

## **WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44**

### **1. Question by Councillor Lambert to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

Access groups in Eastbourne, Seaford and Newhaven have requested me to ask these questions on their behalf:

1. What was the budget for the previous year for the provision of dropped kerbs?
2. Was it spent? And if so, where was it spent?
3. If it wasn't spent, is it still available to be added on to this year's budget?
4. What is this year's dropped kerb budget? And where and when will it be spent?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

Following reports to Economy, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Committee in 2017 and Place Scrutiny Committee in 2018 on the County Council's dropped kerb policy, £50,000 has been allocated in the County Council's capital programme of local transport improvements since 2018/19 towards delivering measures to support accessibility, including dropped kerbs.

Applications requesting dropped kerbs are submitted via the East Sussex Highways website to our Highways team who will assess and prioritise these requests on a number of factors including:

- Is there a dropped kerb located on only one side of the road?
- Are there issues associated with illegal parking?
- Are there issues with speed of traffic, congestion, reduced sight lines?
- Where is the location?
- Is it near a bus stop?
- Is it located on main pedestrian routes within towns and other settlements with larger centres of populations to support the local community and visitors?

Turning to the question received by the access groups via Councillor Lambert, a total of £72,000 was spent on dropped kerbs/tactile paving in 2020/21; an additional £22,000 over the original allocation in that year's programme in response to the number of requests we received. This enabled us to install 41 dropped kerbs across Hastings, Burwash, Eastbourne, Seaford and Forest Row.

In 2021/22, an allocation of £50,000 is available. To date, 14 dropped kerbs have been installed so far across Hastings, Eastbourne, Heathfield, Bexhill. Up to a further 13 dropped kerbs are planned for installation by the end of the financial year within Alfriston, Peacehaven and Newhaven.

In addition to this dedicated funding, dropped kerbs and tactile paving to improve accessibility are integrated into the wider transport schemes that are delivered by the County Council through its capital programme of local transport improvements. These wider transport schemes are funded through a range of sources including our

own capital programme allocation, Local Growth funding through the Local Enterprise Partnership, development contributions and other grant funding we have bid for.

Furthermore, we have also been able to use the tranche 2 funding from the Emergency Active Travel Fund to deliver pedestrian improvements, including dropped kerbs, on key routes across Bexhill, Hastings, Lewes and Newhaven identified through the evidence base in our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Finally, through the planning process, we request for dropped kerbs and tactile paving to be provided by developers in the vicinity of their site as part of their off-site improvements.

Therefore, through a number of means we are introducing dropped kerbs and tactile paving across the county to improve accessibility for all.

## **2. Question by Councillor Field to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

What preparations are being made to accommodate the increased number Adult Social Care assessments which will be needed as a result of recent legislation?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

In preparation for the changes that come into force in October 2023, as well as using information and tools from the Department of Health and Social Care, Office for National Statistics and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, the department is developing a modelling tool to estimate the additional activity that is likely to be generated.

This tool will take into account an estimate of the number of individuals who currently fund their own care and the potential increase in this number when the threshold for local authority support increases from £23,250 to £100,000. It is anticipated that there will be significant demand from people who already fund their own care in Summer 2023 to have their care accounts created in time for the start of the new process in October 2023.

Much of this information is not currently available and when there is confidence in the volume and profile of the estimated additional activity, this will be converted into the estimated staffing requirements to meet the additional demand. This will include areas such as social care and financial assessments, complaints, brokerage and creating and maintaining care accounts.

These estimates will take into account the principles of:

- Ensuring that our systems and processes are as streamlined and proportionate as possible.

- Maximising technology to promote online information, advice and self assessment and management (with the appropriate checks and balances and practitioner oversight),

Once these estimates have been completed, any additional resource requirement will be considered through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process, including the use of the specific government grant allocated for social care reform.

### **3. Question by Councillor Field to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

What is the plan to use lamp columns for Electric Vehicle charging?

#### **Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

ESCC is currently working with its partners in SPACES (Strategic Property Asset Collaboration in East Sussex) to develop a prioritised list of sites for the location of publicly-accessible electric vehicle charge points in the county. Once this list has been established we will need to address a number of factors, including the appropriate type of EV charge points, the availability of power and so on. As part of this process, one of the considerations will be whether to install EV charge points on existing street lighting columns. This is not always practical, for instance where street lighting columns are at the back of the pavement, don't have the correct wiring or are heritage columns.

### **4. Question by Councillor Ungar to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

How many, if any, people in East Sussex have at the moment and over each of the last 4 years by month, "unallocated" or unsourced hours of home care, meaning they are not getting the home care they have been assessed as needing?

#### **Answer by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

The information requested was not routinely collected prior to April 2019. However, for the two year period prior April 2019, independent sector supply closely met adult social care demand for services.

The table below covers the period April 2019 to January 2022 shows homecare packages actively sought by the department's service placement team and, as such, includes clients who are have their immediate care and support needs met by another means (eg: self-funding, residential care, unpaid carers, direct payments) as well as those already in receipt of a homecare package, but requiring an increase or requesting a change of provider.

From April 2019 to July 2021, independent sector supply closely met adult social care demand for services, with the exception of a couple of spikes resulting in a relatively small number of packages experiencing short delays.

Three factors contributed to the significant change in the capacity position in June 2021, as follows:

- A significant increase in demand over the Covid period for homecare services resulting in a sustained 20% increase in requests for homecare provision.
- Increased and on-going infection amongst care workers leading to a capacity deficit due to staff absenteeism.
- The reduction in the number of overseas workers in markets competitive to care (e.g. retail, hospitality) resulted in very significant recruitment issues across the care sector as potential carers opted to work in alternative roles to social care.

|                   |  | Average Number of people waiting for a homecare package |
|-------------------|--|---|
|                   |  |   |
| 01 April 2019     |  | 10  |
| 01 May 2019       |  | 7   |
| 01 June 2019      |  | 5   |
| 01 July 2019      |  | 10  |
| 01 August 2019    |  | 7   |
| 01 September 2019 |  | 11  |
| 01 October 2019   |  | 13  |
| 01 November 2019  |  | 16  |
| 01 December 2019  |  | 13  |
|                   |  |   |
| 01 January 2020   |  | 11  |
| 01 February 2020  |  | 10  |
| 01 March 2020     |  | 4   |
| 01 April 2020     |  | 5   |
| 01 May 2020       |  | 2   |
| 01 June 2020      |  | 3   |
| 01 July 2020      |  | 1   |
| 01 August 2020    |  | 4   |
| 01 September 2020 |  | 9   |
| 01 October 2020   |  | 13  |
| 01 November 2020  |  | 7   |
| 01 December 2020  |  | 5   |
|                   |  |   |
| 01 January 2021   |  | 20  |
| 01 February 2021  |  | 12  |
| 01 March 2021     |  | 5   |
| 01 April 2021     |  | 1   |
| 01 May 2021       |  | 4   |
| 01 June 2021      |  | 8   |
| 01 July 2021      |  | 13  |
| 01 August 2021    |  | 53  |
| 01 September 2021 |  | 84  |
| 01 October 2021   |  | 63  |
| 01 November 2021  |  | 68  |
| 01 December 2021  |  | 49  |
|                   |  |   |
| 01 January 2022   |  | 73  |
| 01 February 2022  |  | 65  |

## **5. Question by Councillor Ungar to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

What is the current waiting time for someone to receive a home care package?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

This information is not currently routinely collected but work is planned to amend the department's client information system to programmatically capture this information in the future.

A manual calculation for December 2021 shows an average waiting time of eight days. Whilst this average figure includes packages of care in both urban and rural areas, it is important to note that some people with the most complex and geographically challenging packages may wait considerably longer and have their care and support needs temporarily met by other means until the package of care is successfully sourced.

Since March 2020 ASC has had in place block contract arrangements exclusively for the purposes of hospital discharge; this enables a dedicated hospital broker to prioritise hospital cases.

Emergencies and placement breakdown are identified as priorities, and are treated as such, bearing in mind that these cases are likely to be clients in receipt of services and potentially with a limited wider network of support.

Community cases are subject to triaging and are prioritised on the basis of complexity and consideration of support networks already in place.

In an urgent situation and in the event of homecare being unavailable, a client will be offered an alternative service provision to meet their assessed needs e.g. respite placement

The above approach of prioritisation and risk management ensures that those with the greatest need receive the support when required (ie: same day, within one week, etc.).

## **6. Question by Councillor Ungar to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

How long are people having to wait to have a full Social Care Assessment now and for each month for the last 4 years?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

The prioritisation of assessments is based upon an individual's level of presenting risk and setting (ie. hospital, home or care home) and all individuals are screened at the point of contact to ensure that immediate needs are met and any risk is managed, prior to a full Care Act assessment being completed.

Approximately two thirds of people receive an assessment within 30 days of contact (27% within 48 hours) and this figure increases to approximately 85% within 60 days.

The table below shows the average length of time between initial contact and assessment each month for the past four years:

|                   | Average number of days |
|-------------------|------------------------|
|                   |                        |
| 01 January 2018   | 24.1                   |
| 01 February 2018  | 23.9                   |
| 01 March 2018     | 27.5                   |
| 01 April 2018     | 23.4                   |
| 01 May 2018       | 24.0                   |
| 01 June 2018      | 25.8                   |
| 01 July 2018      | 28.6                   |
| 01 August 2018    | 26.3                   |
| 01 September 2018 | 28.1                   |
| 01 October 2018   | 24.4                   |
| 01 November 2018  | 30.7                   |
| 01 December 2018  | 21.3                   |
|                   |                        |
| 01 January 2019   | 22.6                   |
| 01 February 2019  | 25.4                   |
| 01 March 2019     | 23.8                   |
| 01 April 2019     | 25.8                   |
| 01 May 2019       | 30.6                   |
| 01 June 2019      | 26.2                   |
| 01 July 2019      | 34.0                   |
| 01 August 2019    | 30.1                   |
| 01 September 2019 | 31.0                   |
| 01 October 2019   | 30.7                   |
| 01 November 2019  | 29.5                   |
| 01 December 2019  | 25.2                   |
|                   |                        |
| 01 January 2020   | 32.6                   |
| 01 February 2020  | 30.3                   |
| 01 March 2020     | 31.2                   |
| 01 April 2020     | 29.7                   |
| 01 May 2020       | 26.3                   |
| 01 June 2020      | 20.1                   |
| 01 July 2020      | 27.0                   |
| 01 August 2020    | 26.9                   |
| 01 September 2020 | 33.2                   |
| 01 October 2020   | 32.1                   |
| 01 November 2020  | 29.7                   |
| 01 December 2020  | 35.4                   |
|                   |                        |
| 01 January 2021   | 28.2                   |
| 01 February 2021  | 37.0                   |
| 01 March 2021     | 34.3                   |
| 01 April 2021     | 35.4                   |
| 01 May 2021       | 26.4                   |
| 01 June 2021      | 33.9                   |
| 01 July 2021      | 36.4                   |
| 01 August 2021    | 39.0                   |
| 01 September 2021 | 51.5                   |
| 01 October 2021   | 50.1                   |
| 01 November 2021  | 44.0                   |
| 01 December 2021  | 37.6                   |

## **7. Question by Councillor Ungar to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

How long does it take for someone to have funding agreed for their care package from the time of the assessment to the agreement of that funding?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

Funding is agreed immediately following the completion of the assessment process (ie: social care assessment, client agreement to the support plan and quality check).

## **8. Question by Councillor Ungar to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

How many people have had their discharge from each hospital in East Sussex delayed because of Social Service issues? Example awaiting a care package to be provided or a place with community re-enablement month by month over the last 4 years?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

The Department of Health and Social Care ceased collecting data on delayed discharges at the start of the pandemic in March 2020.

Since that date, all hospital discharges have been initially funded by the NHS, through the Hospital Discharge Programme, and the system has collectively focused on the timely transfer of patients as soon as they become Medically Ready for Discharge (ie earlier in their hospital stay), using a Discharge to Assess model, and does not attribute causes to any organisation or sector.

The table below includes all East Sussex residents (including those delayed in hospitals outside the County) and provides information on the average number of delays attributable to Adult Social Care, both in terms of absolute numbers and per 100,000 adult population (the previous national indicator) for each month between January 2018 and February 2020:

|                   | The average daily of delayed transfers of care (for those aged 18 and over) each day per 100,000 population - those attributable to Adult Social Care | Delayed Transfer of Care: Average DToC Beds per day attributable to ASC |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 01 January 2018   | 6.1   | 10.0  |
| 01 February 2018  | 5.8   | 13.0  |
| 01 March 2018     | 5.6   | 13.0  |
| 01 April 2018     | 2.5   | 11.1  |
| 01 May 2018       | 2.0   | 6.5   |
| 01 June 2018      | 2.0   | 8.6   |
| 01 July 2018      | 1.9   | 7.5   |
| 01 August 2018    | 2.0   | 10.0  |
| 01 September 2018 | 2.0   | 10.8  |
| 01 October 2018   | 2.1   | 11.9  |
| 01 November 2018  | 2.2   | 10.6  |
| 01 December 2018  | 2.1   | 8.0   |
|                   |   |   |
| 01 January 2019   | 2.1   | 7.0   |
| 01 February 2019  | 2.1   | 8.8   |
| 01 March 2019     | 2.1   | 10.3  |
| 01 April 2019     | 2.8   | 12.4  |
| 01 May 2019       | 2.2   | 6.7   |
| 01 June 2019      | 1.8   | 5.2   |
| 01 July 2019      | 1.8   | 8.5   |
| 01 August 2019    | 1.8   | 8.3   |
| 01 September 2019 | 1.9   | 9.1   |
| 01 October 2019   | 1.8   | 6.6   |
| 01 November 2019  | 1.9   | 10.4  |
| 01 December 2019  | 1.8   | 6.2   |
|                   |   |   |
| 01 January 2020   | 1.8   | 7.5   |
| 01 February 2020  | 1.7   | 3.5   |

### **9. Question by Councillor Georgia Taylor to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

There is a Waste Strategy that commits to reducing the production of waste and to recycling and re-use in East Sussex. Please can you tell me of any initiatives in process or planned to reduce the amount of waste that is produced in East Sussex? Are there any current initiatives to increase and encourage localised re-cycling, upcycling and re-use? Lewes District is the only District Council to undertake food composting; how are other Councils being encouraged to follow suit and are there plans for local food waste energy production (e.g. [How Anaerobic Digestion Turns Food Waste Into Energy - Willshee's \(willshees.co.uk\)](http://www.willshees.co.uk))?

## **Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

East Sussex County Council and all five districts and boroughs produced a joint waste strategy for 2014-2025. We plan to review and update the document when the detailed requirements of the Environment Act are fully understood.

Locally, most East Sussex collection authorities collect refuse on a fortnightly basis. This is proven to reduce residual waste and helps to encourage our residents to make the most of the range of recycling services that East Sussex County Council and our districts and boroughs offer.

Eastbourne Borough Council switched from weekly refuse collection to fortnightly last year which has reduced waste collected and increased recycling.

Nationally and from 2023 onwards, government will be implementing three major changes to how waste and recycling is managed.

1. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) – producers of packaging waste will become responsible for the cost of collecting and treating this waste. This will cause a significant change in how products are manufactured, how much is placed on the market and what these products are made of.
2. Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) – producers of beverage containers will become responsible for the cost of collecting and treating this waste. Residents will also pay a deposit when they purchase a beverage to incentivise them to recycle it.
3. Consistent collections – local authorities will have to collect a set range of recyclable materials and from 2025 provide separate weekly food waste collections for all residents. East Sussex County Council already provides an In-Vessel Composting (IVC) facility at Whitesmith which produces high quality compost using garden waste and food waste collected from our residents.

These are once in a generation changes to waste services and the waste team at the County Council is currently working with partners to prepare for them.

Over the last two years, the County Council has

- delivered recycling leaflets to all residents
- delivered a countywide campaign to increase battery awareness and recycling
- supported three of the district and borough councils to introduce kerbside recycling of small electrical equipment.

We have reuse shops at all 10 of our Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRS) where residents can deposit and buy items that are suitable for reuse. Over 600 tonnes of unwanted household items are reused in this way each year. We have very recently improved and enlarged the reuse shop at our Eastbourne site.

We also support local reuse charities by providing them with a permit for free disposal of furniture that they are unable to resell through their shops. This includes some of the biggest charities in the reuse sector such as Age UK, British Heart Foundation and Furniture Now. This support is important to their work and has ensured that thousands of tonnes of items from households in East Sussex have been put to good use again.

Currently the decision whether to collect food waste is a matter for the individual collection authorities. That is about to change under the Environment Act 2021 that will require all collection authorities in England to provide food waste collections by 2025. The County Council in partnership with Brighton & Hove City Council and Veolia has built the Woodlands composting plant which is operating and available for food waste that our districts and borough councils collect. Currently, food waste that is separately collected by Lewes District Council goes for composting at Woodlands and produces a high-quality compost soil improver. Food waste present in black bags or black bins is treated at Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) and is used to generate electricity.

As we have Woodlands IVC, there are no current plans to develop any other method of food waste energy production.

We have also facilitated the provision of over 35,000 home composters to residents over the last 20 years to help reduce the amount of garden waste that councils are asked to collect and dispose of.

#### **10. Question by Councillor Maples to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

There has been a huge number of incidents where sewage has been released into rivers and the sea in East Sussex by Southern Water. And even when fines are given, Southern Water doesn't improve their practice. Is ESCC taking any action on this issue? Are there any discussions taking place? What strategies could be developed to engage with Southern Water to make sure they start taking residents' concerns seriously? How can Councillors help? When will the Surface Water Management Plans be updated?

#### **Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

The County Council does not have any statutory powers or duties to address matters of water pollution or the continued use by water companies of combined sewer overflows. The matter is a national issue and will require significant investment over the long term to improve the quality of our rivers and streams. The primary vehicle for this change is the regulatory and financial framework set by both government and Ofwat. But clearly the Environment Agency has a key role in enforcing current regulations when it comes to the pollution of water bodies.

The County Council therefore does not have a substantive role in managing this issue, it is not part of our statutory obligations. Nevertheless, we do have opportunities to influence and facilitate change in very specific circumstances. We have worked with Southern Water, for example, to develop options to bring the Bourne Stream in Eastbourne back into use for surface water drainage.

The County Council is leading the Blue Heart project which aims to develop innovative flood risk mitigation measures for Southern Wealden and Eastbourne. This six year £4.5m project will develop an integrated approach to water management in the project's catchment using real time flood modelling informed by data collected by thousands of monitoring points located on assets operated by Southern Water, the Environment Agency, the Pevensey & Cuckmere Water Level

Management Board and the local authorities. One of the outputs of the project is to better manage surface water and use existing assets to their best effect. In the context of foul water pollution this means removing surface water from the foul network to create more capacity.

The County's Surface Water Management Plans (SWMPs) were developed prior to the most recent climate projections, although the mapping that supported the plans has yet to be updated because we are awaiting the outcome of the Environment Agency's National Flood Risk Assessment. It would not be advisable to update the SWMPs until that work has been completed.

#### **11. Question by Councillor Georgia Taylor to the Lead Member for Economy**

How is the council supporting and incentivising local skills and SMEs to deliver a widespread housing retrofit programme. Has the council considered Energiesprong type retrofit, or any other types? What kind of public investment could be provided by the Council, e.g. supporting investment in a factory facility in East Sussex to deliver the units needed for Energiesprong retrofit, which would also deliver significant local jobs?

#### **Answer by the Lead Member for Economy**

In response to how the council is supporting and incentivising skills and SME's - We are aware that there is a significant shortage of retrofitters nationally at the current time, and are working closely with East Sussex College Group, through our Net Zero Skills Working Group to address these skills gaps. The College has recently accessed funding from the government's Skills Development Fund to establish two Decarbonisation facilities, where 15 new courses to support Net Zero skills, including retrofitting, will be developed and taught from the Eastbourne and the Hastings campus

In response to what public investment and support can be provided - The County Council provides capital grants of up to £25,000 and loans of up to £200,000 to help businesses create jobs through its East Sussex Invest 7 (ESI 7) programme. In addition, the county council together with our district and borough partners, fund the Locate Inward Investment service which is able to help investors find property and apply for other sources of funding, including via the South East Business Boost (SEBB) grants programme which we run in partnership with Southend Borough and Kent County Councils. SEBB offers growth grants up to £10k to help businesses create jobs, expand and introduce new products & services. If Cllr Taylor has a particular business in mind now or in the future, then I would be very happy to make the appropriate introductions.

#### **12. Question by Councillor Hilton to the Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change**

What is the Lead Member's response to the Council Climate Scorecards? ESCC is number 14 in a list of 24 County Councils, and scored particularly badly on mitigation and adaptation. [Council Climate Plan Scorecards | Climate Emergency UK](#)

[councilclimatescorecards.uk](http://councilclimatescorecards.uk)) Please can you tell us how the Council will urgently improve action on both mitigation and adaptation. Will the council be using the useful Climate Plan Action Plan checklist created by Ashden and used as part of the assessment process to update and improve the rigour of the ESCC climate Action plan?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change**

Climate Emergency UK is a small voluntary group that has recently undertaken a scoring exercise of all UK Local Authority climate & ecological emergency declarations and action plans. This process began in September last year, so fails to take into account the County Council's commitment of a further £3.8m to reduce corporate carbon emissions that Cabinet agreed in November last year or the publication of the East Sussex Climate Emergency Road Map, which the County Council developed with its partners in the East Sussex Environment Board and which was endorsed by Team East Sussex last month. The scoring also doesn't tell you that the County Council is involved in a range of formal and informal networks and fora with other local authorities, as well as the wider public and private sector, to exchange information on good practice, for instance on modelling for net zero, EV charging, carbon off-setting and carbon literacy. We will use this learning to inform the development of the next stage of our corporate climate emergency plan.

### **13. Question by Councillor Lambert to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

On February and March 2021 the Lead Member for Transport and Environment and Council considered a Notice of Motion from Councillor Darren Grover and I calling for a study to be undertaken and proposals to be developed to improve road safety for car users, cyclists and pedestrians at all junctions with the A259 in Seaford. The Notice of Motion further called for lower speed limits to be imposed and enforced on the approaches to Seaford and for safer crossing points to be introduced at key points on the A259 including at the Bishopstone junctions.

The Notice of Motion was turned down but the Lead Member for Communities and Safety asserted that the County Council was carrying out a pilot scheme to change driver behaviour as he believed that this was a significant contributory factor in accidents across the county.

What progress has been made on this initiative?

### **Answer by the Lead Member for Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

A report which provided an update on the East Sussex Road Safety Programme, was considered by Place Scrutiny Committee on the 26 November 2021. The report and appendices can be found at the following link [Agenda for Place Scrutiny Committee on Friday, 26th November, 2021, 10.30 am | East Sussex County Council](#)

#### **14. Question by Councillor Lambert to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

A workshop to consider the study of the A259 was held on 25 January 2022. Workshop members were split into groups but were given only one hour to consider over 70 proposed projects which had been presented to them that morning at the workshop.

Does the Lead Member consider that this is a satisfactory way to carry out a consultation on this major initiative and if so why?

#### **Answer by the Lead Member for Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

In 2019 Transport for the South East identified that the A259 South Coast Road Corridor between the eastern edge of Eastbourne to the edge of Brighton as one of the ten high-priority Major Road Network schemes across its geography; the Major Road Network being the most economically important A roads managed by local authorities.

A study was commissioned last year with the overarching aim of identifying a preferred package of multi-modal improvements for this section of the A259, which supported the delivery of the Government's Major Road Network objectives as well as reflecting the increasing need to decarbonise transport alongside the Government's Bus Back Better and Gear Change strategies. In turn, the study outcomes will then inform the development of a Strategic Outline Business Case ready for submission to Government in Spring 2022, as the first stage in making the case for investment in the corridor.

Stakeholder engagement and seeking local views is always going to be important in undertaking a study of this magnitude. The first in a series of stakeholder workshops were carried out in October 2021, a second in January 2022 with a final set of workshops planned for spring 2022. The workshops have been structured to ensure that stakeholder groups and community representatives, as well as planning, transport, and environmental interest groups, can contribute their views at key points in the study programme on the evidence base, the potential list of interventions and the assessment of the identified preferred package of improvements.

The aim of the most recent set of workshops in January was to firstly reacquaint stakeholders with the scope of the study, the work programme, timescales, and the outcomes from the initial set of workshops. Stakeholders were then asked to participate in facilitated breakout sessions to help aid the prioritisation of a long list of schemes which were identified through the discussions with stakeholders during the initial set of workshops in October 2021.

This approach, which has worked successfully on other studies, has ensured that the A259 South Coast Corridor project team were able to capture the stakeholder views on the current long list of schemes, ensuring they are reflective of the challenges and needs of local communities, which will then help the next stage of sifting, testing and designing of the preferred package of measures to be put forward in the Strategic Outline Business Case for the A259 South Coast Corridor.

In addition to the workshops, the project team has continued to encourage and provide opportunities for key stakeholders to communicate, including via online survey methods, to ensure we have captured all the required information to support the study. Stakeholders have been provided with a contact email address for the Study project team, and were asked at the January workshops to provide any further comments or feedback on the long list of priorities that were discussed via email.

Following collation of the feedback at this stage, notes from the workshop will be provided to attendees and the A259 project team will be in contact with the dates for the third stage of stakeholder workshops and engagement, currently estimated to be held in March/April 2022.