

CIPFA Resilience Review – Response and Action Plan			
CIPFA Recommendation		CMT Response	Timescale
1	The Council should continue its discussions on the potential need for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) given the reintroduction of external borrowing from 2025 and continued service pressures.	The need for EFS is under constant review through Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR). ESCC will be writing to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to request to open formal discussions on an application for EFS.	Nov 2025 – Feb 2026
2	The Council needs to look at what further early action it can take on savings to reduce reliance on reserves.	Further savings proposals and opportunities to bring forward existing savings are being considered as part of the Council's RPPR process.	Nov 2025 – Feb 2026
3	The Council should continually re-assess its risk appetite and triggers for decision making on divestment, business cases and further savings plans.	The Council's approach to risk appetite is set out in the Risk Management Framework and is considered and applied at a level appropriate to the outcome of the service area. Department Management Teams and Corporate Management Team (CMT) will be reviewing the narrative in the Council's departmental and strategic risk registers during 2025/26 to ensure that reference to risk appetite is included. CMT will carefully consider the risk and implications of decisions on partners, client groups, reputation etc. and ensure this is included in business cases and plans.	Ongoing
4	The Council should maintain its focus on the minimum operating model and potentially reassess its core offer to set out sustainable service levels within available resources.	The Council has been clear that recent savings have taken us below the previously defined core offer and consideration will be given to reviewing its offer in light of the ongoing financial challenge.	Summer 2026
5	The Council should strengthen its data and analytics capability in Children's Services, moving away from fragmented systems and spreadsheets towards integrated forecasting tools.	The Council is currently investing in the Children's Services Essential Development Programme - a 4-year IT systems development programme from 2024 - 2028. The programme was designed to tackle the biggest risks in core systems, to help the Council safely respond to rising and more complex demand.	April 2024 to March 2028

6	The Council should consider applying the CIPFA Data Management Model to assess data governance, quality and accessibility in Children's Services.	CMT will consider the benefits of applying this model.	
7	The Council should reaffirm the focus of Members through scrutiny to ensure appropriate challenge of and support for key financial and service decisions.	Place and People Scrutiny Committee Members have been supported to review their work programme priorities, training needs and approach to utilising pre-meetings to develop questioning strategy at awaydays in September and October 2025. Further training and resources will be arranged by support officers in response to Members' identified needs and to share and adopt scrutiny best practice. Officers will continue to articulate the importance and focus of scrutiny's role in the RPPR process in reports to each committee meeting and to the annual RPPR Boards.	Ongoing
8	The Council should address procurement and contract management capacity through the review of the Orbis arrangements, ensuring value for money and stronger in-house oversight over service contracts.	The Orbis Joint Management Board is currently undertaking a review of Orbis shared services, including Procurement, IT&D (Information Technology & Digital) and Internal Audit. These services will each be subject to a detailed review of value for money, accountability and deliverability of outcomes to each partner. Recommendations will be made for the operating model of each service and completed in time for planned local government reorganisation.	March 2026
9	The Council should increase its focus on workforce recruitment and retention exploring market supplements or targeted career pathways to address competitiveness.	The corporate Recruitment and Retention group, established in 2024 with cross-departmental representation, meets regularly to address workforce planning. Departments also maintain local groups for tailored workforce strategies. We actively invest in staff development, having paid the Apprenticeship Levy (~£1m annually since 2017). Our strategy maximises levy use for new apprenticeships and staff training. In April 2025, the Levy transitioned to the Growth and Skills Levy, allowing broader use for shorter courses and upskilling, expected to boost retention.	Ongoing

		<p>We continue to build our employer brand, 'We Choose East Sussex', positioning the Council as an employer of choice. This includes refreshed recruitment materials, career pathways, and supportive workforce policies such as financial wellbeing, occupational health, and absence management services.</p> <p>The Workforce Planning Toolkit launched this year has received positive feedback from managers. We also maintain clear policies on market supplements and recruitment incentives ('golden hellos'), balancing competitiveness with affordability and fairness across pay structures. Regular market assessments ensure we remain competitive, particularly against neighbouring authorities.</p>	
10	<p>The Council should develop a refreshed partnership position with the NHS, district and borough councils to reflect the significant challenge it is facing and the consideration of EFS.</p>	<p>The Council is committed to ongoing engagement with NHS partners, including through the reforms to Integrated Care Boards, and with district and borough councils as we prepare for local government reorganisation. The conversations continue to focus on timely sharing of data and effective use of joint resources such as the Better Care Fund and developer contributions, across the East Sussex footprint.</p>	Ongoing