

Appendix 4 – Information provided by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

1. Digital Exclusion and the Equality Impact Assessment:

- The concern regarding digital exclusion is noted, but a weekday telephone service is regarded as an appropriate accessible alternative. The waste team will monitor this level of service and can review if necessary. The waste team will also ensure that residents who make telephone bookings will be able to book up to two weeks in advance to ensure they are able to visit at weekends. Affected residents may be able to have someone make an online booking on their behalf if they need to make an unanticipated visit on the day over the weekend.
- Kent County Council and West Sussex County Council operate their contact centres Monday to Friday only and do not accept telephone bookings at the weekend.
- The modelling assumes that 1% of bookings are made by phone. This assumption was based on West Sussex and Kent who also receive around 1% of bookings via telephone.
- The point made regarding friends and relatives helping will be addressed during the design of the system. The waste team will ensure that the system can accommodate situations where friends or relatives need to make bookings on behalf of residents.

2. Business Case for Savings:

- The business case for the online booking system has been carefully considered and is based on savings associated with a small reduction in waste, net of the estimated running costs of the system, including the telephone booking service. The expected savings are £50,000. The waste team will monitor savings when the system is implemented and can return with an update to Scrutiny to report on progress.

3. In Principle Agreement:

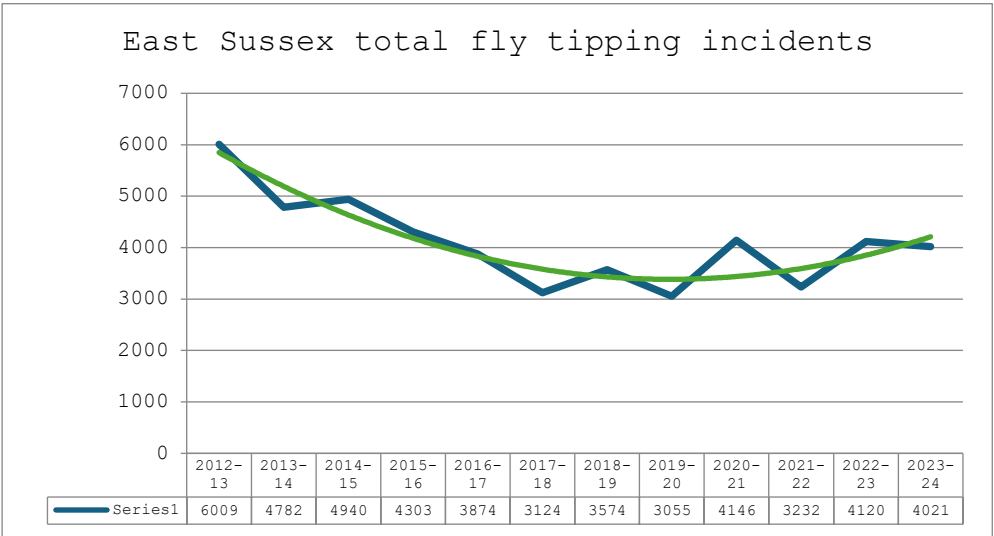
- As part of the Government's Devolution White Paper, all two-tier authorities were invited on 5 February 2025 to submit proposals for local government reorganisation. An interim plan for working up the proposal for East Sussex is being considered by Full Council and Cabinet on 20 March. Part of the proposal is to establish principles about how the Councils will work together and this includes the principle that 'Decisions made by all sovereign bodies until vesting day will have the interests of the future unitary Council as an explicit consideration'. These principles will be considered as part of the plan, and a decision made on how to proceed.

- Therefore, whilst working principles have been drafted with District and Borough Councils, these are yet to be considered through the County Council's formal decision-making processes and therefore do not form part of the Council's policy framework. Notwithstanding, the Council continues to work with District and Borough Councils; and the impacts of decisions on partners, including District and Borough Councils and any potential unitary authority, are considered as one of a number of factors within the decision making process.
- In discussions with the Boroughs and Districts it has also been recognised that each council remains sovereign and has legal responsibility to balance its budget until vesting day for a new unitary. Whilst all councils are committed to strong partnership working to consider fully impacts on other councils and/or the new unitary, the principle cannot bind any of the councils. This is important as the potential new unitary authority is a future organisation, which as yet, has no worked up agreed proposal in place, no government decision, and if agreed will not come into being for a number of years.
- In the context of the requirement for ESCC to make savings to deliver a balanced budget for 2025/26, in making decisions on the specific proposal the Lead Member considered their current statutory responsibilities.
- Appendix 2 of the Lead Member report outlined the public consultation responses where concerns were raised about fly-tipping. It explained that other waste collection authorities in places where booking has been introduced did not experience an increase in fly tipping because of introducing booking systems. The Appendix also highlighted a 2023 report commissioned by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) which concluded that there is no indication that fly-tipping is linked to the introduction of booking schemes.

4. National Fly-Tipping Concerns:

- The experience of other authorities who have introduced a booking system (e.g. Kent and West Sussex) and the 2023 DEFRA report, does not suggest that the introduction of an online booking system will lead to an increase in fly-tipping. Nationally, fly-tipping has increased but there is no indication that this is because of the introduction of booking systems.
- The graph below shows total fly tip incidents in East Sussex over the last 12 years. Fly tipping in East Sussex has ranged from between 3000 incidents in 2019/20 to 6000 incidents in 2012/13. Over the last

ten years between 3000 and 4000 incidents a year have been reported across the county.



For the last five years there have been 6-8 incidents of fly tipping per 1,000 people across East Sussex. The table below shows how East Sussex compares with the South East, London and nationally.

2034/24	Incidents per 1,000 people
East Sussex	8
South East	11
England	20
London	50

5. Organised Crime:

- The concerns and link regarding organised crime involvement in fly tipping, as seen in Kent, are related to industrial scale fly tipping and are not directly relevant to our proposal. East Sussex County Council’s primary obligation is to manage East Sussex residents’ household waste, and to ensure that East Sussex residents have reasonable levels of access to Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRSSs).
- The link to the Kent webpage is about reporting fly tipping, how to manage waste correctly, and the impact fly-tipping has. We recognise the impact fly-tipping has on communities, but as mentioned above there is no evidence that introducing a booking system will lead to an increase in the fly-tipping of domestic waste.

6. West Sussex action on fly tipping:

- The work in West Sussex is not connected to their booking system, but is part of their ongoing collaboration between councils, police, and other agencies to tackle waste crime.
- In East Sussex the Waste Crime Practitioners Group has been operational for over 12 years. It consists of members from various authorities within East Sussex, each having a role in addressing waste crime. Representatives include, but are not limited to, Sussex Police, Local Authorities, County Planning Enforcement, County Traveller Liaison, the County Waste Team, Trading Standards, and the Environment Agency.

7. Conclusion

- The system should not be an obstacle to any resident of East Sussex who wants to visit one of the sites with their own waste. The waste team will work to ensure that the HWRS booking system meets the needs of all residents and considers any concerns raised.