

LEAD MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment, Councillor Claire Dowling, on 11 December 2023 at Committee Room, County Hall, Lewes

Councillors Godfrey Daniel, Johnny Denis, Roy Galley, Wendy Maples, Pat Rodohan, Stephen Shing and Georgia Taylor spoke on item 4 (see minute 48)

Councillors Wendy Maples, Paul Redstone, Stephen Shing and Georgia Taylor spoke on item 5 (see minute 49)

Councillor Wendy Maples spoke on item 6 (see minute 50)

Councillors Wendy Maples and Stephen Shing spoke on item 7 (see minute 51)

44. DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 20 NOVEMBER 2023

44.1 The Lead Member approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2023.

45. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

45.1 There were none.

46. URGENT ITEMS

46.1 There were none.

47. REPORTS

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

48. ALTERNATIVE WEED MAINTENANCE TRIALS 2023

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

DECISIONS

48.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

(1) conclude the alternative weed maintenance trials, noting the feedback, outcomes and challenges;

(2) agree to continue the use of Glyphosate as weed maintenance on the public highway until a suitable alternative or additional funding becomes available; and

(3) agree to provide the option for residents to opt into a volunteer maintenance scheme or District, Borough, Parish or Town Councils to take on weed maintenance through a local agreement.

REASONS

48.3 The Council notes the concerns of Councillors and residents relating to the continued 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 useable highway network.

48.4 At the present time, there is no alternative solution that can be effectively used to treat weeds over a highway network of over 1,900 miles of road channels and footways.

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

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

DECISIONS

49.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

(1) Agree to offer a reduced number of cuts for grass verges in rural areas;

(2) Agree the proposed updates to the Highway Verges and Vegetation Policy; and

(3) Agree that single track lanes, with the exception of wildlife verges, will continue to be excluded in any reduced rural grass cutting because of safety concerns along narrow roads.

REASONS

49.3 Overall, the trial has been well received, with feedback each year being taken onboard, and appropriate changes made, such as the exclusion of single-track lanes.

49.4 The trial has successfully included 618 miles (out of a total of 1,790 miles) of rural verges managed for biodiversity reasons.

50. COMMUNITY MATCH SCHEMES FOR 2024/25

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

50.2 It was noted that the maximum contribution for the proposed schemes outlined in the report is £50,000 per scheme since the applications were made before the Lead Member for Transport and Environment resolved to increase the maximum contribution to £60,000 per scheme on 18 September 2023.

DECISIONS

50.3 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

(1) Agree that £20,000 of match funding is allocated towards the Etchingham Community Match speed reduction scheme for detailed design work and construction in 2024/25;

(2) Agree that £11,500 of match funding is allocated towards the Icklesham Parish Council Community Match bus stop and accessibility improvement scheme for detailed design work and construction in 2024/25;

(3) Agree that £1,930 of match funding is allocated towards Pett Parish Council for the Community Match application for the installation of 13 bollards along a popular walking route:

(4) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to approve the 50% match funding contribution for the schemes in (1) and (2) above, up to a maximum contribution of £50,000 per scheme once the design and construction costs are known; and

(5) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to agree the terms and conditions of the grant funding agreement with Pett Parish Council for the £1,930 grant from the Community Match funding allocation towards the scheme as set out in (3) above.

REASONS

50.4 The Community Match programme continues to provide the opportunity for Town or Parish councils, local resident groups and organisations to secure match funding to enable local priority schemes to be delivered which otherwise would not come forward using County Council funding alone through the capital programme of local transport improvements.

50.5 From the £250,000 allocation for 2024/25, there is sufficient funding available to provide the community match funding required to deliver the schemes that have submitted applications.

51. CHANGES TO THE CHARGEABLE WASTE SERVICE AT EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING SITES

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

DECISIONS

51.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

(1) Note the requirement to change the Chargeable Waste Scheme at Household Waste Recycling Sites;

(2) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to amend the current scheme, as outlined in paragraph 2.5 and Appendix 1 of the report, from 31 December 2023;

(3) Agree to the recommended price increase for paid for non-household waste (beyond the expected free allowance) from 1 April 2024, as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the report; and

(4) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to make future changes, as required, to the amended scheme and policy and charges.

REASONS

51.3 The scheme has delivered significant savings for East Sussex County Council since it's commencement in 2018.

51.4 When Government's revised regulations come into force on 31 December 2023, East Sussex County Council's Chargeable Waste scheme will need to be amended for it to remain legally compliant.