

MINUTES

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 22 MARCH 2022 at 10.00 am

Present Councillors Sam Adeniji, Matthew Beaver, Colin Belsey, Nick Bennett, Bob Bowdler, Charles Clark, Chris Collier, Johnny Denis, Penny di Cara, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Kathryn Field, Gerard Fox, Roy Galley (Vice Chairman), Nuala Geary, Keith Glazier, Alan Hay, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge, Stephen Holt, Johanna Howell, Eleanor Kirby-Green, Carolyn Lambert, Tom Liddiard, Philip Lunn, James MacCleary, Wendy Maples, Sorrell Marlow-Eastwood, Carl Maynard, Matthew Milligan, Steve Murphy, Sarah Osborne, Peter Pragnell (Chairman), Christine Robinson, Pat Rodohan, Phil Scott, Stephen Shing, Alan Shuttleworth, Rupert Simmons, Bob Standley, Colin Swansborough, Barry Taylor, Georgia Taylor, David Tutt, John Ungar and Trevor Webb

54. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2022

54.1 RESOLVED – to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the County Council meeting held on 8 February 2022.

55. Apologies for absence

55.1 Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Abul Azad, Godfrey Daniel, Paul Redstone and Daniel Shing.

56. Chairman's business

PLEDGE TO CHILDREN IN CARE

56.1 The Chairman reported that a copy of the Council's pledge to Children in Care had been left on the desk of every councillor. Councillor Bowdler then provided further detail regarding the Pledge.

UKRAINE

56.2 The Chairman reported that as councillors will have noted the Ukrainian flag was being flown on the County Hall forecourt and the flag was displayed on each desk in the Chamber. The Chairman advised that the Council was ready to play its part and that a report on this issue was to be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S ACTIVITIES

56.3 The Chairman reported that he had attended two engagements since the last meeting of the Council – an International Mother Day event and a memorial service at Westminster Abbey for Dame Vera Lynn.

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PETITIONS

56.4 The Chairman reported that no petitions had been presented by councillors before the meeting.

PRAYERS

56.5 The Chairman thanked Reverend Ben Brown for leading prayers before the meeting.

57. Questions from members of the public

57.1 Copies of a question from a member of the public and the answer from Councillor Fox (Chair of the Pension Committee) are attached to these minutes. A supplementary question was asked and responded to.

58. Declarations of Interest

58.1 There were no declarations of interest.

59. Reports

59.1 The Chairman of the County Council, having called over the reports set out in the agenda, reserved the following for discussion:

Cabinet report – paragraph 1 (Council Monitoring)

Governance Committee report – paragraph 1 (Pay Policy Statement)

Lead Member for Transport and Environment report – paragraph 1 (Notice of Motion – 20 mph zones in roads around schools and playgrounds)

NON-RESERVED PARAGRAPHS

59.2 On the motion of the Chairman of the County Council, the Council adopted those paragraphs in reports that had not been reserved for discussion as follows:

Cabinet report – paragraph 2 (Conservators of Ashdown Forest 2022/23 budget)

Governance Committee report – paragraph 2 (review of the Scheme of Allowances for Members)

60. Report of the Cabinet

Paragraph 1 (Council Monitoring)

60.1 Councillor Glazier moved the reserved paragraph in the Cabinet report.

60.2 The motion was CARRIED after debate.

61. Report of the Governance Committee

Paragraph 1 (Pay Policy Statement)

61.1 Councillor Glazier moved the reserved paragraph in the Governance Committee report.

61.2 The motion was CARRIED after debate.

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62. Report of the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Paragraph 1 (Notice of Motion – 20 mph zones on roads around schools and playgrounds)

62.1 Councillor Claire Dowling moved the reserved paragraph of the Lead Member's report.

62.2 The following amendment was moved by Councillor Holt and seconded:

To delete the motion of the Lead Member for Transport and Environment and Health and insert:

- a) *That this Council recognises the work already carried out by the East Sussex Road Safety Programme to reduce speeding in our county.*
- b) *That this Council requests that the Cabinet considers increasing the number of 20mph zones in roads surrounding schools and playgrounds, to further reduce incidents, anti-social driving and near misses.*
- c) *The Council requests that a report on plans to increase the ease for residents to apply for 20mph zones be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting.*

62.3 A recorded vote on the amendment was requested and taken. The amendment was LOST, the votes being cast as follows:

FOR THE AMENDMENT

Councillors Collier, Denis, Field, Hilton, Holt, Lambert, MacCleary, Maples, Murphy, Osborne, Robinson, Rodohan, Scott, Stephen Shing, Shuttleworth, Swansborough, Georgia Taylor, Tutt, Ungar and Webb.

AGAINST THE AMENDMENT

Councillors Adeniji, Beaver, Belsey, Bennett, Bowdler, Clark, di Cara, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Fox, Galley, Geary, Glazier, Hay, Hollidge, Howell, Kirby-Green, Liddiard, Lunn, Marlow-Eastwood, Maynard, Milligan, Pragnell, Simmons, Standley and Barry Taylor.

ABSTENTIONS

None

62.4 A recorded vote was taken on the motion moved by Councillor Claire Dowling as follows:

- (1) *The County Council is committed to working with all stakeholders to tackle road safety and recognises the work already carried out by the East Sussex Road Safety Programme which resulted in a reduction in speeding reoffences, crashes and casualties;*
- (2) *That this Council recognises the range of road safety improvements that are introduced each year, which can include 20mph schemes, traffic calming and pedestrian crossings, and endorses the current multi-faceted approach as set out in this report;*
- (3) *The County Council endorses the simple process that is in place for residents to request road safety measures, including 20mph schemes; and*
- (4) *The County Council recognises that the review of the East Sussex County Council Local Transport Plan will commence from Spring 2022 and requests that Road Safety interventions are part of that review.*

62.5 The Motion was CARRIED with the votes being cast as follows:

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FOR THE MOTION

Councillors Adeniji, Beaver, Belsey, Bennett, Bowdler, Clark, Collier, Denis, di Cara, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Field, Fox, Galley, Geary, Glazier, Hay, Hilton, Hollidge, Holt, Howell, Kirby-Green, Lambert, Liddiard, Lunn, MacCleary, Maples, Marlow-Eastwood, Maynard, Milligan, Murphy, Osborne, Pragnell, Robinson, Rodohan, Scott, Stephen Shing, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Standley Swansborough, Barry Taylor, Georgia Taylor, Tutt, Ungar and Webb.

AGAINST THE MOTION

None.

ABSTENTIONS

None

63. Questions from County Councillors

63.1 The following members asked questions of the Lead Cabinet Members indicated and they responded:

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
Councillor Lambert	Councillor Glazier	Guidance from Government regarding assistance and support for Ukrainian refugees
Councillor Tutt	Councillor Glazier	Representations to Southern Water regarding discharges of untreated waste water into the sea
Councillor Murphy	Councillor Claire Dowling	Closure of the A27 and other roads to allow for the transportation of a large load on 19 and 20 March
Councillor Scott	Councillor Claire Dowling	Review of the policy and criteria for filling potholes
Councillor Field	Councillor Glazier	Mileage allowance paid to staff
Councillor Stephen Shing	Councillor Claire Dowling	Cost of licence for street parties to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
Councillor Denis	Councillor Claire Dowling	Installation of a bus shelter in Ringmer
Councillor Hilton	Councillor Bennett	County Council's dealings with SeaChange
Councillor Stephen Shing	Councillor Bennett	Plans for land adjacent to the Eastbourne Road (A2270), Eastbourne

63.2 Three written questions were received from Councillors Lambert and Murphy for the Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development, the Lead Member for Transport and Environment and the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion,

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Special Educational Needs and Disability. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes. The Lead Members responded to supplementary questions.

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 12.09 pm

The reports referred to are included in the minute book

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QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. Question from Elaine Hills, Brighton

Hastings Borough Council, Lewes Town Council, Lewes District Council, Peacehaven Town Council, Bexhill Town Council, UNISON, Maria Caulfield MP and Caroline Lucas MP have all called on the East Sussex Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuels.

My own Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, has now passed three motions (in 2017, 2020 and February 2022 respectively) calling on the East Sussex Pension Fund to do so.

Moreover:

- (a) the Fund now appears to have shrunk its investments in fossil fuels down to something like 0.5% of the Fund's total assets;
- (b) the Fund's current policy of 'engaging' with fossil fuel companies has failed to align a single oil & gas major with the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C;
- (c) some 1,500 institutions around the world – collectively worth over \$39 trillion – have already made some form of divestment commitment, including six UK pension funds;
- (d) a public commitment to fully divest the East Sussex Pension Fund from fossil fuels over the next five years poses no financial risk to the Fund;
- (e) by making such a public commitment, the Fund would be sending a powerful signal to policymakers to get serious about tackling the climate emergency, which requires the rapid phasing out of fossil fuels.

Given the above facts, why does the East Sussex Pension Fund continue to reject the calls for it to make a public commitment to fully divest from fossil fuels over the next five years?

Response by the Chair of the Pension Committee

The Pension Fund has stated in its Statement of Responsible Investment Principles, and through other communication channels, that it does not agree with blanket divestment of any sector; this is not effective stewardship of our beneficiaries pensions and the Fund must ensure it invests in a wide range of assets and be an active owner of those assets. The Fund also states that it retains the ability to divest from individual companies where material risks remain following engagement activity. This approach is supported by government advice and the Funds advisers. As part of its climate strategy the Fund has removed all exposure to fossil fuel companies where there is no active decision to hold those companies – so we do not invest in a fossil fuel company just because it is in an index. The Fund's very limited exposure to fossil fuel companies is held through its investment managers who carry out significant research and are actively engaging with the companies. In addition to this, the Fund has invested 10% of its assets specifically to climate impact solutions and 15% to passive like equities that are more resource efficient or Paris aligned. A large portion of the portfolio is also invested in real assets such as property and infrastructure.

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To remove a fossil fuel company from the Fund does not change real world carbon emissions as it does not reduce the global demand for those fossil fuels, it instead moves the problem elsewhere – either to an investor who is less climate conscious or to increase the market share of national oil companies who are less transparent about their activities and have higher carbon footprints per unit of fuel on average than listed fossil fuel companies.

There has been significant moves in the right direction of a number of fossil fuel companies as a result of active ownership by investors. Research published by the Transition Pathway Initiative in November 2021 finds that “three oil and gas firms – Occidental Petroleum, TotalEnergies and Eni – have set emissions reduction targets which are ambitious enough to reach net zero by 2050 and to align with TPI’s 1.5°C benchmark”. The Pension Fund believes that by exercising its powers as shareholders we can influence high emitting companies to effectively transition a low-carbon world and actively reduce real world carbon emissions. This can be done by investors bringing shareholder resolutions on climate disclosures and climate strategy and by voting against management or auditors where climate strategy is insufficient. An example where engagement is starting to see some results is with the vote to put three people on the board of ExxonMobil in 2021 who have expertise and experience in transitioning away from fossil fuels – the Funds Investment managers voted on our behalf to help make this happen. Since this change in Board membership ExxonMobil are no longer planning to increase oil production in the years to 2025 and has started to invest in decarbonization strategies with targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions. There is still a long way to go but this shows a marked change in the company as a result of this active ownership. The Fund publishes a report on engagement activity quarterly and is submitting its response to the FCA’s 2020 Stewardship Code this summer.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44

1. Question by Councillor Lambert to the Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development

A number of councils across the country such as Liverpool, Westminster, Dundee and Kent are all starting to use the social media platform TikTok. TikTok has 1.5 billion global users, 40% of which are aged 16–24 and has growing popularity in the UK. It is a very mobile and flexible medium enabling the production of short videos and access to other information sources. Liverpool also predict that older users will start to explore the possibilities of TikTok.

East Sussex County Council could consider the use of TikTok to assist with communicating valuable information to young people in particular, including offering access to safeguarding, mental health support, advice and support to care leavers, careers advice and skills communication. For older people, it could be used, for example, to assist with recruitment into the care sector.

Will East Sussex County Council explore and consider the use of TikTok as a valuable addition to its communication platform?

Answer by the Leader and Lead Member Strategic Management and Economic Development

East Sussex County Council has made use of TikTok during the pandemic, with advertising aimed at 16-24 year-olds. We are considering how we could make greater use of the platform in future where appropriate. Our surveying of residents shows that 82% of 16-24 year-olds in East Sussex use TikTok regularly. (For 25-44 year-olds it's 44%, for 45-59 year-olds it's 7% and for people aged 60+ it's 6%)

The council runs corporate accounts for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Youtube. In addition to corporate accounts, many teams and departments run their own social media accounts, though all are operated via a central management tool (Hootsuite) to guarantee security and governance. There are 105 social media accounts currently operated by ESCC.

In the year to December 2021, ESCC accounts replied 27,000 times to questions or comments from residents.

2. Question by Councillor Lambert to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Brighton and Hove City Council have been piloting School Streets closures since 2019 and now have an established School Streets programme.

School Streets support the safe movement of children to and from school by creating streets that allow for more walking, cycling, and scooting. Motor vehicle access to streets near school entrances is restricted during school drop off and pick up times which reduces vehicle congestion around the school gates, including engine idling, and

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improves road safety. This in turn encourages and enables active and sustainable travel by children and their parents/carers on the school journey.

School Streets aligns with central government policy including the Gear Change vision document (July 2020) which sets out the national ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choice for short journeys, or as part of a longer journey. East Sussex County Council also has its own transport plans which equally seek to shift how people travel – prioritising walking and cycling for shorter journeys and public transport for longer journeys.

An expected amendment to the Traffic Management Act 2004 will grant Local Authorities in England greater enforcement powers, including the use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras, which could positively impact on the delivery of any School Streets programme in future years. I understand that the Department for Transport have already asked Local Authorities interested in the enforcement powers to submit an application registering interest and potential locations.

Will East Sussex County Council agree to consult on and investigate the practicalities of piloting a School Streets scheme in the three roads immediately around Seaford Primary school with a view to rolling this out in other places if it is successful? Seaford Primary School sits at the bottom of three closed cul-de-sacs (Wilkinson Way, Chapel Close and Foster Close). Access to the school is via narrow residential roads and there have been consistent complaints from parents about dangerous maneuvering and parking, including driving along the pavement. The proposal has strong support from the Head of Seaford Primary school.

Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

As Councillor Lambert will hopefully be aware, through the second tranche of Emergency Active Travel funding we received last year, the County Council undertook a School Streets trial project with six schools across the County. These trials operated over a six week period between 21 March and 5 May 2021.

Following the subsequent evaluation, three of the schools who participated in the trial have been prioritised to assess for potential permanent school street measures. These are:

- All Saints CofE Primary School in Bexhill,
- Southover CofE Primary in Lewes, and
- Langney Primary Academy in Eastbourne

Collaborative design workshops have recently been undertaken with each of these schools and the wider community to:

- reflect on the outcomes of last year's six week trial;
- consider the potential issues and opportunities/solutions of a permanent scheme; and
- to develop a concept design for a permanent school streets scheme in the locality.

We will be reviewing the outcomes of the workshops and concept designs to establish whether any of the schemes can be brought forward for further design work and consultation. If so, we will look to seek appropriate funding to enable their delivery.

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In reviewing our Local Transport Plan, which will start this year, we will need to consider the development of an approach to potentially deliver schemes which re-allocate road space. As part of this, consideration will need to be given towards the potential inclusion of annual school streets schemes programme within the Council's capital programme of local transport improvements.

Therefore, aside from the three schools referred to earlier, we are currently not in a position to consider a pilot School Streets scheme for Seaford Primary or any other schools in the county at this current time.

To support the development of a longer term approach, officers are engaging with the sustainable transport charity, Sustrans, at their national networking events for local authorities delivering school streets schemes. In addition, officers have also engaged with both Brighton & Hove City Council and Kent County Council regarding the approaches they have used to deliver School Streets schemes in their respective geographies.

We are aware of the expected amendment to the Traffic Management Act 2004, which would grant Local Authorities in England greater enforcement powers, including the use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras, and how these could potentially be utilised as part of a School Streets scheme.

However, we have not currently registered an interest or identified potential locations for using ANPR and its use will need to be considered as part of developing our School Streets schemes.

3. Question by Councillor Murphy to the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability

There being approximately 1500 houses that currently have planning permission on greenfield sites in the south and east of Hailsham plus an additional 200 houses that were refused planning in Station Road only two weeks ago. If you walk the fields there for that application you will see reptile barriers have already been erected in those particular fields. The people of Hailsham are constantly saying that the infrastructure of the town is not keeping pace with all the housing developments.

Will the Lead Member carry out a meaningful and timely investigation of the primary school places and nursery provision places in Hailsham?

Answer by the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability

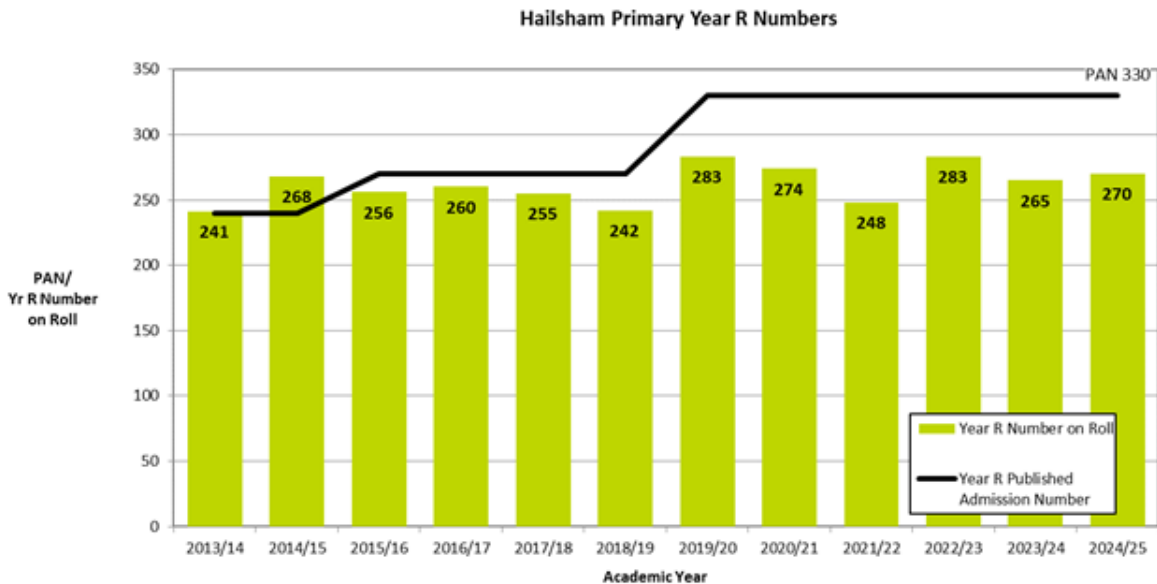
The Council's School Organisation Plan provides our forecasts for all areas of the county including Hailsham.

Over the last 10 years there have been around 2300 units of new housing completed in Hailsham, and this has significantly boosted pupil numbers in the town. However, the current general downward trend in births across the county has partly offset the impact of new housing. Also, high numbers of Hailsham families continue to opt for places in surrounding rural schools. An analysis of the January 2021 school census revealed that

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the numbers of Hailsham children in surrounding schools ranges from 53 to 98 per primary year group cohort.

For the above reasons, reception (Year R) intakes in Hailsham have not been as high as originally predicted least to 2024/25, numbers are unlikely to exceed 300 and, in most years, may stay within 270. The current PAN for Year R across the town is 330.



The latest GP registration data, from October 2021, suggests that 330 Yr R places are likely to be more than sufficient for 2023/24 and 2024/25, but that in 2025/26 numbers will be closer to the PAN of 330.

The predicted general upswing in births, coupled with the likely continuation of significant levels of new housebuilding in Hailsham, is likely to mean that from some point in the second half of this decade or early in the next, the number of primary places required in Hailsham will start to rise to nearer the PAN of 330 and additional places could well be needed.

Parental Preferences

The following table shows the parental preferences for the past 5 years for the Hailsham Primary Schools (figures in brackets are total preferences, outside brackets is first preference only):

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Hailsham Primary Schools	PAN	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Burfield	30	19 (41)	27 (49)	26 (40)	29 (42)	22 (28)
Grovelands	90	100 (157)	80 (134)	103 (160)	82 (144)	82 (127)
HCC	60	N/A	N/A	12 (27)	47 (97)	59 (107)
Hawkes Farm	60	50 (108)	52 (113)	55 (124)	54 (120)	26 (84)
Hellingly	30	41 (118)	37 (107)	37 (131)	23 (96)	27 (92)
Phoenix	30	13 (16)	9 (15)	15 (20)	18 (28)	9 (16)
White House	30	22 (33)	19 (33)	18 (34)	20 (35)	13 (25)
Total first prefs	330	245	224	266	273	238

Officers at the local authority work closely with officers in the districts as they develop their local plans and we consider the impact of local plans on our forecasts. The Council's forecasts are reviewed every year, and the next run of the forecasts will be undertaken in the summer – this will take account of the latest iteration of Wealden's Local Plan and the forecasts updated accordingly. The School Organisation Plan is published annually (in the autumn) and includes the latest forecasts and how we will ensure sufficient pupil places.

In producing forecasts of future demand for Hailsham Schools Primary and Secondary Place Planning Areas, we take into account the following factors:

- School admissions allocations and preference data for Reception and Year 7 intakes for the coming academic coming year.
- Existing numbers in schools and historic data on cohort survival patterns to inform how these numbers are likely to change as year group cohorts move up through the schools (e.g. as a result of net migration).
- New housing completions and commitment data at town/parish level provided annually by Wealden District Council, are used to provide estimates of pupil yield from new housing. We also monitor planning applications on all specific sites in the area of 15 units or more.
- Recent parental preference and pupil movement patterns gleaned from school admissions data and the school census. (Many Hailsham children traditionally take up school places outside the town).
- Live Birth and GP Registration data, as well as demographic projections of future births. These inform the estimates of the number of children coming into Reception in future years. The birth projections are 'dwelling led' and take account of the likely impact of new housing on future births.
- Existing capacity in each school and known planned changes in capacity. Capacity is monitored annually and updated to reflect expansions, new schools, the addition or removal of temporary classrooms and changes to Published Admission Numbers.

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Early Years Places

The forecasts are updated annually and are normally summarised in ESCC's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Because of uncertainties around the impact of Covid on the Early Years Sector, in the past two years, no area level forward forecasts have been published.

The table below shows the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) capacity in Hailsham and the demand – this shows that currently there are 519 FTEs places and demand for 456, so a surplus of 62 places.

FTE Capacity v FTE Demand in All Settings (Provider Address)

Type of Capacity/Demand	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
FTE Capacity in All Settings	446	431	475	519
FTE Demand for All Children				456
Surplus/(Shortfall)				62

Currently there are spare Early Years places in the Hailsham EY Area (as with primary schools this includes Hellingly). However, a shortfall is forecast to arise in the middle/second half of the decade, where the continued pressures from new housebuilding are likely to coincide with a general demographic trend of rising births.

In producing forecasts of future demand for Hailsham Early Years Place Planning Areas, we take into account the following factors:

- Data on demographic projections of future births, as well as recent historic single year of age population data. These inform the estimates of the number of under 5s in the area and how numbers are likely to change/grow, for example as a result of migration, as cohorts move up through the system towards school age. The birth projections are 'dwelling led' and take account of the likely impact of new housing on future births.
- Using early years census data, recent historic patterns of take up of hours for different Early Years age groups, including take-up of the 30 hour offer. Many children do not require 30 hours per week.
- Using early years census data, recent historic flow patterns of where children live and where they access early years provision.
- New housing completions and commitment data at town/parish level provided annually by Wealden District Council are used to provide estimates of child yield from new housing. We also monitor planning applications on all specific sites in the area of 15 units or more.
- Existing capacity and known planned changes in capacity in Early Years settings in the area. This comes from the Early Years Provider Questionnaire. It is expressed as full-time equivalent (FTE) capacity and takes account of the number of registered places and the number of hours per week that each setting is open.