow).
- St Mary's to Home: 14 miles (indicated by a blue circle with '14' and a blue arrow).

The total ordinary commuting miles are calculated as follows:

$$11 + 20 + 22 = 53$$

* Ordinary commuting miles

REIMBURSABLE:
YES – this is a business journey and miles reduced by the ordinary commuting miles can be claimed for reimbursement



YES – this is a business journey and miles reduced by the ordinary commuting miles can be claimed for reimbursement

Report to: Governance Committee

Date of meeting: 16 December 2025

By: Deputy Chief Executive

Title: Scrutiny Activity Update

Purpose: To provide an overview of scrutiny activity being undertaken by the People, Place and Health Overview Scrutiny Committees and an update on the work of the Audit Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Governance Committee is recommended to note the updates on Scrutiny and Audit Committee activity and the current work programmes at appendices 1- 4.

1 Background

1.1 These six-monthly reports aim to provide the Governance Committee with a summary of scrutiny activity across the People, Place and Health Overview Scrutiny Committees and the work of the Audit Committee to support the visibility and effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny activity.

1.2 This report outlines developments since the last update in June, particularly from the committee meetings held later in June/July and in September 2025. The current work programmes for the committees are attached at appendices 1-4. An overview of planned scrutiny review and reference group activity over the coming months across the three scrutiny committees is attached at Appendix 5.

1.3 In June 2025 the Scrutiny and Audit Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs Group met to reflect on the call-in process, following four call-in requests since November 2024 after a number of years of the process not being used. Chairs and Vice Chairs requested that officers prepare further guidance for Members to help navigate the process and clarify aspects of the Constitution. At the following meeting in September, the Scrutiny and Audit Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs Group agreed a proposed checklist to facilitate the call-in process which was approved by the Governance Committee in October to be adopted as the basis for future call-in requests. The Committee also agreed a recommendation to extend the call-in period from 4 days to 5, which was approved by Full Council on 2 December 2025.

1.4 All committees continue to be supported to develop their scrutiny practice and to deepen their understanding of the context for services and issues within their remit. Members of People and Place Scrutiny have requested that training is delivered primarily through 'bite-sized' sessions, and these briefing or training sessions continue to be arranged as topics are identified by the committees. For example, a session has been held for Place Scrutiny on artificial intelligence and one is planned for People Scrutiny on the carers' partnership strategy. Scrutiny Members have also attended recent briefings on highways, food waste, education and prevention in adult social care (open to all Members). A joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) training event has been held with West Sussex and Brighton and Hove HOSCs, covering approaches to the health scrutiny role in the current context. People and Place Scrutiny Committees have

also been supported at recent awaydays to review their approach to using pre-meetings to develop priority lines of questioning ahead of committee meetings.

2 People Scrutiny Committee

2.1 The latest version of the committee's work programme (attached at Appendix 1) captures the full range of activity underway or planned. Key elements are outlined below.

Committee meetings

2.2 The committee met in July 2025 to consider:

- **Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)** – the committee considered relevant parts of the quarter 4 (end of year) 2024/25 monitoring report and the 2025 State of the County report which together provided an overview of performance achievements and challenges, and forthcoming developments, for the services within the committee's remit. The committee was able to ensure that key areas of interest were reflected in its work programme and identify areas for further consideration. Members also established a RPPR Board to consider draft Portfolio Plans and the developing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) later in the year.
- **Work programme update** – the committee considered feedback from scrutiny activity undertaken since the March committee, including an update on scoping of a potential Transport for All Age Care Review, and agreed updates to its work programme.
- **SEND inspection report** – the committee discussed findings of the recent special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) inspection of East Sussex Local Area Partnership and the partnership's response to the report. The committee discussed pressures within the service, including SEND support and high demand for education health and care plans (EHCPs), waiting times for mental health support and provision for post 16 year olds.
- **East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy** – the committee considered the East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy and expressed concerns about housing planning processes, funding to support the work of the Partnership and work to support people with multiple compound needs.
- **Healthy Ageing Scrutiny Review progress report** – the committee received a 6 month progress report on the implementation of recommendations made by this review. The committee welcomed the positive outcomes outlined in the report and discussed plans to further support older people in the workplace and the development of partnerships across the county to deliver healthy ageing initiatives.

2.3 In September 2025 the committee met to consider:

- **Work programme update** – the committee considered its work programme and agreed changes to reflect current priorities including adding reports on recent inspections of adult social care services and children's services.
- **Safeguarding adults board – annual report** – the committee received an annual report on the work of the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board and asked questions about identifying and supporting adults who self-neglect, adults at risk of domestic abuse, safeguarding risks for family carers and homelessness.
- **Annual review of safer communities** – the committee received an annual report on the work and performance of the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership and asked questions on issues including drug related offences and drug and

alcohol related deaths, multi-agency risk assessment conference referrals, shoplifting and community cohesion.

2.4 Further agenda items, including those considered at the committee's recent November meeting and planned for future meetings, include:

- Work on the 2025/26 RPPR process
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment report on Adult Social Care (ASC)
- East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) Annual Report
- Ofsted focussed visit on children's social care
- Review of Adult Social Care and Health savings proposals implementation
- East Sussex Education Attainment and Performance
- SEND developments
- Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report

2.5 In October the committee held its annual work planning **awayday** which provided an opportunity to consider current and forthcoming challenges for the services within the committee's remit and identify areas Members wished to prioritise for further scrutiny. This followed on from consideration of the State of the County report in July. Committee members discussed and asked Directors questions on SEND demand and support; children's mental health; and areas of improvement identified by the CQC in its recent assessment of ASC, including data sharing with partners, support for carers, and provision of care for adults with complex needs. The Committee reviewed its work programme and agreed areas for further scrutiny. This included potential future scrutiny reviews of support for carers; the provision of care for adults with complex needs; and children's mental health. The committee also agreed to monitor progress of actions following the CQC assessment through its CQC Reference Group and to increase its focus on SEND through its Children's Services Reforms Reference Group.

Reference Groups

2.6 People Scrutiny Reference Groups continued their work to provide Member input to areas of work being led by departments:

- **Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HASCIP)** Reference Group (membership: Councillors Belsey, Clark, Geary (Chair), Howell and Webb). This group meets as required to review the latest developments in local health and social care integration. The group last met in October 2025 to consider quarterly progress on the Shared Delivery Plan, focusing on Integrated Community Teams, hospital discharge, and the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Group will hold further meetings aligned to key milestones in the integration programme.
- **Children's Services Reforms** Reference Group (membership: Councillors Belsey, Geary and Howell and John Hayling (Parent Governor Representative)). This group was established to consider the department's response to national reforms in children's services, including the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The group last met in June 2025 and discussed key reforms in children's social care and the department's work in response to these, including the establishment of a Transformation Board. It will meet again in 2026 to scrutinise work to address SEND pressures and consider potential impacts of SEND reforms in the anticipated Schools White Paper.
- **CQC Reference Group** - Reference Group (membership: Councillors Cross, Geary (Chair), Howell and Webb). This group was established to support the

department's preparations for the 2025 CQC assessment, including considering the Local Government Association Peer Review and the Department's response to these findings. Going forward the group will meet in January to begin monitoring the development and implementation of departmental actions in response to the CQC findings which have initially been considered by the full committee in November.

Scrutiny Reviews

2.7 The committee is beginning a new scrutiny review, as outlined below, and continues to monitor progress with implementation of recommendations from its earlier reviews.

Home to School Transport – Personal Transport Budgets and Independent Travel	<p>A further scoping board took place on 29 October 2025 which considered the current pressures, costs and statutory responsibilities related to Home to School Transport; cost avoidance measures in place to mitigate these; and national developments, including anticipated significant reforms in the awaited Schools White Paper. The board agreed that, in light of pending national reforms, a broad review of Home to School Transport would be unfeasible, however there was value in conducting a focused scrutiny review on Personal Transport Budgets and Independent Travel Training, aiming to identify barriers to uptake and explore supporting increased engagement.</p> <p>Board Membership: Councillors, Howell, Belsey and Webb and John Hayling (Parent Governor Representative).</p>
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3 Place Scrutiny Committee

3.1 The committee's latest work programme (attached at Appendix 2) outlines the full range of activity underway or planned. Key elements are outlined below.

Committee meetings

3.2 The committee met in July 2025 to consider reports on:

- **Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)** – as with People Scrutiny, the committee considered relevant parts of the quarter 4 (end of year) 2024/25 Council Monitoring report and the 2025 State of the County report which together provided an overview of performance achievements and challenges, and forthcoming developments, for the services within the committee's remit. The Committee was able to ensure that key areas of interest were reflected in its work programme and future committee meetings in September and November. Members also established a RPPR Board to consider draft Portfolio Plans and the developing Medium Term Financial Plan in December.
- **Work programme update** – the committee reflected on its RPPR discussion and reviewed the work programme to ensure it reflected its priorities. The committee also agreed to establish a scoping board to explore a potential scrutiny review on street works, and to re-establish the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) Reference Group.
- **East Sussex Highways Year 2 Contract Performance** – the committee considered a report on the service performance for the second year of the highways maintenance contract with Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP), focused on areas of performance where improvement plans were in place. A further update

report on the performance of the highways maintenance contract has been added to the work programme for 2026.

3.3 The committee met in September 2025 to consider reports on:

- **Work programme update** – the committee discussed its work programme, including a discussion on the Queensway Gateway Road in Hastings and an approach to scrutiny of the project once it had been completed, as well as how scrutiny can monitor major infrastructure projects as they are ongoing.
- **East Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)** – the committee received a report on recent project development and delivery associated with the LCWIP, as well as ESCC's response to Active Travel England's Local Authority Capability assessment. The committee welcomed active travel developments in the county given the limited funding available for schemes and discussed the importance of accessibility and wider active travel network integration and connectivity.
- **Scrutiny Review of Local Speed Limit Policy** – the committee received a six-month progress report on the implementation of the recommendations made by the scrutiny review. All the Department's responses to the recommendations were either completed or ongoing.

3.4 The committee also held its annual work planning **awayday** in September, which provided an opportunity to discuss how it wished to review the challenges with the construction of the Queensway Gateway Road in Hastings. The committee agreed to scope two potential reviews, one focused on the issues with the construction of the road since the point at which the Council took on responsibility for completion of the scheme, and a second to understand the role scrutiny can play in the oversight of major projects. The committee also reviewed its work programme to schedule reports for future meetings and raised areas of interest for training and briefings, including trading standards, verge cutting and the upcoming Government Road Safety Strategy.

3.5 Further committee agenda items, including those considered at the committee's recent November meeting, and planned for future meetings include:

- A continuation of the committee's work on the 2025/26 RPPR process, including consideration of the November Cabinet RPPR report.
- Scrutiny Review of Procurement update and the introduction of the ESCC Social Value Model;
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging procurement and roll-out;
- Call-in: Decision made by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment regarding the proposed relocation of Hastings Register Office;
- Notice of Motion: 20mph speed limits in new developments
- SPACES programme and property asset disposal; and
- Scrutiny review of local speed limit policy – 12-month update.

Reference and Working Groups

3.6 Place Scrutiny Reference Groups continued their work to provide Member input to areas of work being led by departments:

- **Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)** – Reference Group (membership: all Place Scrutiny Committee members, and People Scrutiny members Councillors Cross, Geary and Howell. Chair: Cllr Hollidge). The group was established to provide timely scrutiny input into the development of plans for

both devolution and LGR, including by providing comments to inform Cabinet decisions. The Reference Group met in September to consider and comment on the One East Sussex LGR proposal and the content of the proposed Statutory Instrument to establish a Mayoral Strategic Authority for Sussex. The Reference Group met again on 26 November 2025 to discuss the Sussex and Brighton Combined County Authority (SBCCA) governance arrangements, including the draft Local Assurance Framework, and will hold a further meeting on 17 February 2026. The Reference Group will continue to meet as these processes develop.

- **Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)** – Reference Group (membership: Councillors Beaver, Collier, Hilton, Hollidge, Lunn, Redstone (chair), Stephen Shing and Tutt). The reference group was re-established to be briefed on and provide input to the supporting documents of the LTP4. The Reference Group met on 3 September to receive a briefing on the request assessment process ahead of it going to Lead Member for Transport and Environment for approval. It met again on 12 November to provide input into the upcoming review of East Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- **Asset Management Strategy** – Working Group (membership: Councillors Hilton, Hollidge, Lunn, Murphy (Chair), Redstone and Wright). The group was established to provide scrutiny input into the update to the Council's Asset Management Strategy, and will resume its work once the plans for LGR in East Sussex are clearer.
- **Exceat Bridge** – Reference Group (membership: Councillors Murphy, Redstone, Stephen Shing, and Wright). The committee has established a Reference Group to scrutinise and provide input to the planning and oversight of the bridge replacement project before and during construction. An initial meeting is planned for December or January to consider project background and initiation, followed by further meetings during 2026 and 2027 to scrutinise the progress of the project as it develops.

Scrutiny Reviews

3.7 The committee has recently begun a new scrutiny review, as outlined below and continues to monitor progress with implementation of recommendations from its earlier reviews.

Street Works	<p>The committee held a scoping board on 20 October to consider a potential review on street works. The scoping board agreed to progress with a review to focus on network management and how the Council works with utility companies to minimise the impact of street works. The board agreed to undertake further scoping to refine the terms of reference of the review to ensure it is focused on the main areas where there are concerns about the approach to street works taken by utility companies.</p> <p>The review board met again on 27 November to discuss the approach to managing the network and challenges that highways officers encounter, and plans to hold a number of meetings over the coming months, including with officers and representatives from utility companies, with a view to bringing a draft report to the March committee meeting.</p> <p>Board membership: Councillors Hilton, Hollidge, Lunn, Murphy (Chair) and Redstone.</p>
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4 Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

4.1 Key work priorities for HOSC are set out in the attached work programme (Appendix 3) with highlights below:

Committee meetings

4.2 The HOSC met in June 2025 to consider reports on:

- **NHS Sussex Winter Plan 2024/25** – the committee scrutinised an evaluation report on the outcomes of the NHS Sussex Winter Plan for 2024/25. The review highlighted key areas of improvement to be incorporated into planning for Winter 2025/26, including East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) having one of the highest proportions of NCTR (no criteria to reside) patients awaiting discharge in the country, and plans to integrate care in multi-disciplinary teams for the following winter.
- **Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service** – the committee scrutinised a report on the implementation and mobilisation of the new Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service contract. The committee highlighted concerns from residents about the booking system in the new contract, and the frequency of cancelled journeys and requested further follow-up and assurance from NHS Sussex on improvements in these areas.
- **HOSC future work programme** – the committee received a verbal update from NHS Sussex about changes to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and considered and agreed its future work programme priorities.

4.3 The committee met again in September 2025 to consider:

- **Access to General Practice in East Sussex** – the committee considered a progress report on work to improve primary care access in East Sussex. The committee highlighted concerns about digital inclusion if the 10-year Health Plan aims to move routes to accessing to primary care online.
- **NHS Sussex Update** – the committee received a verbal report from NHS Sussex regarding changes to the ICB and services in East Sussex.
- **Children and Young People Mental Health Update** – the committee considered a progress report on mental health services for children and young people, including CAMHS, mental health in schools, and access to neurodevelopmental services.
- **HOSC future work programme** – the committee considered and agreed its future work programme priorities and requested additional progress reports on the implementation of the new audiology contract and Neighbourhood Health Teams.

4.4 Key future committee agenda items, including those that will be considered at the committee's December meeting include:

- a report on NHS organisations' preparations and plans for the winter period 2025/26;
- a report on the ESHT planned capital works programme detailing the infrastructure works at the Conquest, Eastbourne District General and Bexhill Hospitals;
- a progress report on the ESHT cardiology transformation programme;
- a report on proposed changes to Uckfield day surgery;
- a progress report from SECamb on their improvement journey and exiting the Recovery Support Programme;

- a further report on the mobilisation of paediatric service model changes at Eastbourne District General Hospital; and
- a response from NHS Sussex to the HOSC Review of Audiology Services.

Reference Groups and briefings

4.5 HOSC representatives are also involved in regular informal meetings with Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT) and other Sussex HOSC Chairs and Vice Chairs to consider the Trust's work and other mental health service issues.

Scrutiny Reviews

4.6 The committee completed a scrutiny review earlier this year and continues to monitor the implementation of service changes that have been subject to its earlier reviews, including paediatric and cardiology services at ESHT as noted above, as well as upcoming changes to the delivery of the health services for the residents of East Sussex that it may wish to review.

Scrutiny Review of Audiology services in East Sussex	<p>The committee conducted a review of audiology services following concerns and issues raised about the provision and access to services, including treatments for earwax removal, and a report on the services considered at the July 2024 meeting.</p> <p>The Review Board reported its findings and recommendations to the HOSC in March 2025, having concluded that audiology services are currently unsatisfactory and have substantially diminished since before the COVID-19 pandemic. NHS Sussex will provide the committee with a full response to the report and recommendations, as well as a progress report on the mobilisation of the over-55s hearing aid contract for Sussex, at the March 2026 meeting.</p> <p>The review board was comprised of councillors Azad, Belsey, Marlow-Eastwood, Robinson (Chair), and Shuttleworth.</p>
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5 Audit Committee

5.1 The committee's future areas of focus are set out in the work programme attached at appendix 4.

Committee meetings

5.2 The Audit Committee met in July 2025 and September 2025 to discuss reports on:

- Assessment of the Corporate Governance Framework and Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25
- Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion 2024/25
- Counter Fraud Annual Report 2024/25
- Audit Committee Oracle Subgroup Update
- Strategic Risk Monitoring - Quarter 4 2024/25
- Audit Committee: Annual Report 2024/25
- External Auditor's Report to those charged with governance and Annual Report 2024/25
- Internal Audit Progress report - Quarter 1 (01/04/25 - 30/06/25)

- Global Internal Audit Standards Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance and Improvement Plan
- CIPFA Financial Management Code
- Strategic Risk Monitoring - Quarter 1 2025/26
- Audit Committee Work Programme

5.3 The committee's future agenda items include the usual quarterly consideration of Internal Audit reports and the Strategic Risk Register. Further committee agenda items, (including those considered at the committee's recent November meeting) include:

- Auditor's Annual (Value for Money) Report on East Sussex County Council 2024/25;
- Oracle Subgroup Update;
- Management Update following Home to School Transport Internal Audit;
- Management Update following Home Care Contract Management Internal Audit;
- CIPFA Code of Practice on the Governance of Internal Audit in the UK Public Sector – Self Assessment and Action Plan; and
- Treasury Management Annual Report & Mid-Year Report 2025.
- Review of Annual Governance Report & 2024/25 Statement of Accounts
- Review of Annual Pension Fund Governance Report & Statement of Accounts
- External Audit Plan 2025/26
- External Audit Plan for East Sussex Pension Fund 2025/26
- Counter Fraud Strategy
- Property Services and Assets Update

Briefings and working groups

5.4 The Working Group which provides oversight of the Oracle Implementation programme met in September and reported progress to the Audit Committee in November. The subgroup will meet again in January 2026 as the programme moves towards phase 3 implementation.

5.5 Audit Committee Members will be invited to a planning session with Internal Audit in February 2026 to plan for the next financial year of internal audit work. This session also provides refresher training to the Audit Committee.

6 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

6.1 This report provides an overview of recent scrutiny and Audit Committee work and a look forward at planned activity for Governance Committee to note. The next update will be due in June 2026.

PHILIP BAKER
Deputy Chief Executive

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People Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme

Current Scrutiny Reviews		
Title of Review	Detail	Proposed Completion Date
Initial Scoping Reviews		
Subject area for initial scoping	Detail	Proposed Dates
Home to School Transport – Personal Travel Budgets and Independent Travel	<p>At its 2024 away day the Committee discussed the challenges in transport for care and home to school transport and agreed that this, in collaboration with Children's Services and Adult Social Care and Health, could be a potential topic for a future scrutiny review.</p> <p>An initial scoping board was held in May 2025 where Members considered current statutory duties around transport in both adult social care and education; cost pressures; and programmes of work, planned and underway, to address these.</p> <p>In relation to ASCH transport, the Board agreed that it was not currently the right time for a scrutiny review into this area, due to work in progress, but that potential upcoming changes to transport policy in ASCH would be brought to the Committee when appropriate.</p> <p>The Board was keen to scrutinise areas in Home to School Transport and agreed that a rapid review in the autumn into some specific aspects could add value. A further scoping board took place in October 2025 which considered the current pressures, costs and statutory responsibilities related to Home to School Transport; cost avoidance measures in place to mitigate these; and national developments, including anticipated significant reforms in the awaited Schools White Paper. The board agreed that in light of pending national reforms, a broad review of Home to School Transport would be unfeasible, however there was value in conducting a focused scrutiny review on Personal Transport Budgets and Independent Travel Training, aiming to identify barriers to uptake and explore supporting increased engagement.</p> <p>Membership of Scoping Board: Cllrs Belsey, Cross, Howell and John Hayling (Parent Governor Representative). Review Board Membership TBC.</p>	To report to March 2026 Committee
Suggested Potential Future Scrutiny Review Topics		

Suggested Topic	Detail	
Children’s Mental Health Support	At its 2025 away day the Committee discussed increasing demand for Children’s services due to parental and children’s mental health needs and agreed to include children’s mental health support, including its role in school attendance, to its work programme as a potential topic for a scrutiny review.	
Carers Partnership Plan	<p>At its 2024 away day the Committee agreed to recommend that a report on the progress of the Carers Partnership Plan be brought to the Committee and that it may wish to consider this topic for a future scrutiny review.</p> <p>The Committee discussed this again at its 2025 awayday, noting findings in the recent CQC assessment report that the plan had not been published at the time of writing, and agreed that although the Carers Partnership Plan had now been published, there was a role for scrutiny in monitoring the implementation of this.</p>	
Scrutiny Reference Groups		
Reference Group Title	Subject area	Meeting Dates
Children’s Services Reforms	<p>The Committee agreed at its March 2025 meeting to convert the existing Prevention in Children’s Services Reference Group and the Attendance Reference Group into a single Reference Group focused on national reforms relating to Children’s Services, with a particular focus on the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The Reference Group will consider the impact of these reforms on ESCC and scrutinise the Department’s response to these. The Committee agreed to look at the recruitment of foster carers as part of this work.</p> <p>The Group met in June 2025 and received a presentation on key reforms in children’s social care and the department’s work in response to these, including the establishment of the Transformation Board. The Group agreed that the next meeting would focus on the expected SEND White Paper.</p> <p>At its 2025 awayday, the committee agreed to hold further meetings to focus on SEND pressures and reform.</p> <p>Membership of the Reference Group: Cllrs Belsey, Cross, Field, Geary and Howell and John Hayling (Parent Governor Representative)</p>	TBC – early 2026, dependent on national SEND reforms
CQC Reference Group	<p>The Committee agreed at its 2023 awayday to establish a Reference Group to support ASCH with the upcoming CQC inspection and LGA Peer Review.</p> <p>The Reference Group last met on 17 June 2024 and received a presentation from the Department on findings from the recent LGA Peer Review and the Department’s response to these findings, including the development of an ASCH Departmental Priority Action Plan. The Group welcomed the positive findings from the LGA report, discussed some of the areas for consideration, and agreed to continue to provide scrutiny support to the Department in its preparations for the CQC assessment. ASCH spokespeople attended additional briefing sessions ahead of the CQC visit.</p>	January 2026

	<p>At the Committee's 2025 awayday, it was agreed that the Group would explore areas identified for improvement by the CQC, including data sharing amongst partners.</p> <p>The next meeting is planned for January 2026 and will consider the outcome of the assessment and progress on the Departmental Priority Action Plan.</p> <p>Membership of the Reference Group: Councillors Cross, Geary (Chair), Howell and Webb.</p>	
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 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 6 October 2025 to consider quarterly progress on the Shared Delivery Plan, focusing on Integrated Community Teams, hospital discharge, and the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Group also received an update on ongoing reforms to Integrated Care Boards and the wider NHS, discussing potential impacts for East Sussex.</p> <p>Membership of the group: Councillors Belsey, Clark, Geary (Chair) Howell and Webb.</p>	TBC
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: 11 December 2025
Reports for Information		
Subject Area	Detail	Proposed Date
Climate Change Health Impact Assessment	For the Committee to receive the final Climate Change Health Impact Assessment.	March 2026
Training and Development		
Title of Training/Briefing	Detail	Proposed Date
Carers Partnership Plan	To brief members on the Carers Partnership Plan as this was identified as an area of interest for a potential topic for a future review.	TBC
Schools White Paper	To receive a briefing on the Schools White Paper to develop Member's understanding of key reforms and implications on local services.	TBC (depending on publication of White Paper)

Relevant Member Training Programme items (open to all Members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEND and mainstream Home to School Transport - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing for Children and young people 	19 November 25 26 November 25
Future Committee Agenda Items		Author
12 March 2026		
East Sussex Education Attainment and Performance	To update the Committee on the education attainment results for the 2024-25 academic year.	Director of Children's Services
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report	To update the Committee on the work of SACRE.	Cllr Roy Galley, Chairman of SACRE / Director of Children's Services
SEND update	To update the Committee on progress on the SEND action plan; SEND White Paper and any local implications/programmes of work.	Director of Children's Services
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 2025/26 financial year.	Chief Executive
Healthy Ageing Scrutiny Review	12 month monitoring report on progress with the Review's recommendations.	Director of Adult Social Care and Health
13 July 2026		
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 2025/26 financial year.	Chief Executive
21 September 2026		
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 2025/26 financial year.	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 2024/25 and the priorities and issues for 2026/27 that will be highlighted in the Partnership Business Plan.	Director of Adult Social Care and Health
23 November 2026		
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 2025/26 financial year.	Chief Executive
East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) Annual Report	Presentation of the annual report of the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.	Independent Chair, East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership

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Place Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme

Current Scrutiny Reviews		
Title of Review	Detail	Proposed Completion Date
Street Works	The Committee has agreed to carry out a review of street works. The review will focus on network management and how the Council works with utility companies to minimise the impact of street works. The board agreed to undertake further scoping in November to refine the terms of reference of the review to ensure it is focused on the main areas where there are concerns about the approach to street works taken by utility companies. Membership: Councillors Hilton, Hollidge, Lunn, Murphy (Chair) and Redstone.	March 2026
Initial Scoping Reviews		
Subject area for initial scoping	Detail	Proposed Dates
To be agreed		
List of Suggested Potential Future Scrutiny Review or Reference Group Topics		
Suggested Topic	Detail	
Footway (Pavement) Maintenance	This topic was discussed as part of the Scrutiny Review of Pothole Management and the Review Board has suggested that the Committee may wish to carry out a scrutiny review on this topic. Some of the issues regarding additional investment in pavement maintenance may be similar to those examined as part of the pothole review. Scoping may also explore verge cutting policy due to the impact on footway maintenance.	
Climate Change	The Committee has agreed to consider scoping a review to examine the Council's countywide work on climate change, which could look at countywide actions and how the Council works with other organisations (e.g. District and Borough councils) on this issue.	

Local Speed Limit Policy – Part 2	Part 2 of the Scrutiny Review of Local Speed Limit Policy including: the work undertaken to review speed limits, their funding and cost; the role of speed limits in the context of the LTP4; the LTP4 prioritisation process and available resources; and the policy framework and budget allocation for 20mph limits and zones of other local authorities and the approaches they have taken to 20mph limits.	
Queensway Gateway Road	The Committee have agreed to explore a scrutiny review to examine the construction of the Queensway Gateway Road in Hastings, to focus on issues since the point at which the Council took on responsibility for the completion of the scheme. Timing subject to the completion of works.	
Scrutiny of major projects	A potential review topic to explore, understand and take forward learning of the role that scrutiny can play in the evaluation and assessment of major schemes and projects taking place in the county.	
Scrutiny Reference and Working Groups		
Reference Group Title	Subject Area	Meetings Dates
Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Reference Group	The Committee has established a Reference Group, together with members of the People Scrutiny Committee, to provide scrutiny input into the work related to Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Membership of the Reference Group consists of all Place Scrutiny Committee members and People Scrutiny Committee members Cllr Cross, Cllr Geary, and Cllr Howell.	17 February 2026
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.	16 December 2025
Asset Management Strategy Working Group	The Committee has established a Working Group to provide scrutiny input into the update of the corporate Asset Management Strategy. Future work subject to LGR developments. Membership of the Working Group consists of Cllr Hilton, Cllr Hollidge, Cllr Lunn, Cllr Murphy (Chair) and Cllr Redstone.	TBC
Exceat Bridge Reference Group	The committee is currently exploring the establishment of a Reference Group to scrutinise and provide input to the planning and oversight of the bridge replacement project before and during construction.	First meeting: December 2025/January 2026
Local Transport Plan 4 Reference Group	The Committee established a Reference Group to provide input into the development of the revised Local Transport Plan (LTP4) which was adopted by the Council in October 2024. The Committee agreed to re-form the Reference Group as relevant support documents and strategies of LTP4 were developed.	TBC

	Membership of the Reference Group consists of Cllr Beaver, Cllr Collier, Cllr Hilton, Cllr Hollidge, Cllr Lunn, Cllr Redstone (Chair), Cllr Shing and Cllr Tutt.	
Reports for Information		
Subject	Detail	Proposed Date
Verge cutting	To receive a report for information on the Council's verge cutting policy and to understand opportunities for increasing verge cutting levels in areas of the county that do not have town or parish councils.	To be agreed.
Briefings, Training and Development		
Title of Training/Briefing	Detail	Proposed Date
Increased Use of Artificial Intelligence.	For the Committee to have a briefing or report on the increased use of AI, including what was happening currently, a risk analysis and the potential benefits (e.g. where AI could be used to gain efficiencies in areas such as process documentation).	28 November 2025
Government Road Safety Strategy	For the Committee to receive a briefing on the Government's New Road Safety Strategy due to be published in autumn, and any implications this may have for ESCC policies.	Following the publication of the strategy
Trading Standards	A briefing on the work undertaken by the trading standards team to combat illicit trading of cigarettes and vapes, including through the use of recently acquired powers.	To be agreed
The Keep	A briefing on The Keep including information on who uses it, how the service works, what are the costs of the service and how it generates income, together with a site visit for committee members.	To be agreed
Approach to consultation and engagement	A briefing on the Council's approach to public consultation and engagement and the process involved.	To be agreed

Future Committee Agenda Items		Author/Witnesses
19 March 2026		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	The Committee will review its input into the RPPR budget setting process, and the impact of any recommendations or comments made by the Committee.	Chief Executive / Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
SPACES Programme and property asset disposal	To receive an update report on the work of the SPACES programme last reported to the Committee in March 2024, to include information on the Council's approach to property asset disposals.	Assistant Director Property / Chief Operating Officer
Scrutiny Review of Street Works	To receive the report of the Review Board on the Scrutiny Review of Street Works for approval and submission to Cabinet for comment and Full Council for agreement.	Chair of the Review Board / Review Board members
Scrutiny Review of Local Speed Limit Policy	To receive the second update report on the implementation of the recommendation from the Scrutiny Review of Local Speed Limit Policy	Assistant Director Communities / Head of Communities
Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan 	Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
22 July 2026		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	The Committee will examine any additional information requested at the September meeting and consider any updated RPPR information for 2026/27.	Chief Executive / Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
Highways maintenance contract	To receive an update report on the key performance indicators of the Highways Maintenance Contract.	Director of Communities Economy and Transport / Assistant Director Operations
Parking policies	A report covering a number of areas related to parking and parking policies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the Council uses any parking revenue surplus; • pavement parking; and • the rationale for pricing and could it be revised (e.g. can parking policy influence or encourage to more Active Travel) 	Director of Communities, Economy and Transport/ Assistant Director Operations

Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan 	Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
23 September 2026		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	The Committee will examine any additional information requested at the September meeting and consider any updated RPPR information for 2026/27.	Chief Executive / Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
Strategic Highway Policies and Asset Management Plans, including highway drainage	For the Committee to receive a progress report on the updated strategic highways policies and asset management plans adopted following the Lead Member for Transport and Environment meeting on 8 September 2025. In particular to include an update on the Drainage Asset Management Plan and any identified issues or challenges.	Director of Communities Economy and Transport / Assistant Director Operations
Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan 	Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
30 November 2026		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	The Committee will examine any additional information requested at the September meeting and consider any updated RPPR information for 2026/27.	Chief Executive / Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan 	Scrutiny and Policy Adviser
Future Items – to be scheduled		Witnesses
Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) Road Collisions	The Committee requested an update report on the effectiveness of the interventions that have been put in place to try and reduce the number of KSI collisions on the County's roads and have an outline of the measures that other local authorities have put in place to tackle this issue.	Director of Communities Economy and Transport / Assistant Director Communities

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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – Work Programme

Current Scrutiny Reviews		
Title of Review	Detail	Proposed Completion Date
To be agreed.		
Initial Scoping Reviews		
Subject area for initial scoping	Detail	Proposed Dates
To be agreed		To be agreed
List of Suggested Potential Future Scrutiny Review Topics		
Suggested Topic	Detail	
To be agreed	Subject to the announcement of NHS service reconfigurations impacting on residents of East Sussex.	
Scrutiny Reference Groups		
Reference Group Title	Subject Area	Meetings Dates
Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) HOSC liaison group	Regular informal meetings with SPFT and other Sussex HOSC Chairs and Vice Chairs to consider the Trust's work and other mental health issues. Membership: Cllrs Belsey and Robinson	Next meetings: 12 January 2026

Reports for Information		
Subject Area	Detail	Proposed Date
To be agreed.		
Training and Development		
Title of Training/Briefing	Detail	Proposed Date
Visit to the new Inpatient Mental Health facility at Bexhill	A visit to the new Inpatient Mental Health facility due to be built at a site in North East Bexhill to replace the Department of Psychiatry at Eastbourne District General Hospital (EDGH).	TBC 2026
Visit to Ambulance Make Ready station and new Operations Centre – East.	A visit to the new Medway Make Ready station and new Operations Centre for 999 and 111 services once the new centre is operational.	TBC

Future Committee Agenda Items		Witnesses
11 December 2025		
NHS Sussex Winter Plan	To receive a report on the Winter Plan for 2025/26. The report to include planning across the health system for East Sussex including services provided by ESHT, UHSx, MTW, SECamb and SPFT that provide services to East Sussex residents.	Representatives from NHS Sussex, University Hospitals Sussex (UHSx), ESHT, SPFT MTW and SECamb.
East Sussex Healthcare Trust (ESHT) Capital Works Programme	To receive a report on the ESHT planned capital works programme detailing the infrastructure works that are going ahead and those that are being deferred at the Conquest, Eastbourne District General (EDGH) and Bexhill Hospitals once the impact of the announcement on the New Hospitals Programme and any additional capital funding has been evaluated.	Representatives from ESHT and NHS Sussex.
Cardiology transformation Programme	A progress report on the implementation of the ESHT Cardiology transformation Programme including the transport and access recommendations and measures made as part of the HOSC review of this transformation programme.	Representatives of ESHT and NHS Sussex.
Uckfield day surgery	To receive a report from ESHT on the findings and outcomes of its pilot of non-complex day surgery cases that currently take place at Uckfield Community Hospital carried out at Eastbourne District General Hospital and Conquest Hospital.	Representatives from ESHT
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
5 March 2026		
SECamb CQC report	To receive a final update report on the progress of South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (SECamb) improvement journey and exiting the Recovery Support Programme (RSP).	Representatives from SECamb

Paediatric Service Model at Eastbourne District General Hospital (EDGH)	To receive a progress report on the changes made to Paediatric Service Model at EDGH after 18-20 months operation of the new model, to include an update on APNP staffing and the use of the former Scott Unit for paediatric services.	Representatives from ESHT
HOSC Review of the Provision of Audiology Services in East Sussex.	To receive a response from NHS Sussex to the HOSC Review of Audiology Services and the recommendations contained in the report of the Review Board agreed at the HOSC meeting held on 6 March 2025, and an update on the mobilisation of the over-55s hearing aid contract for Sussex.	Representatives from NHS Sussex.
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
25 June 2026		
Winter Plan 2025/26 update	To receive an update report on the Winter Plan for 2025/26 to review how the Plan was implemented this year and to highlight any learning or other issues to be taken forward into the next Plan or actioned separately.	Representatives from NHS Sussex, University Hospitals Sussex (UHSx), ESHT and SPFT.
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
17 September 2026		
Committee Work Programme	To manage the committee's programme of work including matters relating to ongoing reviews, initial scoping reviews, future scrutiny topics, reference groups, training and development matters and reports for information.	Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
Items to be scheduled – dates TBC		
Access to NHS Dentistry Services	To receive a further update report on the progress being made to improve access to NHS Dentistry services in East Sussex.	Representatives from NHS Sussex

Ophthalmology Transformation Programme	To receive an update report on the implementation of the ESHT Ophthalmology Transformation Programme when more detail is known about the plans for implementing phase 3 of the Programme. <i>Timing is dependent on ESHT implementation timescales and to be agreed with ESHT.</i>	Representatives from ESHT and NHS Sussex.
University Hospitals Sussex (UHSx), General Surgery and Neurosurgery	To receive an assurance report on the provision and safety of current general surgery and neurosurgery at UHSx Hospitals and in particular the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH). To be programmed in liaison with NHS colleagues.	Representatives from University Hospitals Sussex (UHSx)
UHSx CQC report.	To receive an update report on University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust's (UHSx) response to the August 2023 CQC inspection report (with a particular focus on the actions being taken at Royal Sussex County Hospital on patient safety).	Representatives from UHSx
Specialised Children's Cancer Services – Principal Treatment Centres (PTCs)	To receive an update report from NHS England, London and South East on implementation of the changes to the Specialised Children's Cancer Services – Principal Treatment Centre located in south London which serves East Sussex. <i>Note: timing of the report will be dependent on the implementation of the changes which are not due until 2026 at the earliest.</i>	NHS England, London and South East

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Audit Committee – Work Programme

List of Suggested Potential Future Work Topics		
Issue	Detail	Meeting Date
Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.	As the agenda develops.	TBC
Audit Committee Working Groups		
Working Group Title	Subject area	Meeting Dates
Oracle Implementation (MBOS) Sub-Group	Oversight of the Oracle Implementation programme.	9 January 2025
Training and Development		
Title of Training/Briefing	Detail	Date
Audit Planning Session for 2026/27	A planning session to include Internal Audit training, suggestions for the 2026/27 Internal Audit Plan	13 February 2025

Future Committee Agenda Items		Author
13 February 2026		
Review of Annual Governance Report & 2024/25 Statement of Accounts	Report of the external auditors following their audit of the Council's statutory accounts. It allows the committee to review the issues raised and assess the management response.	External Auditors/ Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer

Review of Annual Pension Fund Governance Report & 2024/25 Statement of Accounts	Report of the external auditors following their audit of the Pension Fund. It allows the committee to review the issues raised and assess the management response.	External Auditors/ Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer
External Audit Plan 2025/26	This report sets out in detail the work to be carried out by the Council's External Auditors on the Council's accounts for the financial year 2025/26.	Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer & External Auditors
External Audit Plan for East Sussex Pension Fund 2025/26	To consider and comment upon the External Audit Plan for the East Sussex Pension Fund for the financial year 2025/26.	Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer & External Auditors
Internal Audit Progress Report	Internal Audit Progress report – Quarter 3, 2025/26 (01/10/25 – 31/12/25)	Nigel Chilcott, Audit Manager/Russell Banks, Chief Internal Auditor
Counter Fraud Strategy	Consideration of the Counter Fraud Strategy for 2026/27.	Simon White, Audit Manager – Counter Fraud / Russell Banks, Chief Internal Auditor
Strategic Risk Monitoring	Strategic risk monitoring report – Quarters 2 and 3, 2025/26 (01/07/25 – 31/12/25)	Ros Parker Chief Operating Officer / Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer
Property Services and Assets Update	Consideration of an annual report on the implementation of the Property Asset Disposal and Investment Strategy.	Ros Parker, Chief Operating Officer

Oracle Subgroup Update	Update from the Oracle (Previously MBOS) Subgroup.	Ros Parker, Chief Operating Officer
Committee Work Programme	Discussion of the future reports, agenda items and other work to be undertaken by the Committee.	Sophie Webb, Governance and Democracy Manager
3 July 2026		
Assessment of the Corporate Governance Framework and Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26	Sets out an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and includes an improvement plan for the coming year, and the annual governance statement (AGS) which will form part of the statement of accounts.	Philip Baker, Deputy Chief Executive
Internal Audit Strategy and Plan	Consideration of the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2026/27.	Russell Banks, Chief Internal Auditor/ Nigel Chilcott, Audit Manager
Internal Audit Services Annual Report and Opinion 2025/26	An overall opinion on the Council's framework of internal control, summarises the main audit findings and performance against key indicators (includes Internal Audit Progress reports – Quarter 4, 2025/26, (01/01/26 – 31/03/26).	Nigel Chilcott, Audit Manager / Russell Banks, Chief Internal Auditor
Counter Fraud Annual Report	Annual report on Counter Fraud work	Simon White, Audit Manager – Counter Fraud / Russell Banks, Chief Internal Auditor

Strategic Risk Monitoring	Strategic risk monitoring report – Quarter 4, 2025/26 (01/01/26 – 31/03/26)	Ros Parker, Chief Operating Officer / Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer
Audit Committee Annual Report	Annual Report 2025/26 of the Audit Committee: meeting a requirement of the CIPFA Position Statement for Audit Committee	Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer, Sophie Webb, Governance and Democracy Manager
Committee Work Programme	Discussion of the future reports, agenda items and other work to be undertaken by the Committee.	Sophie Webb, Governance and Democracy Manager
25 September 2026		
Internal Audit Progress Report	Internal Audit Progress report – Quarter 1, 2026/27 (01/04/26 – 30/06/26)	Nigel Chilcott, Audit Manager/Russell Banks, Chief Internal Auditor
Financial Management Code	Report of the Financial Management Code	Thomas Alty, Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer
Strategic Risk Management	Strategic risk monitoring report – Quarter 1, 2026/27 (01/04/26 – 30/06/26)	Ros Parker, Chief Operating Officer / Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer
Committee Work Programme	Discussion of the future reports, agenda items and other work to be undertaken by the Committee.	Sophie Webb, Governance and Democracy Manager

27 November 2026		
Auditor's Annual (VFM) Report on East Sussex County Council 2025/26	To provide the Committee with Grant Thornton's Annual (Value for Money) Report for 2025/26	Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer & External Auditors
Treasury Management Annual Report & Mid-Year Report 2026	To consider a report on the review of Treasury Management performance for 2025/26 and for outturn for the first six months of 2026/27, including the economic factors affecting performance, the Prudential Indicators and compliance with the limits set within the Treasury Management Strategy before it is presented to Cabinet.	Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer
Internal Audit Progress Report	Internal Audit Progress report – Quarter 2, 2026/27 (01/07/26 – 30/09/26)	Nigel Chilcott, Audit Manager/Russell Banks, Chief Internal Auditor
Committee Work Programme	Discussion of the future reports, agenda items and other work to be undertaken by the Committee.	Sophie Webb, Governance and Democracy Manager

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Scrutiny Review and Reference Group Timelines – Overview

Please note that timelines and dates of meetings may be subject to change due to the evolving nature of scrutiny work.

Scrutiny Reviews

		October	November	December	January	February	March	April onwards
Healthy ageing (People)							Progress report to committee	
Home to school transport (People)		Further Scoping Board	Main review activity				Report to committee	Report to Cabinet (Apr) and Council (May) TBC
Speed limit policy (Place)							Progress report to committee	
Street works (Place)		Scoping Board	Main review activity				Report to committee (TBC)	Report to Cabinet (Apr) and Council (May) TBC
Paediatric changes (HOSC)							Progress report to committee	
Audiology Services (HOSC)							NHS response and progress report to committee	

Reference Groups

	September	October	November	December	January	February	Notes
Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) (Place & People)	Meeting		Meeting			Meeting	Ongoing meetings to link to key milestones in devolution and LGR processes
Asset Management Strategy (Place)						<i>Potential meeting (date TBC)</i>	Future meetings TBC depending on LGR process
Local Transport Plan (Place)	Meeting		Meeting				Meetings on specific LTP elements as required
Health and Social Care Integration Programme (People)		Meeting					Further meeting dates to link to developments in programme
Exceat Bridge (Place)				<i>Potential first meeting (TBC)</i>	<i>Potential first meeting (TBC)</i>		
ASC CQC assessment (People)					Meeting		
Children's Services Reforms (People)						<i>Meeting (date TBC)</i>	Dependent on national reforms