

## **WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44**

### **1) Question from Councillor Field to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.**

When permits are issued to utilities to work on the highway what conditions are stipulated?

- a) Are there conditions about where the signs are placed?
- b) Are there conditions about additional information, e.g. explaining that businesses are still open or that there is no access to certain businesses?
- c) Are there conditions relating to removal of signs and other paraphernalia when the work is finished?
- d) Are any conditions monitored and/or enforced?

### **Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

Each permit is reviewed individually and the appropriate permit conditions for the works being undertaken are requested by the East Sussex Highways Network Coordinator before granting the permit. Conditions can relate to a number of factors such as duration, working hours, manual control of traffic signals, works advertising and additional signage.

#### **a) Are there conditions about where the signs are placed?**

Yes, where appropriate the Network Coordinator will specify the location and type of signs as a permit condition along with the date by which they must be erected / dismantled.

#### **b) Are there conditions about additional information, e.g. explaining that businesses are still open or that there is no access to certain businesses?**

We can and do request additional signs e.g. "Businesses Open as Usual" signs, where it is appropriate to do so.

#### **c) Are there conditions relating to removal of signs and other paraphernalia when the work is finished?**

All works sites must be clear on completion of works. Should signs or other equipment be left on site, following our Inspection (taking photographic evidence) we can issue a section 74 overrun charge, which can vary from £100 per day to £25,000 per day depending on what equipment has been left, where it has been left and if it is affecting traffic/pedestrian flows.

**d) Are any conditions monitored and/or enforced?**

We undertake approximately 800 permit condition inspections per month, approximately 22% of these permit condition inspections fail. A Fixed Penalty Notice have/are issued for all of these failures.

**2) Question from Councillor Tutt to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.**

The Planning committee at their meeting on 15 October approve the next stage of the Seaside bus lane in Eastbourne. The report presented to the committee stated that the introduction of the bus lane will deliver “a positive contribution towards improving air quality”.

I believe that the opposite will take place and so that this statement can be monitored I would be grateful if you can provide the current levels of PM10 and PM2.5 readings outside of both St Andrews and Tollgate schools.

**Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

Outdoor air quality is monitored at representative locations across Eastbourne. It is not practical to measure at every location. The three main pollutants in East Sussex that are of concern for health are particulates, nitrogen dioxide and ozone. These are monitored by a mix of continuous air quality monitoring stations and diffusion tubes.

There are two continuous air quality monitoring stations in Eastbourne that measure particulate matter, which are at Devonshire Park and Holly Place.

In 2024, data from these monitoring stations on PM10 indicated that the annual average concentrations were 17 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and 10.7 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at Devonshire Park and Holly Place respectively. This was slightly lower than the 2023 concentrations of 17.2 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and 11.8 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, and significantly below the annual average threshold of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> required by the national Air Quality Standards Regulations of 2010.

PM2.5 (which is fine particulate matter that can penetrate deeper into the lungs than PM10) was monitored at one site, namely Holly Place. The PM2.5 annual average in 2024 was 6.7 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Again, this was slightly lower than the 2023 annual average of 7.3 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and below the annual average threshold of 20 µg/m<sup>3</sup> required by the national Air Quality Standards Regulations.

Outdoor air quality monitoring at Devonshire Park and Holly Place is continuous, and all the data is publicly available in real-time on the website of the Sussex Air Quality Partnership (SAQP), which is a partnership of all the local authorities across Sussex. In addition, an annual report on air quality, covering the whole of Eastbourne, has to be prepared by the Borough Council and this is published on the SAQP website.

The Eastbourne Air Quality Strategy is currently out to consultation, and a second drop-in session will be held at Gather Space at the Beacon shopping centre on Friday 23 January 2026 where officers will be answering questions on all matters relating to the strategy document and to air quality. We would be happy to provide more information regarding this engagement if of interest.

### **3) Question from Councillor Adeniji to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.**

The Council has now completed its initial School Streets trial using Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders at three pilot schools, and I understand that officers are analysing the outcomes and developing a wider assessment framework to guide the potential prioritisation and delivery of future schemes.

Could the Lead Member please provide an update on:

- a) What is the current timeline for finalising the assessment framework that will guide which additional schools are prioritised for School Street schemes? What criteria will form the basis of that framework?
- b) Once the assessment framework is in place, what is the anticipated process and timing for schools to be formally considered for future schemes? As an example, how will Chyngton Primary School in Seaford be evaluated and when might it be assessed, given that it has requested consideration?
- c) Future rollout prospects, including how resourcing and funding will support the delivery of additional School Streets, and how the Council intends to support schools that have already expressed interest in being assessed.

### **Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

Thank you for your questions.

As you rightly highlight, we used experimental traffic regulation orders to deliver school street schemes at three pilot schools in the county – Southover Primary in Lewes, All Saints Primary in Sidley - Bexhill, and Langney Primary in Eastbourne. These schemes and the traffic regulation orders were made permanent this summer.

In response to your first question, following the successful delivery of these pilot school street schemes, a draft assessment framework has been developed to identify a further programme of school street schemes across the county, subject to funding. This assessment framework is currently being tested by officers, and it is proposed this will be completed by mid-December 2025.

The draft criteria that is being tested assesses both strategic and local factors. This has been informed from learning following engagement with other local authorities who have adopted similar frameworks. A summary of these draft assessment factors include: -

- Local Policy fit – alignment to the East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 and the emerging update to the East Sussex Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- School specific factors – school and local community support, school roll numbers.
- Geographic considerations – such as the type of road, traffic flows, crash record, proximity to bus routes, existing parking restrictions, any traffic displacement, number of properties/businesses/services nearby, existing or proposed infrastructure schemes/measures.

In relation to your second question, the draft process will include assessing all schools. This will be undertaken during January 2026, and a draft programme will be included within the East Sussex Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan, which will be subject to a public consultation at the end of January/early February 2026. Chyngton Primary School will be assessed as part of this process and the outcome of this will be communicated with them, as well as all other schools.

In relation to your final question, Government has announced a four year local transport settlement for the period 2026/27 to 2029/30 of both capital and revenue funding. The revenue and capital funding allocations for active travel from 2026/27 onwards are currently unknown; officers understand an announcement from Government on this is imminent.

With the establishment of the Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority who will become the local transport authority for the geography, they will likely be responsible for the allocation of the local transport and active travel funding settlements down to the existing upper tier, and new unitary authorities post-local reorganisation, who will remain the local highway authorities and would be expected to deliver, for example, school street schemes.

A draft programme of school streets schemes will be included in the draft updated East Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan that will be subject to public and stakeholder consultation in early 2026. The draft final LCWIP is then programmed to come to my decision-making meeting, as Lead Member, in June 2026. This approach will enable the County Council to consider the inclusion of a programme of school streets schemes within future capital local transport investment programmes that are put forward to the new Mayor for the Sussex & Brighton MCCA.

#### 4) Question from Councillor Cross to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.

Over the last couple of years there have been cuts in bus services in rural areas, where we desperately need them. This exacerbates the vicious circle of low bus use and high car use in the area. A reliable, frequent and all day/everyday bus service would encourage more people onto the buses and thereby increase bus income and trust in the bus service. It would support tourism in the area and improve footfall for local businesses.

The bus companies, particularly Stagecoach, do not appear to have the best interests of residents and passengers at the heart of their business model, and they are running an inefficient and unreliable services in some areas, particularly Number 51 Service running Eastbourne-Tunbridge Wells through the heart of East Sussex (mostly travelling through Wealden).

At the same time as cutting services Stagecoach has been increasing profits – the year ending April 2024 Stagecoach made a post-tax profit of £72.5million, more than three times the profit of the year before (£23.2m).

*“As is the case in most parts of the UK, bus services in East Sussex operate in a de-regulated market outside the control of the LTA. The Department for Transport, not ESCC, is responsible for the licensing of operators and services. In this de-regulated environment, operators provide services at their own discretion and set vital features such as routes, timetables, frequencies, and fares. In excess of 90% of all bus journeys in the county are provided on this commercial basis. They do not attract subsidy from ESCC but run only for the revenue generated by passenger usage.”* Enhanced Partnership Plan June 2022

Since this EP draft there has been a government funded £3 price cap on fares (previously £2). Which means that bus services are receiving a subsidy from government, but through ESCC. This could mean that buses are able to increase passenger numbers, and thereby increase profit, whilst government receives nothing. And yet it is unclear how there is accountability for the bus service.

- a) Does the Enhanced Partnership Board have any influence on Stagecoach in terms of monitoring the services and holding them to account for poor performance?
- b) We understand that ESCC supported services are provided under contracts between ESCC and the bus service provider. Is there also a contract in place for the subsidy provided to Stagecoach for the £3 fare (previously £2)?
- c) What is our contractual link between the supported services we fund and the commercial services that Stagecoach run?

- d) Does the contract have key performance indicators (KPIs) that relate just to the supported service, or to the whole bus services? Is payment reliant on reaching these KPIs?
- e) Does the awarding of the supported services depend on the company running a reliable and efficient commercial service that enable residents in rural areas to depend on them for moving around the County?
- f) What is being done to encourage Stagecoach to spend some of their massive profits improving and extending the bus services in the rural areas.
- g) Do you think we would have a better rural bus service if we had opted for the franchise model under the BSIP, which has been so successful in other areas?
- h) The Cuckoo Line north of Hailsham was opened under Act of Parliament in 1880. In 1964/65 local residents were consulted by the British Railways Board. Residents were promised an adequate bus replacement service as far as Tunbridge Wells. The Abandonment Order was granted on condition that these bus routes would continue to exist. At that time the frequency was one bus every quarter of an hour. Legally the onus then fell on Southdown/Maidstone & District to fulfil their obligations. This then passed to the National Bus Company and then to Stagecoach. Does this still pertain?

### **Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

- a) Does the Enhanced Partnership Board have any influence on Stagecoach in terms of monitoring the services and holding them to account for poor performance?**

The Enhanced Partnership is a collaborative framework that reviews key areas such as:

- Service reliability and punctuality.
- Delivery of agreed improvements (e.g., ticketing, real-time information).
- Compliance with Enhanced Partnership Scheme obligations.

The BSIP Board oversees delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan and ensures alignment with the Enhanced Partnership. The BSIP sets out targets and metrics aligned with the National Bus Strategy, including:

- Punctuality and Reliability: % of buses on time and service cancellations.
- Patronage Growth: Passenger numbers compared to baseline (pre-Covid / 2019).
- Journey Times: Average speed and congestion impact.
- Customer Satisfaction: Surveys via Transport Focus and NHT.
- Environmental Measures: % of low/zero-emission fleet and idling reduction.
- Accessibility: Coverage of rural areas and DDRT performance.

It acts as the main governance body for monitoring progress, funding allocation, and compliance with DfT requirement.

Recent changes to the timetable implemented by Stagecoach from September to improve reliability has been successful. Current figures put performance up from c.50% to above 70% as at the end of October 2025.

- b) We understand that ESCC supported services are provided under contracts between ESCC and the bus service provider. Is there also a contract in place for the subsidy provided to Stagecoach for the £3 fare (previously £2)?**

This is a national scheme funded and administered by the Department for Transport until March 2027, ensuring services remain affordable and supporting bus travel, particularly in rural areas. Reimbursement of Stagecoach's reduced fares income in participating in the £3 fare cap is arranged by the Department of Transport.

- c) What is our contractual link between the supported services we fund and the commercial services that Stagecoach run?**

Commercial services, by definition, are not contracted and do not need funding support. There is no contractual link between commercial and supported services.

- d) Does the contract have key performance indicators (KPIs) that relate just to the supported service, or to the whole bus services? Is payment reliant on reaching these KPIs?**

There are obligations for bus operators of all bus services set out in the East Sussex Enhanced Plan Scheme [east-sussex-enhanced-partnership-scheme-31-march-2024.pdf](#)

Payment for supported bus services can be withheld if the contracted journey does not run except for reasons beyond the operator's control.

- e) Does the awarding of the supported services depend on the company running a reliable and efficient commercial service that enable residents in rural areas to depend on them for moving around the County?**

Bus operators must pass the quality requirements of the joint East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Public Bus Services to be able to submit a bus tender. These are general quality requirements relating to areas of business continuity, performance management, training, recruitment, social value and efficiency.

The awarding of supported service contracts cannot be linked to the operator's commercial services in rural areas as this would inhibit competition for contracted bus services.

**f) What is being done to encourage Stagecoach to spend some of their massive profits improving and extending the bus services in the rural areas.**

This profit figure is for all Stagecoach's bus activities across the UK, with an annual turnover exceeding £1.5 billion. [STAGECOACH GROUP LIMITED filing history - Find and update company information - GOV.UK](#)

Stagecoach are struggling to financially sustain bus services on certain routes in East Sussex due to the higher costs incurred by traffic congestion and the relatively low number of bus users due to the more rural nature of the county. The measures in the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership are vitally important in contributing to improvements in bus services, though the first task has been to stem further reductions in service provision.

**g) Do you think we would have a better rural bus service if we had opted for the franchise model under the BISP, which has been so successful in other areas?**

The franchise model requires very significant funding to set up and also likely to require higher levels of on-going funding. The view within the EP is that the EP remains the pragmatic approach, given that BSIP funding has been offered in short term increments.

**h) The Cuckoo Line north of Hailsham was opened under Act of Parliament in 1880. In 1964/65 local residents were consulted by the British Railways Board. Residents were promised an adequate bus replacement service as far as Tunbridge Wells. The Abandonment Order was granted on condition that these bus routes would continue to exist. At that time the frequency was one bus every quarter of an hour. Legally the onus then fell on Southdown/Maidstone & District to fulfil their obligations. This then passed to the National Bus Company and then to Stagecoach. Does this still pertain?**

This is no longer the case; it was intended to last for a reasonable period after closure linked to licensing and subsidy arrangements under the old regulatory regime. The National Bus Company was dissolved in the late 1980s, in addition bus deregulation under the Transport Act 1985 removed most statutory service obligations, replacing them with a commercial market plus local authority tendered services.

Today, service provision is governed by:

- Local Transport Authority contracts for East Sussex County Council supported routes
- Public Service Obligation (PSO) regulations under the 2023 UK regime, which allow authorities to contract for socially necessary services—but these are



new contracts, not historic obligations. These services are subject to funding, for which ESCC has a prioritisation for.

Any continuation of those routes today depends on commercial viability or local authority subsidy under BSIP or Enhanced Partnership arrangements.

## **5) Question from Councillor Murphy to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

Hailsham has had a huge amount of large housing development over the last 4 years and there are a large number of conflicting temporary direction signs fixed to lamppost and street furniture that the developers have put up to direct traffic to these developments.

Can you confirm that these signs are for Construction traffic and are intended to direct large construction vehicles on a safe route to the development.

There are increasingly large vehicles using the town High Street and it is causing traffic problems negotiating around the turns into George Street and holding up traffic when there are busses in the High Street.

- a) Will ESCC Highways seek to review the existing signs and licenses to ensure that the large vehicle do stay out of the High Street?
- b) Will ESCC Highways adopt a policy on all new license applications of no large construction vehicles in the High Street?
- c) Will ESCC Highways write to Google Maps, Marin, Tom-Tom and any other satellite navigation system and inform them that the Hailsham High Street is not suitable for large vehicles?

## **Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

- a) Will ESCC Highways seek to review the existing signs and licenses to ensure that the large vehicle do stay out of the High Street?**

Routing of construction vehicles is generally controlled through Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMP), which are secured through planning conditions attached to the corresponding planning permissions. The request for large vehicles to stay out of the High Street would be dependent on the details of each Construction Transport Management Plan (CTMP) associated with the various planning permissions and where the construction site is. Ultimately, it will be the planning authority (Wealden District Council) to agree the CTMPs, although ESCC are generally a consultee on these. Where possible, ESCC do highlight / advise avoiding the High Street and try to ensure any unnecessary signage is removed. We will continue to do this.

**b) Will ESCC Highways adopt a policy on all new license applications of no large construction vehicles in the High Street?**

See our response to question a. We would also point out that this depends where the development site is exactly, what the access options may be and the specific requirements for a given development.

**c) Will ESCC Highways write to Google Maps, Marin, Tom-Tom and any other satellite navigation system and inform them that the Hailsham High Street is not suitable for large vehicles?**

We are aware that other Highway Authorities have made approaches to these companies in the past, but little to no change has resulted. This is not a problem exclusive to East Sussex and it appears there is no easy solution, apart from putting up signs and the use of specialist sat navs for larger vehicles, however many lorry drivers don't appear to use these as they are more expensive than standard. A more permanent solution would be a TRO such as a weight limit. We will raise this matter at our regional forum of Highway Authorities, to see if there is a way to guide these companies better on such matters.

**6) Question from Councillor Murphy to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

Hailsham has a number of utility roadwork temporary closures in the past year causing untold misery for traffic trying to enter and leave the town. Whilst Highways cannot deny utility companies the right to dig up roads, ESCC have also carried out temporary road closures particularly on South Road and Ersham Road in the past two years. Unfortunately, there have been some latent defects left behind after these works that have resulted in additional remedial works having to be carried out.

- a) What is the level of monitoring carried out on the utilities and ESCC contractors' roads works?
- b) If a defect is identified that requires remedial action, is this carried out at the contractors' expense or does the additional expense fall to ESCC?
- c) What timescale should we reasonably expect these defects be rectified?

**Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment**

**a) What is the level of monitoring carried out on the utilities and ESCC contractors' roads works?**

On average we undertake 800 permit condition Inspections and 1,330 site Inspections per month on Utilities and ESCC works. In October we had a defect failure rate of 12.6%.

**b) If a defect is identified that requires remedial action, is this carried out at the contractors' expense or does the additional expense fall to ESCC?**

All defects are rectified by the Utility/contractor, ESCC do not meet the cost of any remedial work on Utility defects.

**c) What timescale should we reasonably expect these defects be rectified?**

The defect process states Utilities have 10 days to dispute the defect, having accepted the defect remedial works should be undertaken within 20 days. Where the undertaker fails to rectify the non-compliant reinstatement within the prescribed timescales, if required, the authority may undertake the remedial work and recover their reasonable costs from the undertaker.

**7) Question from Councillor Murphy to the Leader.**

The recent proposal by the Home Office to house up to 600 asylum seekers at Crowborough training camp has caused huge stress and anxiety to the residents of the town and further afield in Wealden. The situation in the town has not been helped by elected members at all levels seeking to gain political capital out of the situation. Residents are rightly concerned but they also have a right to have all the facts presented to them and not the misinformation and half- truths that have been used by those who seek to sow division and distrust.

There has been several public meetings held in Crowborough organised by WDC, Crowborough Town Council, the MP and a political party. The County council has been criticized at these meetings for being absent and not turning up as invited.

The situation now in Crowborough is one that has culminated in public meetings degenerating into aggressive, hostile environments where local women councillors were being confronted, abused and intimidated. They had to be escorted to their vehicles and the Town Council had now been forced to engage security for their subsequent Town Council meeting.

This is in stark contrast to when, three years ago, the Home Office installed 130 asylum seekers at the Boship Hotel with 48 hours' notice. Residents of Hailsham and the surrounding villages were rightly concerned at the time but there was no misinformation issued by elected members at national or local level.

This matter should have been debated at full council, in the absence of that these questions require an urgent reply from the Leader.

- a) Will the Council seek to reduce tension in the town by issuing a letter to each household detailing the timeline of the announcements by the Home Office

and ESCC responses. This letter to include details of the services ESCC are expected to provide as requested by the Home Office?

- b) Will the Council remind elected members at all levels of the duty of care to represent all residents, not just those who seek to divide and confront?
- c) Will the Council ensure that senior officers will, when invited, attend all meetings organised by the Home Office, Wealden District Council, Sussex Police, NHS Sussex and other affected official organisations?
- d) Will the Council convene a whole council forum for ESCC Councillors on the subject of isolated encampments to house asylum seekers and the comparison of the County Council's responses and handling of the Home Office asylum seeker proposals for the Boship Hotel, Crowborough Camp and Northeye Camp?
- e) Will the Council issue Councillors with the name of the police officer responsible for Councillor safety in order that they can report any instances of verbal, physical or virtual threats?
- f) Will the Council provide advice to schools in the Crowborough area to prioritise the mental health and well-being of all pupils and staff when handling enquiries from pupils that would be anxious about the situation regarding the conflict in the Town?

### **Response by the Leader**

I fully appreciate and understand the Crowborough residents' anxiety and concerns regarding the Home Office's considerations in respect of accommodating a large number of single adult male asylum seekers at Crowborough Training Camp (CTC). These concerns, I am sure, are amplified by the absence of meaningful and comprehensive information and facts, as well as the presence of much misinformation and rumour. There are many questions that remain unanswered and we are continuing to work with Wealden District Council (WDC), as the local lead agency, and other statutory partners to better understand the Home Office's considerations and, in turn, ensure that they are in possession of all of the local influencing factors, prior to them making a decision.

- a) Will the Council seek to reduce tension in the town by issuing a letter to each household detailing the timeline of the announcements by the Home Office and ESCC responses. This letter to include details of the services ESCC are expected to provide as requested by the Home Office?**

The Home Office formally announced its intentions to use Crowborough Training Camp to accommodate asylum seekers on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025. This followed an unofficial release (leak) of this information earlier in the same week. The county council was first informed in strict confidence, alongside other statutory partners on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025. The council has made no formal responses to the Home Office as our statutory duties and powers only apply if the camp is mobilised. We have

however, worked with Wealden District Council, as the local lead agency, and other statutory partners to obtain more details of the proposals from the Home Office so that we can better assess any potential impact on our services and the wider community.

We will not, at this stage, issue a letter to each Crowborough household, as the responsibility for communication and engagement on this matter sits with the Home Office and we have no additional information to add beyond what is already widely available and can be accessed through the following links on the Home Office, Wealden District Council and our own websites. We will keep this position under review:

[Crowborough Training Camp, East Sussex: factsheet - GOV.UK](#)  
[Crowborough Army Camp - Wealden District Council](#)  
[Support for different migrant groups | East Sussex County Council](#)

We have not been requested to provide any services in respect of the proposal, nor do we expect to be.

If the proposal goes ahead, the council will have some limited statutory duties and powers as the asylum seekers accommodated at CTC would be considered as 'residents' of East Sussex, albeit temporary. Details of our Duty of Care for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in East Sussex can be found through the following link to our website:

[Duty of care for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in East Sussex | East Sussex County Council](#)

The paragraphs below set out some of the main statutory duties that may be relevant if CTC were to become operational and accommodate asylum seekers. The lists excludes our duties in respect of children and young people as we have been informed that asylum seekers accommodated will be over the age of 18.

### **Adult Social Care**

- Local authorities have a duty to assess asylum seekers in relation to their care and support needs under the Care Act 2014 if requested. It is, however, important to recognise the distinction from Home Office support. Asylum seekers can receive support from the Home Office (under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999) for 'destitution', but the Care Act applies to those who have additional care and support needs. Asylum seekers with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) may receive support under the Care Act 2014 if their needs are not solely due to 'destitution' and a human rights assessment is completed.
- Adult asylum seekers are entitled to safeguarding under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 if they meet the specific criteria, irrespective of their immigration status. The local authority has a duty to act if it reasonably suspects an adult in its area:
  - Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting those needs);
  - Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and

- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect.

### ***Public Health***

- Asylum seekers are considered as 'residents' so we have a population responsibility for health improvement and health protection. In reality, this would mainly apply to infection prevention and ensuring any communicable diseases are well handled.

### ***Community Safety***

- Prevent (The aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and is part of CONTEST, the national counter-terrorism strategy). We have incorporated the potential occupation of CTC in our revised Situational Risk Assessment for Prevent and will review and update the assessment as more information becomes available and the situation develops.
- ESCC is a member of the multi-agency Wealden District Community Safety Partnership (Safer Wealden Partnership), chaired by Wealden District Council.

#### **b) Will the Council remind elected members at all levels of the duty of care to represent all residents, not just those who seek to divide and confront?**

The council's Constitution includes [Part 5 - Section 1 - Members Code of Conduct](#) (including 'The Seven Principles of Public Life'), which clearly sets out the expectations of all County Councillors. If any County Councillor is unclear of the expectations of their role and associated responsibilities, they should review this Section and / or seek advice from the council's Monitoring Officer.

#### **c) Will the Council ensure that senior officers will, when invited, attend all meetings organised by the Home Office, Wealden District Council, Sussex Police, NHS Sussex and other affected official organisations?**

Senior council officers have, and will continue, to attend all strategic, operational and tactical meetings (as well as its own internal meetings), organised by the Home Office or system partners, in respect of this proposal. Officers have not attended any public meetings or the Wealden District Council Scrutiny Committee, for the same reasons as set out in the response to Question 1 - the responsibility for communication and engagement on this matter sits with the Home Office and we have no additional information to add beyond what is already widely available. ESCC officers do not attend other councils' scrutiny committee to ensure accountability lines are clear. As also described in the response to Question 1, the council's limited statutory duties and powers would relate to the operation of asylum accommodation at CTC, as opposed to any consideration or proposal.

**d) Will the Council convene a whole council forum for ESCC Councillors on the subject of isolated encampments to house asylum seekers and the comparison of the County Council's responses and handling of the Home Office asylum seeker proposals for the Boship Hotel, Crowborough Camp and Northeye Camp?**

No, not at this stage, but we will keep this position under review. Whole Council Forums are an incredibly useful mechanism for sharing and discussing information and topics in detail with and between Members. As you know, we did touch upon the proposals relating to CTC at the end of the last Whole Council Forum on Reconciling Policy Performance and Resources (RPPR) and essentially, beyond the details contained on the three webpages listed in the response to Questions 1, we have no further information to share or discuss at this stage.

For the avoidance of doubt, the council's 'response and handling' to the CTC proposals is identical to similar Home Office proposals for Northeye and the Boship Hotel (and other asylum accommodation proposals in the county).

**e) Will the Council issue Councillors with the name of the police officer responsible for Councillor safety in order that they can report any instances of verbal, physical or virtual threats?**

I, and this council, unreservedly condemns any form of violence and intimidation towards Councillors and members of the public. Anyone in an emergency situation where there is an immediate risk to them (or another person) or when a crime is being committed, should call 999. Anyone who needs crime prevention or personal safety advice or to report a crime that does not need an emergency response, should call 101.

In terms of a named police officer responsible for Councillor safety, this is a matter for Sussex Police and you should contact them direct for a response.

**f) Will the Council provide advice to schools in the Crowborough area to prioritise the mental health and well-being of all pupils and staff when handling enquiries from pupils that would be anxious about the situation regarding the conflict in the Town.?**

The council has been, and will continue to be, in contact with all of the local schools in the area to provide information, advice and support in respect of this matter.