

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held on 24 September 2025 at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes

PRESENT Councillors Keith Glazier, OBE (Chair), Nick Bennett (Vice Chair), Bob Bowdler, Penny di Cara, Carl Maynard and Bob Standley.

Members spoke on the items indicated

Councillor Beaver	- item 6 (minute 18)
Councillor Denis	- items 5 & 6 (minutes 17 & 18)
Councillor Field	- item 6 (minute 18)
Councillor Glazier	- items 5 & 6 (minutes 17 & 18)
Councillor Robinson	- item 5 (minute 17)
Councillor Standley	- item 5 (minute 17)
Councillor Swansborough	- item 6 (minute 18)
Councillor Tutt	- items 5 & 6 (minutes 17 & 18)
Councillor Wright	- item 6 (minute 18)

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JULY 2025

13.1 The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 15 July 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

14.1 Apologies for absence were received for Councillor Claire Dowling.

15. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

15.1 All Members have been granted with a dispensation, in relation to their membership of the Council and any membership of a district or borough council, under the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct to enable them to participate and to enable the Cabinet to vote on the items on the agenda.

16. REPORTS

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

17. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION: PROPOSAL FOR A SINGLE TIER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACROSS EAST SUSSEX

17.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive.

17.2 It was RESOLVED to:

1) Approve the submission of the business case setting out the proposal for a single unitary council for East Sussex, based on a Continuing Authority model, (Appendix 1 of the report) to Government by 26 September 2025;

2) Agree to request Government to cancel or postpone the county council elections scheduled to be held in May 2026;

3) Delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, authority to finalise and submit the business case setting out the proposal and a covering letter formally requesting the cancellation or postponement of the county elections and for the County Council to have Continuing Authority status; and

4) Note the next steps in the process.

Reasons

17.3 In response to the Government's invitation for a single tier of local government, a proposal was developed with district and borough involvement. The six councils collaborated to create an evidence-based business case based on resident and stakeholder feedback, financial analysis, and economic considerations. The report summarises the development and recommends, for the reasons set out in the report and in its appendices, the proposal for a single-tier government in East Sussex.

17.4 Should the proposal and suggested timetable be accepted by Government with an election anticipated in 2027 the cancellation of the County Council election in 2026 will address cost, resource constraints, the upcoming transition to a new authority, and the short term that new councillors would serve before re-election.

18. COUNCIL MONITORING REPORT - Q1 2025/26

18.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive.

18.2 It was RESOLVED to:

1) note the latest monitoring position for the Council; and

2) approve the amendment of the outturn for the unclassified roads measure set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

Reasons

18.3 The report sets out the Council's position and year-end projections for the Council Plan targets, Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, and Savings Plan, together with Risks at the end of June 2025.

18.4 The outturn of 31% for the unclassified roads measure will be replaced with a null outturn (represented as 'not available' in the Council Plan) for the 2024/25 year due to identified data quality issues as detailed at Appendix 6 of the report.

19. TRANSPORT FOR THE SOUTH EAST (TFSE) - TRANSPORT STRATEGY REFRESH 2025

19.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Communities, Transport and Environment.

19.2 It was RESOLVED to:

1) note the updated refreshed TfSE Transport Strategy 2025; and

2) note the continued support from East Sussex County Council towards the refreshed strategy as a constituent authority of TfSE's geography.

Reason

19.3 The delivery of the TfSE's refreshed Transport Strategy provides an opportunity to support and grow the economy, boost connectivity and speed up journeys whilst improving access to opportunities for all and protecting and enhancing our region's unique environment. Whilst it is now finalised, it will also need to continue to be cognisant of the fast-moving picture arising from the devolution and local government reorganisation proposals for East Sussex, and the new Sussex Mayoral Combined County Authority as well as other parts of its geography.

20. ASHDOWN FOREST TRUST FUND

20.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer.

20.2 It was RESOLVED to:

1) note the report and the Ashdown Forest's Trust Income and Expenditure Account for 2024/25 and Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025; and

2) approve the draw of £99,200 from the General Reserve to fund a programme of tree surveys and works across the forest.

Reason

20.3 The Trust made an operating surplus of £9,062 during 2024/25. The General Reserve as at 31 March 2025 amounts to £188,346. This fund is available to finance expenditure which meets the Trust's objectives.

21. TO AGREE WHICH ITEMS ARE TO BE REPORTED TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL

21.1 It was agreed that items 6 and 8 should be reported to the County Council.

[Note: The items being reported to the County Council refer to minute numbers 18 and 20]