

LEAD MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment, Councillor Claire Dowling, on 19 December 2022 at Committee Room, County Hall, Lewes

Councillors Godfrey Daniel, Julia Hilton and Wendy Maples spoke on item 4 (see minute 44)

Councillors Godfrey Daniel, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge, Wendy Maples and Paul Redstone spoke on item 5 (see minute 45)

Councillors Godfrey Daniel, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge and Wendy Maples spoke on item 6 (see minute 46)

Councillor Wendy Maples spoke on item 7 (see minute 47)

40. DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022

40.1 The Lead Member approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2022.

41. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

41.1 There were none.

42. URGENT ITEMS

42.1 There were none.

43. REPORTS

43.1 Reports referred to in the minutes below are contained in the minute book.

44. HIGHWAY POLICIES REVIEW

44.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

DECISIONS

44.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

(1) Approve the proposed amendments to the Highway Asset Management Policy as summarised in Appendix 1 and set out in Appendix 2 of the report; and

(2) Approve the proposed amendments to the Highway Asset Management Strategy, including the review of the Network Hierarchy as summarised in Appendix 1 and set out in Appendix 3 of the report.

REASONS

44.3 The amended Highway Asset Management Policy and Highway Asset Management Strategy ensure that East Sussex County Council has a clear and consistent asset management approach to maintaining and managing the highway network.

45. HIGHWAY NETWORK RESILIENCE PLAN

45.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

DECISIONS

45.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to approve the proposed new Highway Network Resilience Plan 2022 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

REASONS

45.3 The new Highway Network Resilience Plan 2022 will ensure that East Sussex County Council has a clear and consistent asset management approach to maintaining and managing the highway network.

46. EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S ALTERNATIVE WEED MAINTENANCE TECHNIQUES TRIALS 2022

46.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

DECISIONS

46.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

- (1) Note the feedback, outcomes and challenges from the trials; and
- (2) Agree to extend the volunteer streets weed control trial and reactive weed removal trial to include additional roads to further understand the impact of not using Glyphosate on the highway infrastructure.

REASONS

46.3 The Council noted the concerns of Councillors and residents relating to the use of Glyphosate and are committed to finding an alternative means of controlling weed growth, however the Authority must also meet its statutory duty to maintain a safe and usable highway network. At the present time, there is no proven alternative solution that can be effectively used to weed treat a network of over 1,900 miles of road channels and footways.

46.4 Extension of the volunteer streets and reactive streets trials and increasing the number of streets involved, will help to gather more data, monitor the impact and implement lessons learnt to improve the process. This will allow the service to see the full impacts of alternative weed treatment over a number of years and determine how various weed control techniques can best be applied across the network whilst continuing to look for new technologies and methods as they emerge. The Council will continue to use a Glyphosate based herbicide to control weeds across the highway network, alongside the proposed extension of the trial of volunteer streets and reactive streets.

46.5 Due to the cost and practical issues in using foam stream on a large highway network this trial will not be extended any further at this stage.

47. RURAL VERGES AS WILDLIFE CORRIDORS - TRIAL OF EARLY SEASON REDUCTION IN RURAL GRASS CUTTING

47.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

DECISIONS

47.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

- (1) Agree to offer reduced rural cuts to all Parish and Town Councils for the grass cutting season of 2023 to determine the total demand and review further feedback.
- (2) Agree that single track lanes will be excluded in any reduced rural grass cutting due to safety concerns along narrow roads.

REASONS

47.3 Overall, the trial has been well received, however, neither of the trial years was a typical growing season therefore it will be beneficial to roll the trial out further and evaluate the impact of the trial over more grass cutting seasons.

47.4 The offer of reduced rural cuts to all Parish and Town Councils for the grass cutting season of 2023 will allow further feedback and understanding of the impact of reduced rural verge cutting across the County on both operational and biodiversity impact.

47.5 Single track lanes will not be included in the reduced rural grass cutting due to concerns raised around safety on these roads for all road users.