

Title: Council Monitoring Report – end of year 2023/24
Report to: Cabinet
Date: 25 June 2024
Report by: Chief Executive
Purpose: To report Council monitoring for the full year 2023/24

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

1) note the latest monitoring position for the Council.

1. Introduction

1.1 This 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 March 2024.

1.2 Broad progress against the Council's four strategic priority outcomes is summarised in paragraph 4 and an overview of finance and performance data is provided in the Corporate Summary at Appendix 1. Strategic risks are reported at Appendix 8.

2. Overview of Council Plan 2023/24 outturns and strategic risks

2.1 We set challenging targets each year that reflect our aim to deliver the best services we can for our local residents and businesses with the limited resources we have available. While there have been a number of successes for our services over the past year, there are also areas that have experienced challenges. The Departmental Appendices (3-7) provide details of both our achievements and how we are working to improve where targets have not been met.

2.2 Overall 37 (64%) of the 58 Council Plan targets were achieved and 14 (24%) were not achieved. 7 (12%) do not have results available yet and are carried over for reporting in quarter 1 2024/25. The carry overs are measures where action has been completed, but the year-end outturn data is not yet available to report against the target.

2.3 Of the 58 targets, the outturns for 14 (24%) are not comparable with the outturns from 2022/23. Of the remaining 44 measures which can be compared, 23 (40%) improved or were at the maximum (i.e., the most that can be achieved); 14 (24%) had a lower outturn; and 7 (12%) do not have results available yet and are carried over for reporting in quarter 1 2024/25. Although 14 measures are showing a lower outturn compared with 2022/23, 10 of these met their target for 2023/24.

2.4 The Strategic Risk Register, Appendix 8, was reviewed and updated to reflect the Council's risk profile. Risk 12 (Cyber Attack) has updated risk definition and risk control. Risk 1 (Roads), Risk 4 (Health), Risk 6 (Local Economic Growth), Risk 9 (Workforce) and Risk 15 (Climate) have updated risk controls.

3 Budget Outturn

3.1 The details of revenue over and underspends in each department are set out in the relevant appendices, and show a total overspend of £30.1m. This is an increase of £1.0m from quarter 3. The main headlines are:

- Children's Services (CSD) is overspent by £30.4m (£28.5m at quarter 3).

The main area of overspend is in Early Help and Social Care (EH&SC) of £29.8m, an increase from quarter 3 of £1.9m. The main pressures are within Looked After Children, with lost income due to delays in Lansdowne opening and cost pressures for Agency Residential placements, continuing the trend demonstrated this year of a small number of children placing high pressure on the budget. The service has worked with IMPOWER to support longer term

placement sufficiency and identify opportunities for delivering improved care placement options for children and young people through the 'Valuing Care' approach. The aim of this work is also to identify cost reductions and efficiencies within the service.

There is also an increased overspend of £1.2m within the Home to Schools Transport service. There has been an increase in pupil numbers qualifying for transport and contract costs have also increased for the new academic year cohort, where they couldn't be added to existing routes. The CSD Team will be working closely with the Communities, Economy and Transport transport service to explore all possible mitigations to reduce costs.

The CSD overspend will be funded Corporately for 2023/24 as follows:

Mitigation of CSD Overspend	£m
Forecast overspend	(30.1)
Mitigated by:	
Treasury Management underspend	8.2
Underspend on Capital Programme	1.8
Part of underspend on Pensions	0.3
General Contingency	4.9
Use of provision for budgetary risks	3.5
Business Rates Levy surplus	0.9
Agreed use of COMF	1.3
Covid-19 General Funding (balance held Corporately)	5.7
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	2.0
Use of Financial Management Reserve	1.5
Subtotal Mitigation	30.1

- The outturn for Adult Social Care is an overspend of £2.0m (decrease of £0.001m since quarter 3). It comprises an overspend of £2.9m in the Independent Sector due to a number of factors including increasing complexity of need, plus pressures arising from demand and demographic growth returning to pre-pandemic levels of modelling. This is offset by an underspend of £0.9m in Directly Provided Services, mainly being due to staffing vacancies which reflects difficulties in recruitment.
- Communities, Economy and Transport has underspent by £1.7m (£1.3m at quarter 3). The largest underspend is £2.0m in Transport and Operations where current market prices mean that electricity and recycling income is exceeding expectations in the Waste Service. The underspend of £0.4m in Communities is mostly due to staff vacancies in Trading Standards and Road Safety with additional income from Emergency Planning training. Customer and Libraries have underspent by £0.3m due to staff costs and additional income in libraries, and slippage in maintenance at the Keep.

These are netted against an overspend of £0.6m in Highways due to the estimated increased cost of electricity for streetlighting; an overspend of £0.3m in Transport Development Control within Planning and Environment due to an increase in speculative planning applications for residential developments, which often have challenging transport issues that need addressing; and a £0.1m overspend in Economy which is mostly due the cost of consultants engaged to help transition SELEP funded projects back into Council control.

- Business Services has an underspend of £0.4m (£0.07m at quarter 2), mainly due to: higher staff recharges to Orbis, higher than expected Ukraine funding plus lower consultancy and Audit fees within Finance & Business Administration: higher recharges for project managers and higher than anticipated licence recharges within IT & Digital.
- Governance Services has a final underspend of £0.163m (£0.05m overspend at quarter 3). The forecast overspend on Coroners (due to costs of mortuary provision, court hire, body removal, toxicology and staffing, as well as accumulative demands on the service) decreased

due to a reduction on demand compared to that anticipated. The overspend in Corporate Support is due to the cost of covering maternity leave in Legal Services, partially offset with staff vacancies elsewhere.

3.2 Within Treasury Management (TM), Centrally Held Budgets (CHB) and corporate funding there is an underspend of £18.6m including the general contingency (£18.5m at quarter 3):

- In CHB there is an underspend of £0.6m for Pensions because of the actuarial revaluation. This is offset by an accounting adjustment of £0.6m to reflect the potential risk that increasing outstanding debt levels will not be settled. The General Contingency of £4.9m will be required in full to offset service overspend.
- There is an £8.2m underspend on TM, based on a continued improvement in the current forecasts for our market investment returns and increased cash balances. The anticipated average investment return for the year has increased to 5.39% from the 4.45% assumed when the budget was set, based on the latest forecasts from our external treasury management advisors. In addition, slippage on the Capital Programme and an increase in our cash balances has reduced the need to borrow externally in 2023/24.
- The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy published the revised Treasury and Prudential codes in 2021. These require quarterly reporting of performance against forward looking prudential indicators. The performance of the Council's treasury management activity against benchmarks and the key indicators in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, as approved by Full Council on 7 February 2023, are provided at Appendix 2.
- The aforementioned slippage on the Capital Programme has resulted in an underspend of £1.8m, where two transfers for Capital Expenditure from Revenue Account have not been utilised this financial year.
- There is a planned £3.5m use of the in-year provision made for budgetary risks to cover part of the remaining overspend on service budgets.
- The £0.9m underspend on Business Rates is mainly due to the Levy Surplus Distribution for 2023/24, announced alongside the Local Government Finance Settlement on 5 February 2024, plus movements in pool monitoring.

3.3 The Council is still experiencing residual COVID-19 related costs and income losses which are being mitigated from general and specific COVID-19 grant funding. The balance of COVID-19 General Funding will be used to meet CSD cost pressures. The following table shows the use of this funding in 2023/24:

COVID-19 Grants 2023/24 (£m)	Carried forward	Estimated use in-year (including payback*)	Balance to offset CSD overspend	Specific set-aside for LAC in future years	Estimated balance remaining
COVID-19 General Funding	9.1	(1.6)	(5.7)	(1.8)	-
COVID-19 Specific Funding	4.3	(3.9)	-	-	0.4
Total funding	13.4	(5.5)	(5.7)	(1.8)	0.4

*To date the Council has repaid £2.1m of unused grant.

3.4 Capital Programme expenditure for the year is £77.5m against a budget of £85.9m, a net variation of £8.4m. The main headlines are:

- Total slippage of £9.6m across a number of projects as the programme continues to experience extended lead-in times, and where inflation and material cost increases have resulted in the pause and reassessment of a number of projects to ensure delivery within budgets, as well as other project specific factors. The largest areas of slippage include the Highways Structural Maintenance programme (£2.0m), Integrated Transport Schemes (£1.1m), Youth Investment Fund project (£0.9m), Bridge Assessment and Strengthening (£0.7m), Excerpt Bridge

Replacement (£0.6m), IT& Digital Programme (£0.6m) and the Visibly Better Roads programme (£0.5m).

- A net overspend of £0.2m, mainly relating to the Bexhill and Hastings Link Road (£0.6m) where project costs remain for post excavation archaeology, landscaping, and compensation, which is offset to a large extent by various smaller underspends
- A number of minor spends in advance totalling £1.1m across a number of projects.

4 Progress against Council Priorities

Driving sustainable economic growth

4.1 The Council has spent £311m with 847 local suppliers over the past 12 months. This is 64% of our total spend exceeding our target of 60%. We have continued, throughout 2023/24, to work with suppliers to maximise the social value delivered by our contracts, with benefits that were equal to 31% of the contract values being achieved, against a target of 10% (Appendix 4).

4.2 Work on our highways has taken place in 2023/24, using the additional funding approved by the Council in recognition of the deterioration of the network following the last prolonged, wet and cold winter. 564 patches across 337 sites were completed. 102 road signs have been replaced, with a further 427 signs scheduled to be replaced in 2024/25. Around 180 drainage schemes have been delivered, including replacing gully covers and clearing significant blockages. 117 road improvement schemes were completed in 2023/24 and 29,357 potholes were repaired (Appendix 6).

4.3 A number of projects have been implemented in 2023/24 using the £41.4m of funding assigned to the Council as part of the Government's Bus Service Improvement Plan. £13m of bus service improvements have begun, including the Flexibus service which covers over 90% of East Sussex. £5m is allocated for reduced fares which are scheduled to run until April 2025. Improvements to bus stop infrastructure have been made, including the installation of 2,560 QR code plates, new hard standing areas and the installation of Real Time Information signs at a number of stops (Appendix 6).

4.4 Several programmes have helped people into work or improved their skills in 2023/24. These projects included the Multiply programme, which supported 950 people to improve their numeracy skills; the Moving on Up and Support into Work schemes which helped 265 homeless and refugee residents into work; and 65 young people starting work experience placements in libraries (Appendix 6).

4.5 The average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools in East Sussex in academic year 2022/23 was 43.6. This is below our target of 46.5 and below the national average of 46.4. The average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils in East Sussex was 30.3. This is below our target of 33.3 and below the national average of 35.1. The average Attainment 8 score for Looked After Children was 18.9. This is just below our target of 19 and the national average of 19.4 (Appendix 5).

4.6 The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 16 (year 12) is 4.4% against a target of below 4%. For academic age 17 (year 13), 6% of young people are NEET against a target of below 6%. We have been successful in a bid for Education and Skills Funding Agency funding to increase the vocational offer for young people in 2024/25 (Appendix 5).

4.7 The development of the Sussex Story has been delayed due to performance management issues needing to be addressed on the overall contract awarded to the consultants. As a result, the Council, as the lead contractor on behalf of partners, severed the contract and withheld 25% of the contract fee. A new supplier will be identified to complete the work in 2024/25, with the cost for the outstanding work to be met by the remaining 25% budget (Appendix 6).

Keeping vulnerable people safe

4.8 The inspection of the Council Local Authority Children's Services by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) Inspections took place from 11 – 15 December 2023. This was a short inspection. The inspection report was published 6 February 2024, and we were awarded an overall effectiveness grading of Good with the experiences and progress of children in care graded as Outstanding (Appendix 5).

4.9 The rate of Looked After Children has decreased from a rate of 63 (671 children) at quarter 3, to 61.5 (655 children) at the end of 2023/24, against a target of 63.4 (676 children). The decrease has resulted from a focus on reunification work with children and their birth families, and discharges from care into Special Guardianship, Adoption and Child Arrangement Orders. The rate of children with a Child Protection plan has decreased from a rate of 70.6 (753 children) at quarter 3 to 64.6 (688 children) at the end of 2023/24, however, this is above the target of 62 (661 children) (Appendix 5).

4.10 Children's Services formally launched Connected Families Intervention Practitioners in January 2024. The team are adult facing specialist practitioners, delivering support and interventions with parents/carers of children on Children in Need or Child Protection plans, who are experiencing domestic abuse, problematic mental health and/or problematic drug and alcohol use. Since their launch the practitioners have supported 177 parents and there has been a reduction in the number of Child Protection plans (Appendix 5).

4.11 The latest figures (from 2022) for deaths from drug or alcohol misuse show 77 people died in the county. Within that total there was a significant decrease in the number of people who died as a result of drug misuse compared to previous years. Every death is a tragedy, and we continue to work hard to reduce the number of deaths every year, including by working with partners to ensure people receive support as early as possible (Appendix 3).

4.12 The Government's Sustainable Warmth Scheme, which was delivered through the Council's Warm Home Check Service came to an end in October 2023. Between 2022/23 and 2023/24 over £2m of major home energy efficiency improvements were installed for fuel poor households. Over 600 warm home checks were completed during 2023/24 and the 'keep warm and well' helpline provided brief advice to over 8,000 residents (Appendix 3).

4.13 The White Ribbon charity aims to prevent violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes. The Council was reaccredited as a White Ribbon organisation in quarter 4. The Safer Communities team are scheduled to submit a three-year action plan to White Ribbon UK in quarter 2 2024/25. During quarter 4, the Safer Communities Team supported Clarion to open four self-contained units at Phoenix House for people fleeing domestic violence in East Sussex. These units have expanded the options for safe accommodation in East Sussex, especially for those where communal refuges may not be always appropriate (Appendix 3).

Helping people help themselves

4.14 The Tribe project, an app and website that makes it easier to volunteer across the county, was launched in quarter 2. By quarter 4 there were 434 listings on the platform from 141 organisations. 323 of these listings were volunteering opportunities and 111 activities for people to take part in. In February 2024, the Council and Tribe created a promotional campaign that reached over 50,000 residents, encouraging volunteering across East Sussex (Appendix 3).

4.15 The number of people receiving Direct Payments fell from 1,520 at the end of 2022/23 to 1,457 at the end of 2023/24. The number has also decreased as a proportion of all clients, due to an increase in the number of people receiving community based long term support meaning this remains below target. Despite this, the Council's performance is still good compared to national benchmarks. Based on current national data, performance would fall within the upper-middle quartile (Appendix 3).

4.16 333 carers were supported through short-term crisis intervention in 2023/24, against a target of 390. The service relies on receiving referrals direct from carers or via other organisations. There

is evidence that carers do not identify themselves as having a caring role, and being in need of support. Adult Social Care will look in more detail at reasons for the drop in referrals and explore solutions with the provider to increase referrals to the service (Appendix 3).

4.17 11 family hubs were opened across the county in 2023/24. Family hubs provide support and advice from midwives, health visitors, early communications support workers, early years practitioners and more. Activity sessions give children, parents and carers the chance to socialise and support their children's needs and development (Appendix 5).

Making best use of resources now and for the future

4.18 Throughout 2023/24 our corporate lobbying work has focussed on using our partnerships and networks at the local, regional, and national level to influence policy development in a range of areas, including investment in highways and children's services, as well as local authority funding more generally. During quarter 4, the Council outlined to East Sussex MPs the severe financial pressures facing the authority and asked for support in lobbying ministers to increase the funding in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) 2024/25. This successfully resulted in a number of local MPs signing a letter organised by the County Councils' Network that called for more funding in the LGFS and an additional £600m of national funding for social care subsequently being made available in that settlement. Also, during quarter 4, ahead of a debate in the House of Commons, the Director of Children's Services provided a written briefing to MPs on pressures in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities system, which included proposed solutions to address these pressures. This briefing was mentioned during the debate and a copy provided to the Minister for consideration (Appendix 7).

4.19 25 energy efficiency projects have been completed in 2023/24 meeting the target for the year, including 5 LED lighting projects and 10 solar PV energy generation schemes. Triple glazing and loft, door and wall insulation has been installed at 5 schools in the county. 3 heat decarbonisation projects have been completed to transition from oil boilers to air source heat pumps at schools. 2 asset rationalisation projects have also been completed, ensuring more modern facilities with reduced carbon emissions. Projected energy consumption at the end of quarter 3 (reported a quarter in arrears) was down 33% on the 2019/20 baseline, against a cumulative target of 43% for the year. If energy use in quarter 4 was the same as quarter 4 2022/23, our Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions would reduce by 2% in 2023/24 compared with 2022/23 (Appendix 4).

4.20 The Council has continued to work with a range of partners to develop and deliver carbon reduction and climate change adaptation work in 2023/24. This included securing funding for a feasibility study for a potential solar farm on a former landfill site. Funding was secured to develop a plan to provide people with the skills to retrofit domestic properties and reduce their carbon emissions. Small and Medium Enterprises were assisted to measure their carbon footprint and awarding grants to businesses to improve their energy efficiency and install renewable energy systems (Appendix 6).

4.21 The Council has received 90% of the £4.4m allocated to East Sussex from the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund. The remaining 10% will be paid once the final contract has been approved. The funding will support the delivery of on street electric vehicle chargepoints in the county. It is expected that procurement of the contract will begin in quarter 2 2024/25, and that Initial work to deliver chargepoints will follow in quarter 4 2024/25 (Appendix 6).

4.22 The 2023/24 sickness absence figure (excluding schools) is 9.13 days per Full Time Equivalent role (FTE). Although this is a decrease of 9.3% since 2022/23, the 2023/24 target of 9.10 days per FTE has not been met. Mental health absences have increased by 772 days compared to 2022/23, and extra support is being offered to staff to help deal with this issue (Appendix 4).

Becky Shaw, Chief Executive

How to read this report

This report integrates monitoring for finance, performance and risk. Contents are as follows:

- Cover report (includes how to read this report)
- Appendix 1 Corporate Summary
- Appendix 2 Treasury Management Prudential Indicators
- Appendix 3 Adult Social Care and Health – (ASCH)
- Appendix 4 Business Services (Department) – (BSD)
- Appendix 5 Children’s Services (Department) – (CSD)
- Appendix 6 Communities, Economy and Transport – (CET)
- Appendix 7 Governance Services – (GS)
- Appendix 8 Strategic Risk Register

Cover report, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2

The cover report, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 provide a concise corporate summary of progress against all our Council Plan Targets (full year outturns at quarter 4), Revenue Budget, Savings Targets, Capital Programme and Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.

The cover report highlights a selection of key topics from the departmental appendices, for the four Council priorities:

- driving sustainable economic growth;
- keeping vulnerable people safe;
- helping people help themselves; and
- making best use of resources now and for the future.

More information on each of these topics is provided in the relevant departmental appendix referenced in brackets, e.g. (Appendix 3). More detailed performance and finance data is also available in the departmental appendices.

Departmental Appendices 3-7

The departmental appendices provide a single commentary covering issues and progress against key topics for the department (including all those mentioned in the cover report). This is followed by data tables showing progress against Council Plan Targets, Savings Targets, Revenue Budget, and Capital Programme for the department.

For each topic, the commentary references supporting data in the tables at the end of the appendix, e.g. **(ref i)**. The tables include this reference in the ‘note ref’ column on the right hand side. Where the commentary refers to the Revenue Budget or Capital Programme, it may refer to all or part of the amount that is referenced in the table, or it may refer to several amounts added together. Performance exceptions follow these rules:

Quarter 1	All targets not expected to be achieved at year end i.e. not RAG rated Green, and any proposed amendments or deletions. Changes to targets early in Q1 should be made under delegated authority for the Council Plan refresh in June.
Quarter 2	Targets that have changed RAG rating since Q1 including changes to Green (except where target was amended at Q1), plus proposed amendments or deletions.
Quarter 3	Targets that have changed RAG rating since Q2 including changes to Green (except where target was amended at Q2), plus proposed amendments or deletions.
Quarter 4	Targets that have changed RAG rating since Q3 to Red or Green (except where target was amended at Q3). Outturns that are not available are reported as Carry Overs. All target outturns for the full year are reported in the year end summary at Appendix 1.

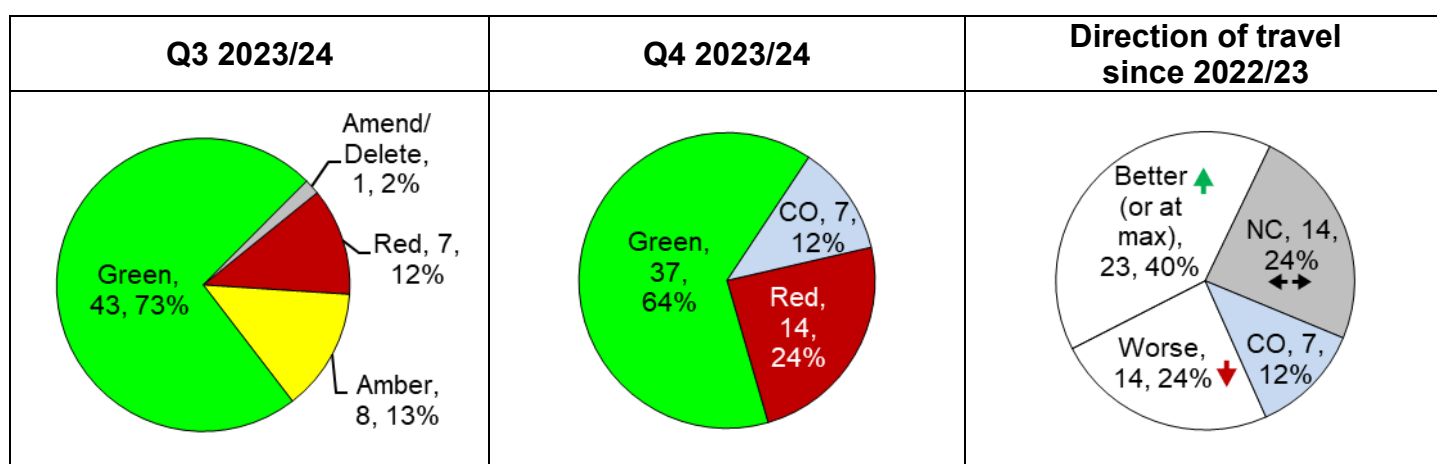
Strategic Risk Register Appendix 8

Appendix 8 contains commentary explaining mitigating actions for all Strategic Risks.

Council Monitoring Corporate Summary – end of year 2023/24

Council Plan performance targets

Priority	Total	Red	Green	Carry Over
Driving sustainable economic growth	25	9	16	0
Keeping vulnerable people safe	12	2	6	4
Helping people help themselves	14	2	10	2
Making best use of resources now and for the future	7	1	5	1
Total	58	14	37	7



Direction of Travel key:

No Change: ↔, Not Comparable: NC, Carry Over: CO, Worse: ↓, Improved (or at maximum): ↑

Council Plan year end 2023/24 outturn summary all measures

58 Council Plan target outturns for the full year are reported below. Targets achieved are highlighted in green; targets not achieved are highlighted in red; and carry overs (CO) for reporting at Q1 2024/25 are highlighted in blue.

Detailed information for new exceptions at Q4 is contained in the departmental appendices and these exceptions are highlighted **in bold in the table below**. Details of previous exceptions can be found in the referenced appendices for Q1-Q3 monitoring.

Where available, performance improvement relative to 2022/23 is given under Direction of Travel. Measures marked NC (not comparable) do not have 2023/24 outturns, which are comparable with 2022/23 outturns.

Driving sustainable economic growth – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
BS	The percentage of Council procurement spend with local suppliers	66%	60%	64%	↓
BS	Economic, social, and environmental value committed through contracts, as a percentage of our spend with suppliers	57%	≥10.0%	31%	↓
BS	The Council's Apprenticeship Levy strategy supports the Council's workforce development and training plans	270 staff within the Council and schools currently undertaking an apprenticeship 115 staff enrolled on a new apprenticeship in 2022/23 Apprenticeships range from entry level to master's degree across 47 different types of apprenticeship. Apprenticeships continue to address skills shortages and offer existing staff a variety of progression routes	Where appropriate Standards exist, to ensure apprenticeship training is available and taken up (subject to the needs of the business), which addresses skills shortages in the Council	252 staff within the Council and schools currently undertaking an apprenticeship 117 staff enrolled on a new apprenticeship in 2023/24 Apprenticeships range from entry level to master's degree Over £275,000 annual levy spend passed onto small and medium employers throughout the county in 2023/24	↑
CET	Percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance	5%	4%	4%	↑
CET	Percentage of Non-Principal roads requiring maintenance	6%	4%	5%	↑
CET	Percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance	13%	14%	17%	↓
CET	The number of businesses and professionals receiving advice and support through training and bespoke advice provided by Trading Standards	379 (107 individual delegates trained; 272 businesses received bespoke advice)	350	653 (324 individual delegates trained; 329 businesses received bespoke advice)	↑

APPENDIX 1

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CET	Deliver a range of Family Learning programmes across East Sussex to provide high quality learning opportunities for parents/carers and their children to develop English, maths and language skills and to support a culture of learning in the family (subject to external funding)	1,166 enrolments	500 enrolments across Family English, maths, and Language (FEML) and Wider Family Learning (WFL) programmes	2,051 enrolments	↑
CET	In partnership with funding organisations provide online learning (including skills for life and ICT courses) in libraries (subject to contract)	83 achievements	70 achievements	88 achievements	↑
CET	East Sussex Careers Hub	Schools supported to achieve an average of 5.36 national benchmarks; 46 Industry Champions recruited to support schools and colleges	East Sussex Careers Hub to support schools to achieve an average of 5 national benchmarks. 210 Industry Champions support schools and colleges in the county	Schools supported to achieve an average of 5.7 benchmarks; 234 Industry Champions in place	↑
CET	Deliver East Sussex Skills priorities for 2021-2026	6 action plans developed to address the 6 Skills East Sussex priorities	a) Adult Learning Network established b) Deliver six interventions that meet the Skills East Sussex priorities c) Deliver six embedded numeracy interventions	a) Adult Learning Network established b) 6 interventions delivered that meet the Skills East Sussex priorities c) 17 embedded numeracy interventions delivered	NC
CET	Deliver new economic strategy	N/A	Draft economic strategy developed	Draft economic strategy developed	NC
CET	Job creation from East Sussex Invest	N/A	27 jobs created	No jobs created from East Sussex Invest; Fund remains closed to new applications	NC

APPENDIX 1

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CET	Create a pan-Sussex visitor economy group to re-start the leisure, hospitality, culture, retail, and tourism economy and enhance existing marketing vehicles	Sussex Tourism Leadership Group established	Develop a shared Sussex Story and assets to promote the region Develop a shared Sussex Meetings, Inceptive, Conferences and Events (MICE) initiative	Completion of shared Sussex Story and assets delayed until 2024/25; Shared Sussex Meetings, Inceptive, Conferences and Events (MICE) initiatives developed	NC
CET	Create a prioritised list of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k	List of cultural projects, ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k, launched	Maintain a list of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k	Pipeline list published and maintained on ESCC website of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k	↑
CS	The percentage of eligible 2 year olds who take up a place with an eligible early years provider	ESCC: 82% National Average: 72% (March 23)	Equal to or above the national average	ESCC: 84% (1,045 / 1,241) National Average: 73.9%	↑
CS	The percentage of pupils achieving a "good level of development" at the Early Years Foundation Stage	Ac Year 21/22: ESCC: 69.0% National Average: 65.2%	Ac Year 22/23: Equal to or above the national average	ESCC: 69.9% National Average: 67.2%	↑
CS	Average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools	N/A	Ac Year 22/23: 46.5	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 43.6	NC
CS	The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving at least the expected standard in each of reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	Ac Year 21/22: ESCC: 37.6% National Average: 42.7%	Ac Year 22/23: 37.7	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 39.2%	↑
CS	The average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils	Ac Year 21/22: ESCC: 33.3 National Average: 37.7	Ac Year 22/23: 33.3	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 30.3	↓
CS	The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 16	N/A	Below 4%	4.4%	NC
CS	The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 17	N/A	Below 6%	6%	NC

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CS	Average Attainment 8 score for Looked After Children (LAC)	N/A	Ac Year 22/23: 19	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 18.9	NC
CS	The percentage of LAC participating in education, training, or employment at academic age 16 (Year 12)	81% RPA (86% EET)	80%	EET: 84% (75 / 89)	↓
CS	The percentage of LAC participating in education, training, or employment at academic age 17 (Year 13)	67% RPA (80% EET)	70%	EET: 73% (77 / 105)	↓

Keeping vulnerable people safe – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
ASC	Percentage of Health and Social Care Connect referrals triaged and progressed to required services within 24 hours	87.34% (67,404/77,177)	95%	95.69% (74,375 / 77,724)	↑
ASC	Health and Social Care Connect – % of contacts that are appropriate and effective (i.e., lead to the provision of necessary additional services)	99.27% (78,641/79,219)	95%	99.17% (81,237 / 81,916)	↓
ASC	The % of people affected by domestic violence and abuse who have improved safety/support measures in place upon leaving the service	91.4% (360/394)	90%	CO	CO
ASC	When they leave the service the % of those affected by rape, sexual violence and abuse who have improved coping strategies	92.7% (544/ 587)	88%	CO	CO
ASC	The percentage of people who access additional support from our specialist commissioned domestic abuse service who are older	N/A	3%	CO	CO
ASC	Number of drug and alcohol related deaths in the county	N/A	74	Calendar year 2022: 77	NC
ASC	The number of people accessing treatment for opiate misuse	N/A	1,247	CO	CO
CET	The number of positive interventions for vulnerable people who have been or may be the target of rogue trading or financial abuse	530 positive interventions	200	2,669 positive interventions	↑
CS	Rate of children with a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000 children)	64.8 (691 children)	62 (661 children)	64.6 (688 children)	↑
CS	Rate (of 0-17 population) of referrals to children's social care services (per 10,000 children)	Rate: 377 (4,018)	≤ 556	Rate: 413 (4,400)	↓
CS	Rate (of 0-17 population) of assessments started by children's social care services (per 10,000 children)	Rate: 353 (3,764) assessments initiated	≤ 558	Rate: 399 (4,249)	↓

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CS	Rate of Looked After Children (per 10,000 children) <i>*Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children</i>	62.3 per 10,000 children (664 children) 55.5 (591 children excl. UASC*)	63.4 (676 children)	61.5 per 10,000 children (655 children) 54.6 (582 children excl. UASC*)	↑

Helping people help themselves – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
ASC	National outcome measure: Proportion of working age adults and older people receiving self-directed support	100% (4,792 clients)	100%	100% (5,181 clients)	↑
ASC	National outcome measure: Proportion of working age adults and older people receiving direct payments	31.9% (1,520 people)	>31.5%	28.1% (1,457 people)	↓
ASC	Number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention	494	390	333	↓
ASC	Number of people receiving support through housing related floating support	7,946	7,000	8,178	↑
ASC	Percentage of respondents who strongly agree or agree that the professionals who are involved in organising and providing their care communicate well with each other and share information to make sure their support is the best it can be (Listening To You)	58.5% Clients: 64% (60/94) Carers: 53% (47/89)	>56%	61.6% Clients: 61.9% (130 / 210) Carers: 60.9% (67 / 110)	↑
ASC	The proportion of people who received short-term services during the year, where no further request was made for ongoing support	94.7% (1,292/1,364)	>90.5%	95.9% (1,678 / 1,749)	↔
ASC	National outcome measure: Achieve independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care	90.5% (801/885)	>90%	CO	CO
ASC	Through the Drug and Alcohol Funding streams, commission services that sustain the development of the recovery community in East Sussex	12 services commissioned	Commission services	7 services commissioned	↓
ASC	Recommission the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service (IHWS)	N/A	Recommission Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service	Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service recommissioned	NC
ASC	Improved targeting of NHS Health Checks	Cumulative uptake: 29.5% (5 year period 2018/19 – 2022/23 Q4)	10% of the eligible population in the 20% most deprived areas (IMD1) have received a health check	CO	CO

APPENDIX 1

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CET	Road Safety: Deliver targeted cycle training activities to vulnerable road users	555 Bikeability Courses delivered to 4,354 individuals; 252 Wheels for All Courses delivered to 3,649 individuals	Deliver Bikeability Training to 4,000 individuals and 100 Wheels for All sessions	551 Bikeability Courses delivered to 4,428 individuals; 343 Wheels for All sessions delivered to 3,862 individuals	↑
CET	Road Safety: Implement infrastructure schemes on identified high risk sites/routes to improve road safety	17 Safety Schemes implemented	Implement 24 safety schemes	24 Safety Schemes implemented	↑
CS	Proportion of all new EHC Plans issued within 20 weeks (a) Including Exception Cases (b) Excluding Exception Cases	N/A	(a) 65% (b) 70%	(a) 76.3% (521 / 683) (b) 76.5% (521 / 681)	NC
CS	The proportion of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of getting targeted support from the 0 – 19 Early Help Service	Adult: 91% Young Person: 100% Average: 95.5%	80%	Adult: 86% (82 / 95) Young Person: 91% (29 / 32) Average: 87%	↓

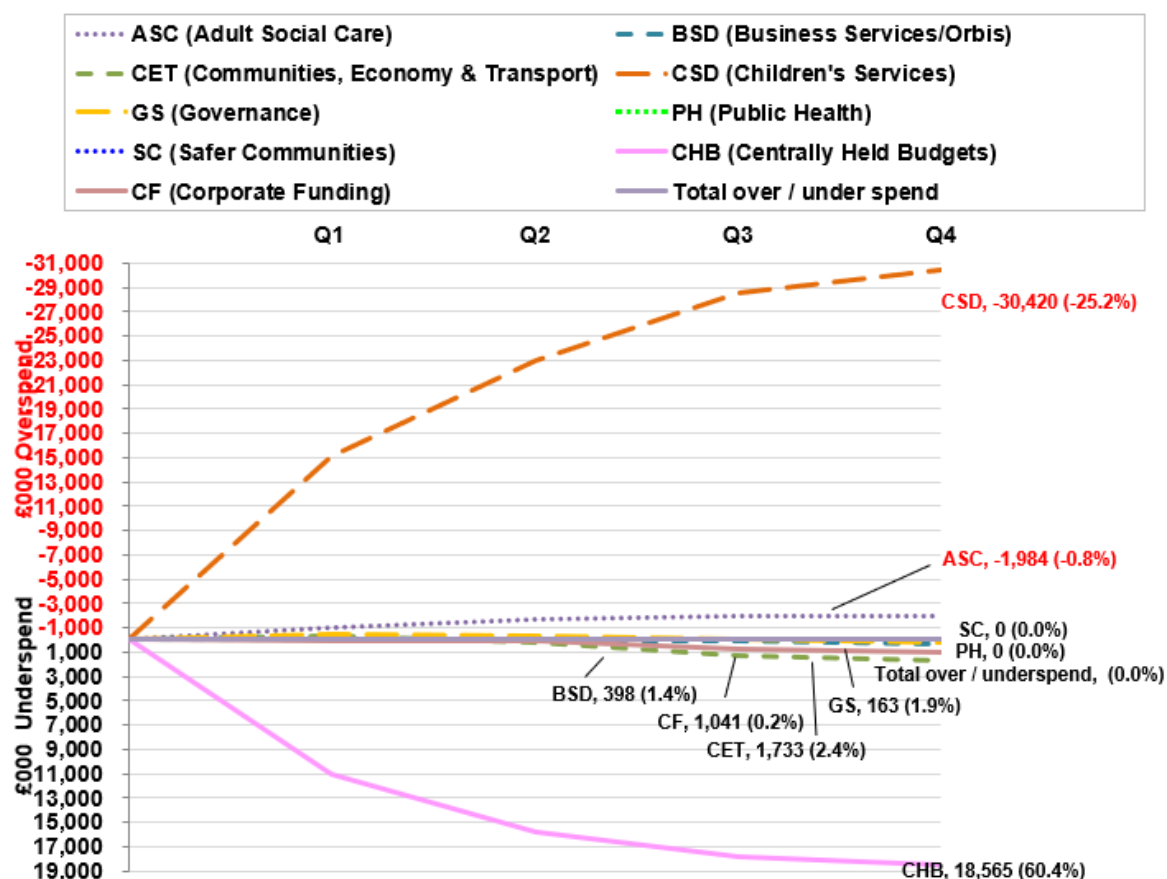
Making best use of resources now and for the future

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
BSD	Reduce the amount of CO2 arising from County Council operations	32% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions	43% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions (emissions not to exceed 7,139 tonnes CO2e)	CO	CO
BSD	Progress on implementation of Carbon reduction schemes	11 low energy lighting schemes completed; 8 solar PV schemes completed; 2 decarbonisation of heat schemes implemented	23 energy saving schemes implemented	25 energy saving schemes implemented	↑
BSD	Number of working days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) employee due to sickness absence in non-school services	10.07	9.10	9.13	↑

APPENDIX 1

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
BSD	Review use of corporate buildings	Workstyles adaptations completed in 3 office hubs. Impact reviewed	Develop revised office strategy based on 2022/23 review	Office strategy revised and footprint reduced in Eastbourne and Hastings. Paper on options for County Hall produced. Plans for 2024/25 developed, including consideration of options for County Hall, finalisation of Eastbourne office moves, and further work to reduce the Hastings office footprint	NC
BSD	Deliver the Property Asset Investment Strategy	6 business cases completed	Outline Business cases brought forward against at least 2 priority projects	4 Outline Business cases brought forward against priority projects	↓
GS	Delivery of Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan actions planned for the year	N/A	Deliver the key actions within the action plan	Key actions delivered from action plan	NC
GS	Achievement of key milestones for the Workplace Adjustments Review	N/A	Completion of appropriate milestones that support the objectives of the Workplace Adjustments Review	Key milestones from the Workplace Adjustments Review achieved	NC

Revenue budget outturn (net £000)



Revenue budget summary (£000) 2023/24

Services:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Adult Social Care	379,603	(143,290)	236,313	423,204	(184,907)	238,297	(43,601)	41,617	(1,984)
Safer Communities	2,076	(909)	1,167	2,792	(1,625)	1,167	(716)	716	-
Public Health	36,778	(36,778)	-	35,672	(35,672)	-	1,106	(1,106)	-
Business Services / Orbis	56,038	(26,728)	29,310	67,250	(38,338)	28,912	(11,212)	11,610	398
Children's Services	402,521	(282,003)	120,518	441,651	(290,713)	150,938	(39,130)	8,710	(30,420)
Communities, Economy & Transport	159,757	(88,116)	71,641	156,743	(86,835)	69,908	3,014	(1,281)	1,733
Governance Services	9,202	(744)	8,458	9,256	(961)	8,295	(54)	217	163
Total Services	1,045,975	(578,568)	467,407	1,136,568	(639,051)	497,517	(90,593)	60,483	(30,110)

APPENDIX 1

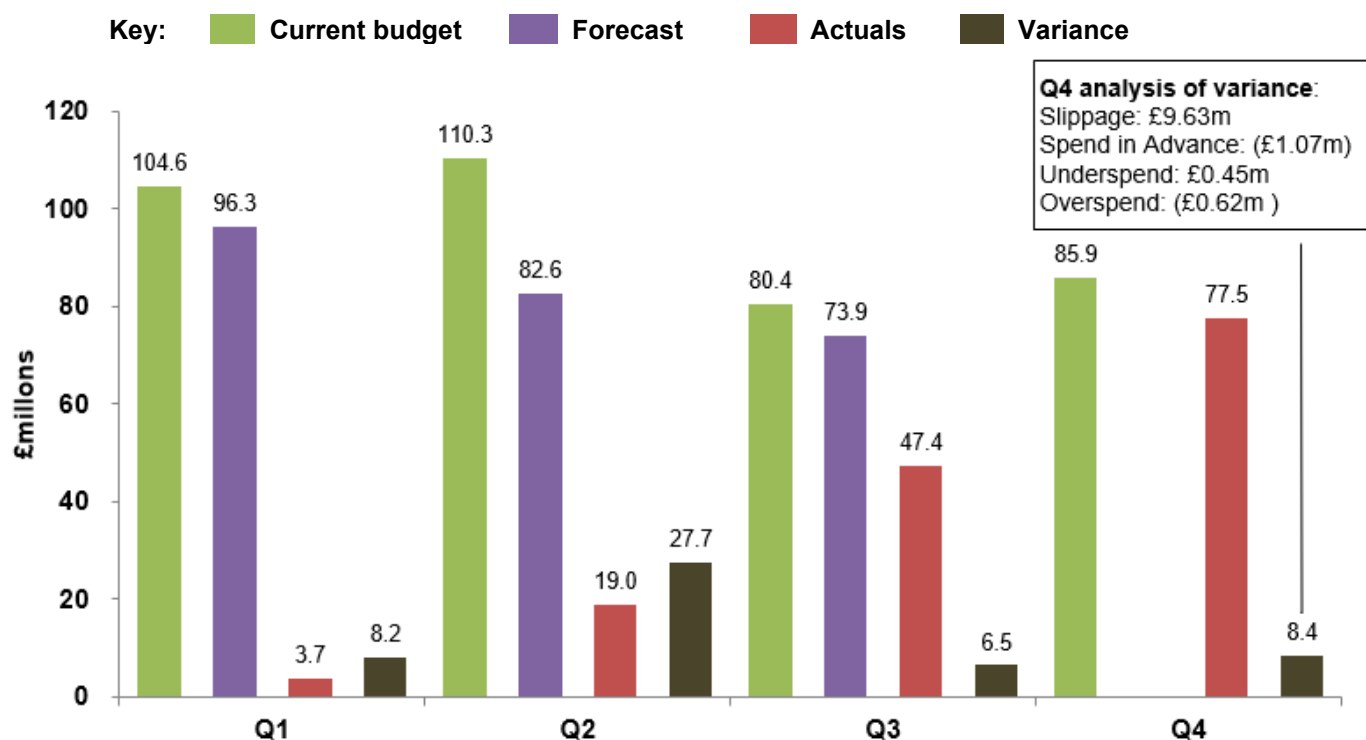
Centrally Held Budgets (CHB):

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Treasury Management	21,630	(7,700)	13,930	19,770	(14,053)	5,717	1,860	6,353	8,213
Capital Programme	2,314	-	2,314	1,787	(1,300)	487	527	1,300	1,827
Unfunded Pensions	5,202	-	5,202	4,622	-	4,622	580	-	580
General Contingency	4,880	-	4,880	-	-	-	4,880	-	4,880
Provision for Budgetary Risks	4,272	-	4,272	740	-	740	3,532	-	3,532
Apprenticeship Levy	772	-	772	794	-	794	(22)	-	(22)
Levies, Grants & Other	5,121	(5,779)	(658)	5,455	(6,270)	(815)	(334)	491	157
Debt Impairment	-	-	-	602	-	602	(602)	-	(602)
Total Centrally Held Budgets	44,191	(13,479)	30,712	33,770	(21,623)	12,147	10,421	8,144	18,565

Corporate Funding:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Business Rates	-	(94,336)	(94,336)	-	(95,256)	(95,256)	-	920	920
Revenue Support Grant	-	(4,076)	(4,076)	-	(4,076)	(4,076)	-	-	-
Service Grant	-	(2,916)	(2,916)	-	(3,036)	(3,036)	-	120	120
Council Tax	-	(351,828)	(351,828)	-	(351,829)	(351,829)	-	1	1
Social Care Grant	-	(44,612)	(44,612)	-	(44,612)	(44,612)	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	-	(351)	(351)	-	(351)	(351)	-	-	-
Total Corporate Funding	-	(498,119)	(498,119)	-	(499,160)	(499,160)	-	1,041	1,041

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
TOTAL	1,090,166	(1,090,166)	0	1,170,338	(1,159,834)	10,504	(80,172)	69,668	(10,504)
Use of COMF	-	-	-	-	(1,285)	(1,285)	-	1,285	1,285
Use of Covid Funding	-	-	-	-	(5,668)	(5,668)	-	5,668	5,668
Use of CT Surplus	-	-	-	-	(2,031)	(2,031)	-	2,031	2,031
Use of Financial Management Reserve	-	-	-	-	(1,520)	(1,520)	-	1,520	1,520
FINAL TOTAL	1,090,166	(1,090,166)	0	1,170,338	(1,170,338)	0	(80,172)	80,172	0

Capital Programme (gross £ millions) – approved projects**Capital Programme Summary 2023/24 (£'000)**

	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance
Adult Social Care	1,259	1,025	234	37	197	-
Business Services	25,360	23,402	1,958	367	2,098	(507)
Children's Services	1,868	1,881	(13)	(13)	-	-
Communities, Economy & Transport	57,393	51,184	6,209	(563)	7,336	(564)
Gross Expenditure (Planned Programme)	85,880	77,492	8,388	(172)	9,631	(1,071)
Section 106 and CIL	1,607	592	-	-	-	-
Other Specific Funding	10,710	8,085	-	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	817	817	-	-	-	-
Formula Grants	39,296	38,736	-	-	-	-
Reserves and Revenue Set Aside	22,904	19,831	-	-	-	-
Borrowing	10,546	9,431	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	85,880	77,492	-	-	-	-

Treasury Management

The Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), which provides the framework for managing the Council's cash balances and borrowing requirement, continues to reflect a policy of ensuring minimum risk, whilst aiming to deliver secure realistic investment income on the Council's cash balances.

The average level of Council funds available for investment purposes during Q4 was £223.16m. The total amount received in short term interest for Q4 was £2.999m at an average rate of 5.39%, compared to £3.646m at an average rate of 5.38% for Q3 2023/24. The average investment return for the year was 4.89% from the 4.45% assumed at budget setting and was based on the forecasts from our external treasury management advisors.

The Bank of England Base Rate was maintained in Q4 at 5.25%. The investment return outlook had improved during the latter part of the year however, the potential for increased interest rates into the future has ended, 5.25% is expected to be the peak and the latest forecasts suggest marginal decreases in the bank rate into 2024/25. Where possible a number of fixed term deposits with local authorities were placed for periods up to 1 year in Q4 at improved rates over bank deposits. These investments have been 'laddered' and will mature at different intervals in the next 12 months. This will take advantage of securing investment returns into 2024/25.

In seeking investment opportunities, as defined by the TMS, opportunities have been taken to invest in bank deposits that aligns to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In Q4, an average of £12m was in place during the quarter, opportunities to place additional funds will be explored into 2024/25.

No short-term borrowing was required in Q4. The majority of the Council's external debt, totalling £216.6m at Q4, is held as long-term loans. No long-term borrowing was undertaken in Q4, and no further cost-effective opportunities have arisen during Q4 to restructure the existing Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) or wider debt portfolio.

The Treasury Management budget underspent by £8.2m. This is based on the position outlined above with regard to balances held and investment returns and slippage on the capital programme reducing the need to borrow externally in 2023/24.

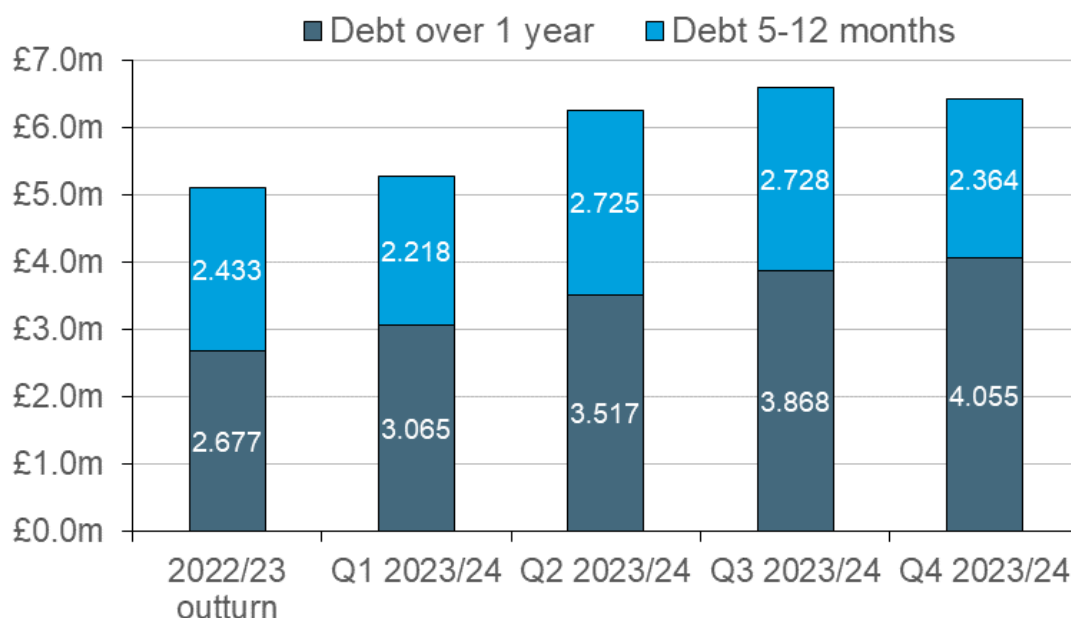
The performance of the Council's treasury management activity, against benchmarks and the key indicators set in the Treasury Management Strategy, as approved by Full Council on 7 February 2023, are set out at Appendix 2.

Reserves and Balances 2023/24 (£000)

Reserve / Balance	Balance at 1 Apr 2023	Forecast net use at Q3	Outturn net use at Q4	Movt	Balance at 31 Mar 2024
Statutorily ringfenced or held on behalf of others:					
Balances held by schools	20,082	-	(1,824)	(1,824)	18,258
Public Health	7,812	(1,704)	(1,518)	186	6,294
Other	6,983	(867)	(230)	637	6,753
Subtotal	34,877	(2,571)	(3,572)	(1,001)	31,305
Service Reserves:					
Corporate Waste	19,883	(440)	(397)	43	19,486
Capital Programme	13,425	(4,061)	(3,574)	487	9,851
Insurance	7,363	133	(4)	(137)	7,359
Adult Social Care	3,099	-	(65)	(65)	3,034
Subtotal	43,770	(4,368)	(4,040)	328	39,730
Strategic Reserves:					
Priority / Transformation	17,398	(11,474)	(10,084)	1,390	7,314
Financial Management	41,880	(10,115)	(6,075)	4,040	35,805
Subtotal	59,278	(21,589)	(16,159)	5,430	43,119
Total Reserves	137,925	(28,528)	(23,771)	4,757	114,154
General Fund	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Total Reserves and Balances	147,925	(28,528)	(23,771)	4,757	124,154

Changes to Fees & Charges

There are no changes to Fees and Charges during quarter 4.

Outstanding debt analysis (£ millions)

The value of debt aged over 5 months at Quarter 4 has increased by £1.309m to £6.419m compared to the 2022/23 outturn position of £5.110m.

The value of aged debt over 5 months as a proportion of debt raised has increased from 3.22% in 2022/23 to 3.93% in 2023/24.

The majority £5.984m (93.22%) of all debt over 5 months old relates to Adult Social Care (ASC), which has increased by £1.769m compared with the 2022/23 outturn position of £4.215m.

The debt over 5 months related to income due to other departments has decreased by £0.460m to £0.435m, compared with the 2022/23 outturn position of £0.895m. £0.294m of the £0.435m due to other departments is income due from the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) and other Local Authorities and ongoing communications take place to facilitate repayment.

Debt recovery related to ASC client contributions can often take a long time due to circumstance of the debtors. For example, an ASC client may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves and an appointee, deputy or power of attorney therefore needs to be established, or the debt forms part of the administration of an estate.

Recovery of debt continues to be a high priority. As part of ongoing improvement work a Debt Recovery Project has been initiated to review and improve the ASC debt recovery model. The ASC Debt case panel continues to meet monthly to review complex and high value debt cases, ensuring the most appropriate next steps are taken to recover debt with sensitivity and consideration of the clients or families concerned and in accordance with the Care Act.

Revenue Savings Summary 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target for 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
ASC	-	-	-	-	-
BSD/Orbis	869	869	559	310	-
CS	-	-	-	-	-
CET	105	910	105	745	60
GS	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	974	1,779	664	1,055	60
ASC			-	-	-
BSD / Orbis			-	-	-
CS			-	-	-
CET			-	-	-
GS			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings & Permanent Changes	974	1,779	664	1,055	60

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
ASC	-	-	0
BSD / Orbis	210	100	310
CS	-	-	0
CET	745	60	805
GS	-	-	0
Total	955	160	1,115

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Adult Social Care – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2023/24	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Total	0	0	0

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

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Business Services – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
IT&D: SEG wide area network operating costs	300	300	300	-	-
Property: Courier cost reduction based on reducing the frequency of pickups	24	24	24	-	-
Procurement: Identified income generation	100	100	0	100	-
Central Management: Resources for support	15	15	15	-	-
IT&D: Reduced printing costs	220	220	220	-	-
Property Assets (Offices): Co-location of St Mary's & St Marks and reduced usage of County Hall	210	210	-	210	-
Total Savings	869	869	559	310	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	869	869	559	310	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
Property Assets (Offices)	210	-	210
Procurement	-	100	100
Total	210	100	310

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Children's Services – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2023/24	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Total	0	0	0

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Communities, Economy & Transport – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
Parking: Increase on-street parking charges where possible. Surpluses to be used for transport related funding.	-	745	-	745	-
Libraries: improving the cost efficiency of provision and/or relocating back office functions/libraries. In addition, we'll achieve further efficiencies in ICT through the implementation of a new contract for self-service facilities in libraries.	105	105	105	-	-
Environmental Services: Income generation through traded services.	-	60	-	-	60
Total Savings	105	910	105	745	60
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	105	910	105	745	60

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
Parking - one-off funding for 2023/24	745	-	745
Environmental Services - part of reported variance	-	60	60
Total	745	60	805

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Governance Services – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2023/24	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Total	0	0	0

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators – Q4 2023/24

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy published the revised Treasury and Prudential codes in 2021, which now requires quarterly reporting of performance against forward looking prudential indicators. The performance of the Council's treasury management activity, against benchmarks and the key indicators in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, as approved by Full Council at its meeting of 7 February 2023, are set out below.

Investments

The average investment return over Q4 was 5.39% performing above the benchmark rate by 19 basis points (or 0.19 percentage points). Performance has improved as a result of reinvesting maturing investments in a duration matched to a peak in the forecast Bank of England (BoE) bank interest rate.

Quarter	Average Investment Balance £m	Average Investment return	Average Benchmark Rate*	Difference
Q1	295.687	4.19%	4.34%	(0.15%)
Q2	293.169	4.82%	5.09%	(0.27%)
Q3	269.102	5.38%	5.19%	0.19%
Q4	223.163	5.39%	5.20%	0.19%

**the Benchmark rate used is the Standard Overnight Index Average (SONIA); a rate administered by the Bank of England based on actual transactions of overnight borrowing by financial institutions.*

During Q4 we have monitored the security of the Council's investment, to assess the risk of those investments losing their value. These risks were assessed using the financial standing of the groups invested in, the length of each investment, and the historic default rates. Our investment strategy sets an allowable risk level of 0.050% (i.e. that there is a 99.95% probability that the Council will get its investments back). The actual indicator ranged between 0.005% and 0.007%, reflecting the high proportion of investments held in highly secure and/or very liquid investments.

Investment Risk benchmark	0.050%
Maximum investment risk experienced Q4	0.009%

Borrowing

The table below shows the Council's total external borrowing and average rate as at 31 March 2024:

	Balance as at 31 March 2024 £m	Average Rate
PWLB	210.142	4.53%
Market Loans	6.450	4.25%
Total borrowing	216.592	4.52%

The table below shows the outturn position of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) compared to the forecast position within the 2023/24 strategy approved in February 2023. The closing CFR showed an under-borrowed position of £59.084m, compared to the original estimate of £83.932m under-borrowed. The strategy throughout the year forecast that the level of reserves and balances in the medium term allowed for internal borrowing of up to £50.000m, and therefore it could be expected that external borrowing of £9.084m may have been required during the 2023/24 year to support the capital programme. However, in the current economic environment delaying that external borrowing decision is a prudent Treasury Management action as the cost of borrowing is high and cash balances remain sufficient to delay that external borrowing in the short to medium term.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) (Underlying Borrowing Need)	Original Estimate 2023/24 £m	Outturn Position 2023/24 £m
Opening CFR	274.367	271.822
Borrowing Need	34.904	12.100
Minimum Revenue Provision	(7.429)	(8.246)
Closing CFR	301.842	275.676
External Borrowing as at 31 March 2024		216.592
Forecast Under-borrowing (if no action taken)		59.084

The table below shows that the Council is operating within the Operational Boundary and Authorised Borrowing Limits set within the Treasury Management strategy and has sufficient headroom to cover the borrowing need arising from the year's capital programme.

Borrowing Limits	Operational Boundary £m	Authorised Borrowing Limit £m
Limit set for 2023/24	376.000	396.000
Less: PFI & Leases	65.000	65.000
Limit for Underlying Borrowing	311.000	331.000
Actual External Borrowing at 31 December	216.592	216.592
Headroom*	94.408	114.408

*Authorised Borrowing headroom cannot be less than zero

The maturity profile of the Authority's borrowing is within the limits set within the strategy.

Maturity Structure of borrowing	Lower Limit set	Upper Limit set	Actual as at 31 March 2024
Under 12 Months	0%	25%	2%
12 months to 2 years	0%	40%	2%
2 years to 5 years	0%	60%	7%
5 years to 10 years	0%	70%	20%
Over 10 years	0%	90%	68%

Adult Social Care and Health – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Adult Social Care (ASC)

Health and Social Care integration

A five-year [Shared Delivery Plan](#) was developed and agreed by all health and care partners in Sussex in June 2023, to support the Sussex Integrated Care Strategy ‘Improving Lives Together’ and the [East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy](#). A key priority within the Shared Delivery Plan is developing Integrated Community Teams (ICTs), which will be made up of professionals working together as a ‘team of teams’ across health, social care, housing and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners to improve integrated neighbourhood delivery. In 2023/24 we agreed our ICT footprints which align with borough and district boundaries and developed a pan-Sussex core offer for ICTs focussed on proactive care for the most complex and vulnerable patients, and population health improvement. Alongside this, ICTs will also address local priorities based on intelligence and insight: [data and insight packs](#) have been produced for each area to help further understand and address local health and care needs and inequalities.

Building on our progress with integrated care in East Sussex, Hastings is our ‘community frontrunner’ area for developing the ICT model. A local leadership planning meeting took place in November 2023, followed by an initial workshop with 28 people from frontline teams and services to understand the concept, share ideas about how the ICT can add value in the local context, and develop action plans. Similar meetings are planned for Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother and Wealden in the first half of 2024/25. To prepare, over the next few months each area will identify specific challenges to test how the ICT approach can help.

Adults are able to take control of the support they receive

The number of people in receipt of Direct Payments is now showing a decrease from 1,520 at 31 March 2023 to 1,457 at 31 March 2024. This number has also decreased as a proportion, to 28.1% due to an increased number of people receiving community based long term support (the denominator), meaning this remains below our target of >31.5%. Despite this, the Council's performance is still good compared to national benchmarks. Based on current national data, performance would fall within the upper-middle quartile. It is important to note that this measure is a snapshot at the end of each reporting period, so performance can fluctuate.

Reabling people to maximise their level of independence

Reablement services are provided to help people to regain mobility and daily living skills, especially after a hospital stay. Data shows that our reablement services are having a positive impact on the ongoing support needs of our residents and enable people to stay in their own homes after a stay in hospital. In particular:

- During 2023/24, 95.9% of people who received short-term services did not request any further support, above the target of >90.5%.
- Between April and December 2023 (reported a quarter in arrears), 92% of older people discharged from hospital to reablement / rehabilitation services were at home 91 days after their discharge from hospital. Based on current national data, this performance would fall within the upper quartile.

Homes for Ukraine

As of 31 March 2024, 1,831 guests had arrived in East Sussex under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, sponsored and hosted by 833 sponsors. A significant number (672) have successfully moved from hosted accommodation into independent private sector accommodation.

Third Sector support

During Q4, we continued to co-develop the Community Network Support Programme, engaging with 66 Network representatives, and over 60 representatives from groups and organisations that connect with or support Networks. This engagement has resulted in insight on the successes and challenges faced by Networks and will be used to develop a menu of support measures for Networks that will be tested during 2024/25.

The Council has partnered with the Tribe Project to help make finding a voluntary role easier, and to increase community engagement. Tribe is a free app and online platform, which connects people interested in volunteering with local organisations and their volunteering opportunities. In Q4, there was a total of 434 listings on Tribe from 141 organisations: [323 volunteering opportunities](#) and [111 activities for people to take part in](#). In February 2024, the Council and Tribe created a campaign to promote Tribe that reached over 50,000 residents, encouraging volunteering across East Sussex. During Q4, Tribe and East Sussex Community Information Service (ESCIS) worked together to ensure that activities on ESCIS could also be seen on Tribe.

Number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention

The number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention (**ref i**) in 2023/24 was 333 against a target of 390. The service relies on receiving referrals direct from carers or through other organisations. There is evidence that carers do not identify themselves as having a caring role, and being in need of support. We will look in more detail at reasons for the drop in referrals and explore with the provider solutions to increase referrals to the service at the next Performance Review Meeting.

Safer Communities

Drug and alcohol related deaths

The latest figures for deaths (from 2022) resulting from drug or alcohol misuse have been released. These show 77 people died as a result of drug or alcohol misuse. Within that total there was a significant decrease in the number of people who died as a result of drug misuse compared to previous years. Every death is a tragedy, and we continue to work hard to reduce the number of deaths every year, including by working with partners to ensure people receive support as early as possible.

Treatment for opiate misuse

At the end of Q3 (reported a quarter in arrears), there were 1,060 individuals in treatment for opiate use which was a slight increase but remained below our target. Of those in treatment for opiate use, 57% in East Sussex are showing substantial treatment progress, compared to 46% in England.

Domestic Violence and Abuse, Sexual Violence and Abuse Services

In Q4, the Safer Communities Team supported commissioned refuge provider Clarion to open four self-contained units at Phoenix House. These units have expanded the available options for safe accommodation in East Sussex, especially for those where communal refuges may not be always appropriate or suitable (such as male or transgender victims/survivors). At the end of Q4, two male victims/survivors were resident at Phoenix House.

The Council is trialling a MARAC ([Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference](#)) Triage Pilot, until the end of March 2025. This was in recognition of the increasing number of cases being discussed at MARAC and the fact that while all high-risk cases require a multi-agency response to implementing a safety plan, not all require a discussion at MARAC to implement this.

The Safer Communities Team has delivered and participated in various awareness-raising and community engagement events throughout the year, particularly in quarters 3 and 4. This included: a social media campaign for 16 Days of Activism 2023, a Council staff White Ribbon awareness day in November 2023, Safer Hastings Partnership's 'Blue Light' community event in November 2023, an online joint webinar with West Sussex County Council in December 2023, a Domestic Homicide Review training session with refuge staff in January 2024, and Hastings' Women's Voice 'Hear Me Roar More' festival for International Women's Day 2024.

The Council's application to become White Ribbon (re)accredited was accepted in Q4; the Safer Communities team will submit a three-year action plan to White Ribbon UK in Q2 2024/2025.

Fraud and Scams

During Q4, Get Safe Online (GSO) and the Council promoted campaigns around 'Ticket Fraud' and 'Your Child and Online Gaming' to residents. The Safer East Sussex Team and GSO also delivered online training to teaching staff, and promoted monthly campaigns, including tips on how to stay safe when online shopping, safeguarding children online, de-mystifying Artificial Intelligence, and information on how to make sure smart devices are used safely.

The team and GSO delivered Digital Ambassador training to frontline staff and supported the Eastbourne 999 Festival delivering internet safety advice to the public in June 2023. The event attracted thousands of people from across the region.

Preventing Violent Extremism

In Q4, the team delivered 33 awareness raising sessions to East Sussex organisations. Approximately 2,360 students and staff have benefitted. The team also delivered a conference with partners in West Sussex County Council, increasing knowledge and understanding of Prevent among the 135 community and VCSE partners who attended.

Serious Violence

During Q4 the team produced four place-based community safety profiles (funded by a Home Office Grant) in different districts and boroughs to understand the nature and causes of crime and anti-social behaviour in these areas. The profiles will be used alongside community engagement activities to develop holistic action plans to tackle violent crime.

During 2023/24 the East Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership have developed an East Sussex Serious Violence Reduction Strategy Action Plan and commenced a two-year project in hyper-local areas with higher volumes of serious violent crime in each district and borough area.

Positive achievements generated in year one of the project include:

- Increased data and information sharing.
- Identification of 'at risk' groups, crime types and exploitation factors in each area based on analysis of Sussex Police data – with this information used to inform targeted police patrols and youth outreach interventions.
- Use of Sussex Police data to support two new contextual safeguarding assessments in Hastings and Rother.
- Mapping of community assets and community development activities.

Devonshire Safer Streets Project

In 2023 the Safer Communities team secured Safer Streets funding for a 12-month project in the Devonshire area of Eastbourne, to tackle neighbourhood crime, anti-social behaviour, violence against women and girls, and improving public safety for all.

The project and survey findings have influenced an action plan for sustainable longer-term activity including continuation of the Devonshire Community Safety Forum (open to all residents) and the Grassroots Network (attended by over 25 community-based agencies working together to improve safety outcomes for the Devonshire area).

Substance Misuse

Throughout 2023/24, there has been increased investment into drug and alcohol treatment and recovery interventions by Government. An extensive public consultation and equalities impact exercise was conducted in Q3 and Q4. The findings from these will inform future commissioning processes in 2024/25.

Throughout 2023/24, work has been monitored by the Harm to Hope Board has focused on ensuring a whole system approach to address the aims of the Government's Drug Strategy. This has improved the support pathways for a range of specific groups, including those with co-occurring conditions and those leaving prison. Due to this work, stronger links have been made with HMP Lewes resulting in an increase in the rate of individuals leaving prison and entering community treatment. A specialist pathway for those with respiratory conditions has been implemented, and a joint working protocol for those with a co-occurring mental health condition is also in development.

Public Health

NHS Health Checks

The aim of this target is to ensure that the NHS Health Checks programme is accessible to those living in the most deprived areas. At Q3 (reported a quarter in arrears), 1,532 NHS Health Checks were delivered to those living in IMD1 (the top 20% most deprived) areas (66% of the target). Overall activity levels for NHS Health Checks decreased over the winter due to competing priorities in primary care such as flu jab services. Although activity was expected to increase during Q4 due to suspension of Sussex Integrated Care Systems (ICS) locally commissioned services, provisional data shows 2,067 checks have been delivered to those living in an IMD1 area against a target of 2,300 (90% achievement). Data will be confirmed at Q1, but it is unlikely that the target will be achieved.

Successes

Research shows that life expectancy for men in Hastings and St Leonards is significantly lower than the national average. The 'Mr Hastings and St Leonards' project aims to put men at the heart of decision making within strong, supportive, and well-connected communities to support happier, healthier, and longer lives. A logo has been co-designed with a local graphic designer and a group of local men. A regular [podcast](#) is in place hosted by local men and featuring local organisations, such as Grumpy Cook and Project Rewild. The film premiere of 'Men Don't Talk?', produced by a local film maker and filmed at a local barber's, shares stories from local men about their own mental health and wellbeing. A sofa on wheels has been upcycled together with portable 'murals' including infographics and panoramic views of Hastings and St Leonards to generate conversations and make connections with local men.

The Men in Mind programme focuses on increasing participants knowledge and confidence to discuss matters around mental health and suicide prevention. To date over 70 local businesses within Eastbourne and Hailsham (the initial prioritised areas for the programme) have signed up to receive information on the programme and over 100 people have booked onto training courses.

A Real Time Surveillance Dashboard for suspected suicides has been developed and is providing valuable information to partners across Sussex, including public health, the Police, mental health

trust and ICS. The Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategy 2024-27 and Action Plan was endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Boards in West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

Over 600 warm home checks were completed during 2023/24 and the 'keep warm and well' helpline (and linked services) provided brief advice to over 8,000 residents. Between 2022/23 and 2023/24 major home energy efficiency improvements were installed for fuel poor households valued at over £2m.

Every year tens of thousands of people across the UK die from conditions that can be linked to exposure to cold weather. Cold Alert is a free service providing free severe cold weather warnings for individuals with respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, parents of young children, carers and healthcare professionals. Latest figures (November 2023 to January 2024) show there are 2,804 subscribers to the Cold Alert service in East Sussex, an increase of 213 (7.6%) subscriptions.

The 'Making it Happen' programme continues to help to build the confidence and capability of people to come together in their neighbourhoods to make change for themselves and create positive health outcomes. The grants awarded to groups of residents and community groups show a great deal of interest in projects relating to arts, culture and creativity. Making it Happen has been working with Latest TV to create a TV series showcasing some of the amazing things that communities are doing. Previous Phenomenal Happenings episodes are available through [Making it Happen](#). Future episodes will continue to be aired on Latest TV. There is increasing interest in the programme outside the county.

Our digital sexual health service has improved the accessibility of face-to-face delivery and our method of service delivery has attracted interest from other local authorities. Both the online and postal sexually transmitted infection self-sampling and condom distribution scheme are reaching residents who are from deprived communities, have different sexual partners and belong to diverse ethnic groups. The reach of our digital health service was presented at the STI and HIV World Congress in July 2023 in Chicago.

Roma Children and Young People designed and delivered a blacksmithing project focussing on traditional Roma crafts, concepts of home, community, physical and mental health and wellbeing. The art work will be toured to schools and libraries across the county to enable workshops tackling stigma and discrimination through dialogue and understanding of the different ideas associated with the concept of home and health and community.

The second annual Wellbeing at Work event presented 36 awards to 31 East Sussex employers. This included the first Gold Awarded organisations to both Affinity Select Insurance and Servomex. The event was well attended by employers already registered with the scheme, prospective organisations and local service providers with excellent feedback about the networking opportunities and guest speakers (Mind Brighton & Hove, Sussex MSK Partnership). The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) noted the increase in organisations adopting a stand-alone wellbeing policy. This is great progress for programmes such as Wellbeing at Work.

A [case study](#) outlining Public Health work that promotes creativity as key to our prevention approach has been published on the [National Creative Health Review](#) website and highlighted as an example of good practice.

The Public Health 'Healthy Places Team' was highlighted as one of the three best practice case studies across England in a report by the Quality-of-Life Foundation. The report focuses on work done to help embed health in planning decisions through our collaborative relationships with partners.

The Public Health ‘Infection Control’ team received a Silver Award from the Infection Prevention Society for Nurturing Infection Prevention and Control Talent 2023. The award recognised the work of the team in 2023/24 with the wider remit of groups such as unpaid and informal carers, day services and volunteers working in the community and people’s homes.

Revenue Budget Summary

ASC

The net ASC budget of £236.313m includes a 10% inflationary uplift of £25.797m to support the care market across the Independent Sector. This uplift is in addition to £4.546m to fund growth and demographic pressures, with the costs of the increases being partially funded by £6.635m raised through the 2% ASC Care Precept. In July 2023, the Department of Health and Social Care announced an additional £3.932m Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund, which has been fully invested to support the market.

The ASC outturn for 2023/24 is £238.297m. This gives an overspend of £1.984m, a decrease of £0.001m since Q3. The movement in Q4 comprises a decrease in the overspend of £0.026m on Independent Sector care provision (£2.917m total overspend), offset by a decrease in the underspend of £0.025m in Directly Provided Services (£0.933m total underspend). The overspend on the Independent Sector is due to a combination of factors with the most material being increasing complexity of need, and pressures arising from demand and demographic growth returning to pre-pandemic levels. The underspend in Directly Provided Services is due to staffing vacancies and reflects the difficulties in recruitment.

Safer Communities

The net budget of £1.167m has been fully spent in 2023/24.

Public Health

The Public Health (PH) budget of £36.778m comprises of the PH grant allocation of £29.804m, additional income and grants of £4.350m, a planned draw from PH ring-fenced reserves £2.058m for reserve projects and £0.566m drawn to support in year spending.

At 31 March 2024 the PH outturn against budget was an overall underspend of £1.106m. This comprises underspends of £1.706m on the PH Reserve projects and £0.140m general PH programme, offset by an overspend of £0.740m on the Health Visiting programme, which is used to support Children’s Early Years.

COVID-19 related funding streams

ASC continues to incur expenditure relating to schemes initiated during the national COVID-19 response. £0.413m will be spent in 2024/25 on corporately approved schemes before the 30 September 2024 deadline for this spend.

Grant	Funding brought forward £'000	Planned Usage £'000	Balance Remaining £'000
Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF)	2,695	2,282	413
CEV Grant (support to CEV individuals)	1,539	1,539	-
Omicron Support Fund	42	42	-
Total	4,276	3,863	413

Homes for Ukraine

ASC continues to lead on the programme of services to support Ukrainian guests to settle in East Sussex. Actual expenditure in 2023/24 was £5.447m against funding of £12.657m, with the

remaining budget allocated for the subsequent years of support required under statutory guidance. In addition, ASC passed £1.245m to districts and boroughs to fund payments to hosts, in line with guidance.

HFU Grant Funding	Total Funding £'000	Actual Expenditure £'000	Balance Remaining £'000
Funding for guests	12,657	5,447	7,210
Host Payments	1,245	1,245	-
Total	13,902	6,692	7,210

Capital Programme Summary

The ASC Capital programme budget for 2023/24 was £1.259m. Actual expenditure for the programme in 2023/24 was £1.025m. There has been slippage on the Supported Living project of £0.188m due to the previous contractor going into administration. This contract has been novated to a new contractor and work on the scheme has restarted, with expenditure £0.112m higher than forecast at Q3. Phase 1 is on track to be completed by mid-September 2024. There has also been an underspend of £0.037m on House Adaptations and slippage of £0.009m on Greenacres.

Performance exceptions (see How to read this report for definition)

Priority – Keeping vulnerable people safe

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
The number of people accessing treatment for opiate misuse	New measure 2023/24	1,247	G	G	A	CO	Reported a quarter in arrears. Q3: 1,060	
The % of people affected by domestic violence and abuse who have improved safety/support measures in place upon leaving the service	91.4%	90%	G	G	G	CO	91.8% (Q3)	
When they leave the service the % of those affected by rape, sexual violence and abuse who have improved coping strategies	92.7%	88%	G	G	G	CO	90% (Q3)	
The percentage of people who access additional support from our specialist commissioned domestic abuse service who are older	New measure 2023/24	3%	G	G	G	CO	3.13% (Q3)	

Priority – Helping people help themselves

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention	494	390	G	A	G	R	333	i
Improved targeting of NHS Health Checks	Cumulative uptake: 29.5% (5 year period 2018/19–2022/23 Q4)	10% of the eligible population in the 20% most deprived areas (IMD1) have received a health check	R	A	G	CO	Reported a quarter in arrears. Q3: 1,532 / 2,300 NHS Health Checks delivered (66% of target)	
Achieve independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care	90.5%	>90%	G	G	G	CO	92.0% (Q3)	

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
Total	0	0	0	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)**Adult Social Care – Independent Sector:**

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
IS - Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support for Memory & Cognition	167,651	(99,949)	67,702	190,354	(120,577)	69,777	(22,703)	20,628	(2,075)	
IS - Learning Disability Support	86,281	(5,863)	80,418	89,967	(9,130)	80,837	(3,686)	3,267	(419)	
IS - Mental Health Support	31,294	(16,409)	14,885	31,695	(16,387)	15,308	(401)	(22)	(423)	
Subtotal	285,226	(122,221)	163,005	312,016	(146,094)	165,922	(26,790)	23,873	(2,917)	

Adult Social Care – Directly Provided Services & Assessment and Care Management:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support for Memory & Cognition	17,315	(5,121)	12,194	16,392	(5,668)	10,724	923	547	1,470	
Learning Disability Support	8,791	(592)	8,199	8,797	(545)	8,252	(6)	(47)	(53)	
Mental Health Support	4,322	(4,199)	123	4,587	(4,235)	352	(265)	36	(229)	
Substance Misuse Support	477	-	477	476	-	476	1	-	1	
Equipment & Assistive Technology	7,414	(3,782)	3,632	7,985	(4,351)	3,634	(571)	569	(2)	
Other	130	-	130	110	-	110	20	-	20	
Supporting People	6,144	(310)	5,834	5,934	(100)	5,834	210	(210)	-	
Assessment and Care Management	30,601	(2,202)	28,399	34,469	(4,972)	29,497	(3,868)	2,770	(1,098)	
Carers	3,639	(2,930)	709	3,029	(2,321)	708	610	(609)	1	
Management and Support	14,896	(1,735)	13,161	19,193	(7,478)	11,715	(4,297)	5,743	1,446	
Service Strategy	648	(198)	450	10,216	(9,143)	1,073	(9,568)	8,945	(623)	
Subtotal	94,377	(21,069)	73,308	111,188	(38,813)	72,375	(16,811)	17,744	933	

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Total Adult Social Care	379,603	(143,290)	236,313	423,204	(184,907)	238,297	(43,601)	41,617	(1,984)	

Safer Communities:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Safer Communities	2,076	(909)	1,167	2,792	(1,625)	1,167	(716)	716	-	
Total Safer Communities	2,076	(909)	1,167	2,792	(1,625)	1,167	(716)	716	0	

Public Health – Core Services:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Mental Health & Best Start	12,422	-	12,422	12,678	-	12,678	(256)	-	(256)	
Risky Behaviours and Threats to Health	13,699	-	13,699	13,364	-	13,364	335	-	335	
Health Systems	3,616	-	3,616	3,253	-	3,253	363	-	363	
Communities	925	-	925	1,047	-	1,047	(122)	-	(122)	
Central Support	3,600	-	3,600	4,595	-	4,595	(995)	-	(995)	
Recovery & Renewal	458	-	458	383	-	383	75	-	75	
Public Health Grant Income	-	(29,804)	(29,804)	-	(29,804)	(29,804)	-	-	-	
Other Grants and Income	-	(4,350)	(4,350)	-	(4,350)	(4,350)	-	-	-	
Draw from General Reserves	-	(566)	(566)	-	(426)	(426)	-	(140)	(140)	
Draw from Health Visiting Reserves	-	-	-	-	(740)	(740)	-	740	740	
Project Board Reserves	2,058	(2,058)	-	352	(352)	-	1,706	(1,706)	-	
Total Public Health	36,778	(36,778)	0	35,672	(35,672)	0	1,106	(1,106)	0	

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
Supported Living Projects	6,421	6,421	1,200	1,012	188	-	188	-	
Greenacres	2,598	2,598	9	-	9	-	9	-	
House Adaptations for People with Disabilities	2,719	2,682	50	13	37	37	-	-	
Total ASC Gross	11,738	11,701	1,259	1,025	234	37	197	0	

Business Services – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Key cross cutting programmes

Carbon

In line with our current Climate Action Plan, further progress was made in Q4 on the delivery of energy efficiency projects. A further 9 projects were completed in Q4 making a total of 25 completed projects in 2023/24, against a target of 23 (**ref ii**).

Schemes completed throughout 2023/24 were:

- 5 LED lighting energy saving projects at Milton Grange Residential Home plus Frant, Hankham, Chiddingly and Catsfield Primary Schools.
- 10 solar PV energy generation projects at The Keep, the Phoenix Centre, St. Nicolas Centre, Hailsham Library, Bexhill Library, Newhaven Library, and Bodiam, Chiddingly, Plumpton, and Rocks Park Primary Schools.
- 5 building insulation projects to cut heat loss: triple glazing at Greenwood and Grovelands Primary Schools and loft, doors and wall insulation at Hellingly, Rocks Park and Rotherfield Primary Schools.
- 3 decarbonisation of heat projects to transition from oil boilers to air source heat pumps at Bodiam, Chiddingly and Plumpton Primary Schools.
- 2 large asset rationalisation projects ensuring more modern facilities with reduced carbon emissions. These are the Ropemaker Park to Alder Close project and the move from Ocean House to Cavendish House, Hastings

The Property team hosted a further energy saving workshop for managers / school caretakers in Q4, with a focus on heat cost savings. The annual target to train 40 site managers has been exceeded, with 95 trained at 5 events.

A pilot scheme for the Site Heating Control Interventions Initiative was successfully completed in Q4, targeting 10 sites with low heating efficiency arising from poor control. A consultant visited sites to review and optimise heating controls and provide training for site managers to support improvements being sustained in the longer term. A summary report on the cost-benefit of the interventions across all 10 sites will be completed in Q1 2024/25 and will be used to determine whether the return on investment is sufficient to consider roll out to further sites later in the year.

Total energy consumption (buildings, streetlighting and servers) in Q3 (reported a quarter in arrears) was down 8% compared with the same period last year and down 25% on the baseline year 2019/20. Building energy use in Q3 was down 8% compared with the same period last year and down 28% on the baseline year 2019/20.

As there is now only one quarter of 2023/24 remaining for the reporting of energy consumption, the forecast outturn does become more reliable. However, the final outturn can still be impacted by the weather, as Q4 has the potential for the largest heating demand of the year. If consumption for Q4 this year is the same as Q4 last year our Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions would reduce by 2% in 2023/24 compared with 2022/23, against the target of 16% required to keep within the 5-year carbon budget. This is an improvement from Q2 where a 0.39% decrease in emissions was forecast and would result in a 33% reduction on the 2019/20 baseline, against a cumulative target of 43% (**ref i**).

Carbon emissions from the Council's electricity consumption increased during 2023/24, despite a fall in the amount of electricity consumed by the Council. This was due to changes in the carbon emission factor, which is the figure used to convert electricity consumption from the national grid into equivalent carbon emissions. Carbon emission factors are produced by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. They are updated every year and applied widely in the UK. The UK

grid carbon emission factor changes from year to year as the fuel mix consumed in UK power stations changes (i.e. between renewables, nuclear, natural gas, oil and coal) and as the proportion of imported electricity also changes. The carbon emission factors used for reporting in 2023/24 are based on the fuel mix used in 2021, due to the time it takes to collate and analyse the data (more information can be found here).

The carbon emission factors for electricity fell by over 24% between 2019/20 and 2022/23 as renewables increasingly replaced coal in the generation mix. However, for 2023/24, this trend reversed and the carbon emissions factor increased. This was due to a post-covid increase in national electricity demand and a relatively poor year for wind generation in 2021 (see above on timing delay). We continue to see the benefit of energy efficiency projects, which have helped reduce our overall energy consumption and utility bills. Without these projects, we would have missed the carbon target by a greater margin.

Modernising Systems

The Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) Programme was established to deliver the replacement of the Council's core finance and Human Resources systems, to support further developments to increase agile and digital working. The programme will enable the Council to move off the SAP system, which is due to go out of support in 2027. Following the decision not to go live in 2023, the external programme support was significantly reduced, and an independent review was commissioned to complete an assurance exercise of the system and programme. The first phase of the review gave a number of recommendations and confirmed that Oracle remains a suitable product for the Council.

Human Resources and Organisational Development (HROD)

Successes and achievements during 2023/24 include:

- Successful organisational wide engagement on the refresh of the 2024-2027 People Strategy.
- Delivery of 'single sign-on' for access to the Council's Attendance Management System, GoodShape. GoodShape accounts are now automatically linked with Council network accounts, which improves security and ease of access when using the portal. This is expected to increase Return to Work Interview compliance, as it will reduce the reason 'manager unable to log on to GoodShape' for not completing a Return to Work Interview.
- Delivery of a series of 'masterclasses' for Heads of Service in areas of key strategic importance, with positive feedback received.
- Review and re-design of the process and provision for workplace adjustments, including strengthening support for neurodiversity.

Attendance Management and Wellbeing

The 2023/24 year end sickness absence figure for the whole authority (excluding schools) is 9.13 days lost per Full Time Equivalent role (FTE), a decrease of 9.3% since last year. Despite this, the 2023/24 target of 9.10 days/FTE has narrowly been missed (**ref iii**). The main reason for the decrease in absence rates is a fall in COVID-19 related absences.

We have continued to see a significant decrease in musculoskeletal absence of 1,182 working days compared to 2022/23. This indicates that preventive measures are having a positive impact in reducing sickness absence for this reason. In addition, we are running a dedicated pilot within Adult Social Care and Health with the University of Brighton to explore how our musculoskeletal offer can be further improved to reduce absence and retain staff.

However, mental health absence has increased by 772 days compared to last year. Benchmarking data from GoodShape suggests this is a common theme across local authorities and our absence rates are below the average for other authorities. Set against this background, we are continuing to provide support to staff by:

- The HR Attendance Management Team proactively contact all line managers during the first week an employee reports a stress related absence. This ensures timely and practical guidance on supporting the employee back to work is given. The results over the last 3 months have shown a 34% decrease, equating to a reduction of 9 days per absence.
- Improving the Wellness Plan and Stress Risk Assessment, which were successfully launched during Q3, and are being promoted in line with key awareness days and in team meetings and employee sessions.
- Providing enhanced tools and guidance for workplace adjustments specifically in relation to supporting performance and mental health.
- Offering employees additional support when they report an absence due to Mental Health to GoodShape. The aim is to reduce absence length and the risk of further mental health absence taking place in the future.
- Our growing Mental Health First Aid network continues to pro-actively support staff and promote wellbeing resources within teams.

Procurement

Savings achieved through procurement, contract and supplier management activities

The Council has spent £311m with local suppliers over the past 12 months. This equates to 64% of our total procurement spend, compared to a target of 60%. 847 local suppliers were used. The Procurement team continues to promote our contract opportunities to local suppliers, as well as building local supply chain opportunities into our tenders where possible.

Social Value

Several contracts with significant social value commitment were secured this year, including:

- Soft Facilities Management (FM) Services for the Council's corporate and schools estate. The successful suppliers for the various FM services committed to a Social Value offer of £1.46m (29% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: apprenticeship opportunities for local people; job opportunities for local people in priority groups; volunteering for the local community; work experience and professional development opportunities offered to local people.
- Solar PV for Schools. The successful supplier has committed to a Social Value offer of £450k (35% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: apprenticeship and job opportunities for local people; training opportunities to aid green skills growth in the construction sector; school talks to educate pupils on the importance of renewable energy and environmental sustainability; and community volunteering.
- Start' and 'Specialise' Business Support. The 2 successful suppliers committed to a Social Value offer of £255k (57% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: spend with locally based businesses; training on environmental awareness; job opportunities for local people; and volunteering for local charities.
- Youth Employability Service (YES). The successful supplier has committed to a social value offer of £171k (17% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: 2 apprenticeships offered to local people; professional development opportunities offered to local people; and a local job opportunity for a priority group.

In Q4, a total of 21 contracts commenced, of which 10 were out of scope of the Social Value Measurement Charter, which quantifies the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the procurement, as they accessed an existing pre-approved list of suppliers (Frameworks) with predefined contractual terms. The in-scope contracts for Q4 had a total contract value of £18.11m and secured £5.79m in Social Value commitment, which equates to an outturn of 32% against a target of 10%. This brings the final outturn figure for 2023/24 to 31%.

The Social Value secured through our Property Frameworks used for the Planned Maintenance Programme in 2023/24 has been reported in Q4. Contracts with a combined value of £11.24m were awarded and secured £3.51m in Social Value, which equates to 31%. The Social Value consists of a number of different measures, including targeted spend with local sub-contracted suppliers and contractors, which is an important contributor to economic growth, and various employment and skills initiatives.

The Place Scrutiny Committee's report of Procurement: Social Value and Buying Local was agreed at full Council in May 2023. The 9 recommendations included a 12-month trial of a new qualitative approach to social value within the Adult Social Care and Health service which is now underway. Place Scrutiny Committee considered an update of the implementation of the recommendations Action Plan in March 2024 and were pleased with the progress that has been made implementing the recommendations from the review, in particular the Social Value trial. The Place Scrutiny Committee will consider a further update report at the Place Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2024.

Procurement's Policy Team continues to build on the success of achieving publication of the Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy (ESPP) in 2022. Extensive guidance for the Procurement Team on how to utilise the policy has been published on our new Procurement Intranet site. The policy received minor updates in March 2024 to reflect enhanced approaches to biodiversity, waste hierarchy and explicit reference to government policy, namely Carbon Reduction Plans. The Senior Policy Lead for Supply Chain Decarbonisation has developed a broad Carbon Reduction Strategy for the Authority (presented to Climate Emergency Board in September 2023) and is working with Services and Procurement colleagues to develop focused strategies in the 5 prioritised spend areas. The Procurement Policy Team continues to make good progress against the 4 related actions in the Climate Emergency Plan and is steadily increasing the number of suppliers reporting and reducing carbon emissions through procurement and contract management activity.

Internal Audit

Through the delivery of sufficient audit coverage in Q4, the Chief Internal Auditor continues to be able to provide assurance over the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control for the Council.

Internal Audit have continued to focus on delivery of the Annual Internal Audit Plan and were able to complete 91.2% of the plan to draft report stage by the end of Q4, against an annual target of 90%.

All high priority actions agreed with management as part of individual audit reviews are subject to action tracking, whereby we seek written confirmation from services that these have been implemented. 9/9 (100%) of the agreed high-risk actions due to be implemented on a 12-month rolling basis have been actioned.

Property

Work has continued through Q4 on an options paper for the County Hall campus, with additional technical support being provided by external specialists. The paper is expected to be completed in Q1 2024/25.

The delivery plan to consolidate our Eastbourne offices into one main base has begun its implementation phase in Q4 and will continue in Q1 2024/25.

The re-procurement of facilities management services for the corporate and schools estate has completed and mobilisation of the services began in Q4, with full service implementation in Spring 2024.

Working across the workstreams in the Council's Asset Management Plan 2020-2025, progress throughout 2023/24 includes:

- Relocating teams from Ocean House to their new Hastings bases at Cavendish House and Muriel Matters House, with ongoing support for teams as they settle in. The move has reduced the Council's carbon footprint for corporate premises in Hastings by 43% (when compared to Ocean House)
- Completion of the sale of the former Etchingham School Site and 1 Southview Close, Crowborough.
- The sale of Hindslands, Polegate, is progressing through the legal process, with conditional contracts now expected to be signed in Q1 2024/25. The capital receipt is dependent on the purchaser securing planning consent which will need to be approved by Wealden District Council.
- The sale of Hye House Farm, Crowhurst is progressing through the legal process, with 3 purchasers identified for 4 separate transactions. It is anticipated these sales will proceed in Q1 / Q2 2024/25.
- Temporary school buildings were completed on schedule and a nursery extension in Wadhurst was completed.
- Planning permissions for two new youth facilities were secured, at Heathfield and The Joff, Peacehaven, and have begun as projects. Both are funded through the Youth Investment Fund from central Government.

IT & Digital

Interest in artificial intelligence (AI) has increased considerably during Q4 and exploratory work has started to understand the implications of this technology and explore how it could be used safely, responsibly and effectively to enable efficiencies. Work has focused on understanding the types of AI available and the risks and benefits associated with each type which include free to use tools such as ChatGPT, vendor specific licenced tools such as Microsoft Co-pilot and AI capability built into line of business applications. This activity will be overseen by the Corporate Digital Board which will facilitate the sharing of learning across the Council.

The migration of services to the new South East Grid (SEG) network on behalf of the Link Consortium has continued during Q4 and is nearing completion. Hosted by the Council, the network allows the Council and other public sector organisations in the South East to access higher speed digital infrastructure connections and contributes to the provision of ultra-fast data network connectivity throughout East Sussex.

The Wi-Fi service has now been replaced and upgraded to a next new generation Wi-Fi capability across Council sites. The new service provides higher bandwidth and will improve performance and enhance security. It will also be an enabler of newer technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) likely to be used in the future for a range of activities such as energy and intelligent buildings management.

Work to replace the core telephony solution paired with a dedicated contact centre solution has progressed in Q4, with the contract now signed. The change from landline-based telephony builds on existing technology investment and provides a sustainable solution, reducing the carbon footprint (removing handsets and on-premises equipment) and removing building dependency, thereby supporting a reduction in office space.

Following successful procurement activity, a supplier for the Device Refresh Project has been appointed. Periodically refreshing our IT equipment is vital so that it stays up to date and safe to use to best support and enable a digital workforce. The scale at which this is done (across three councils through the Orbis Partnership) has many benefits and in this case, a saving of 18% per device has been achieved through this joint procurement. New devices will be rolled out with a new operating system as Windows 10 reaches the end of its supportable life. Hence, a Windows 11 Readiness Project has been underway in parallel to ensure that all Council business applications continue to work in the updated environment.

In addition to the above, work has continued throughout Q4 to move all Council SharePoint sites into the Microsoft 365 cloud service where there is increased functionality that will help people to collaborate effectively, this project is nearing completion.

External Funding

In Q4, the External Funding team helped 15 organisations bring £501,850 into the county. This included small to medium sized applications from organisations such as Warming Up the Homeless in Bexhill, Northiam Village Hall in Rye, and Holding Space in Eastbourne, to continue offering parent and carer peer support to families whose children are struggling with their mental health.

The team responded to 56 funding enquiries from not-for-profit organisations, primarily for community and health and wellbeing work. During Q4 the service provided one-to-one support to 6 organisations, prioritising and aligning funds to projects and discussing steps to take before applying.

Throughout 2023/24 the team supported 77 Council colleagues and 200 organisations including new and existing groups, charities, and social enterprises across a wide range of causes (many overlapping) – health and wellbeing, community, environment, arts, culture and heritage, economy. Needs included adapting or expanding services in response to the impact of the cost of living to both services and residents, making improvements to community facilities. Funding needs ranged from startup and first year's costs, project costs and notably core running costs and multi-year funding.

The Team provided:

Resources

- Funding News, a monthly electronic publication about forthcoming funding opportunities (11,300 subscribers).
- East Sussex 4 Community, a free to use database of funders.

One to one support

- 283 funding searches tailored to organisations' needs.
- Bid readiness – talking through practicalities and steps to take before applying. The team met with 71 organisations and 24 council colleagues to discuss their specific requirements.
- Reviewing grant applications, vetting proposals for strengths and weaknesses. We carried out 15 quality checks and delivered 10 applying for funding sessions attended by 382 people.

Partnership working

- Participating on wider strategic and cross sector work such as Partnership Plus, and Multi-Agency Financial steering group.
- Participating on the Healthy Activities and Food Fund (HAF) panel.
- Working with key stakeholders, discussing trends and sharing best practice.

By facilitating resources and connections between groups and colleagues, the team helped bring in £891,211 to East Sussex, through 44 grants ranging from £500 to £450,000. These projects mostly covered communities, (29 projects) health and wellbeing (8 projects).

Revenue Budget Summary

The 2023/24 Business Services net revenue budget is £29.310m. There are £0.869m planned savings in BSD this financial year, of which £0.210m (**ref iv**) relating to the consolidation of the Eastbourne hubs will not be achieved but will be offset by underspending elsewhere. These unachieved savings are included within the current outturn forecast, which is a net £0.398m underspend (**ref viii**). The underspend has increased by £0.329m since Q3. Finance and

Business Administration has a net underspend of £0.248m (**ref v**) an increase of £0.186m from Q3 due to higher staff recharges to Orbis, higher than expected Ukraine funding plus lower consultancy and Audit fees. IT & Digital has an underspend of £0.151m (**ref vi**) an increase of £0.262m since Q3 and is due to higher recharges for project managers and higher than anticipated licence recharges. The Procurement income target of £0.100m (**ref vii**) set for East Sussex was not achieved due to certain income streams not materialising. However, the service did exceed its income budget by £0.030m across the Orbis partnership representing a £0.009m contribution for East Sussex.

Capital Programme Summary

The 2023/24 capital budget is £25,360m with a £1.958m net underspend variance at the end of the financial year. The Salix underspend of £0.294m (**ref ix**) will be offset by a reprofile of the total SALIX programme budget. The Youth Investment Fund slippage of £0.889m (**ref x**) relates to delays as the project is value engineered to stay within budget. The spend in advance of £0.238m (**ref xi**) on Corporate Buildings Improvements relates to a number of projects which commenced in 2023/24 that were originally planned to start in 2024/25. This includes the heating project at Greenwood and the building maintenance spend on fabric works (windows external insulation/rendering) and an emergency boiler replacement. The Core Programme – Capital Building Improvements Schools spend in advance of £0.201m (**ref xii**) was as a result of milder, drier weather enabling greater progress to be made on several projects than had been expected. Core Programme – IT & Digital Strategy Implementation variation of £0.683m (**ref xiii**) relates to slippage in Laptop deployment and telephony projects and an underspend on the TechForge implementation. Core Programme – IT & Digital Strategy Implementation MBOS slippage of £0.442m (**ref xiv**) arising from delays in the programme which means that some of the work initially planned for 2023/24 will be carried out in 2024/25.

Performance exceptions (Q4 – See How to read this report for definition)**Priority – Making best use of resources now and for the future**

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Reduce the amount of CO2 arising from County Council operations	32% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions	43% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions (emissions not to exceed 7,139 tonnes CO2e)	R	R	R	CO	Emissions reported a quarter in arrears Estimate for 2023/24: 33% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions	i
Progress on implementation of Carbon reduction schemes	11 low energy lighting schemes completed; 8 solar PV schemes completed; 2 decarbonisation of heat schemes implemented	23 energy saving schemes implemented	A	A	A	G	25 energy saving schemes implemented	ii
Number of working days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) employee due to sickness absence in non-school services	10.07	9.10	G	G	G	R	9.13	iii

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
Planned savings - BSD	869	869	559	310	-	
Planned savings - Orbis	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	869	869	559	310	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	869	869	559	310	0	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
Property: consolidation of Eastbourne hubs	210	-	210	
Procurement	-	100	100	vii
	-	-	-	
Total	210	100	310	iv

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Finance & Bus Admin	11,660	(5,753)	5,907	13,523	(7,864)	5,659	(1,863)	2,111	248	v
HR & OD	3,353	(1,160)	2,192	3,587	(1,396)	2,191	(234)	235	1	
IT & Digital	12,135	(3,671)	8,464	17,075	(8,762)	8,313	(4,940)	5,091	151	vi
Procurement	-	(100)	(100)	-	-	-	-	(100)	(100)	vii
Property	25,144	(16,044)	9,100	29,319	(20,317)	9,002	(4,175)	4,273	98	
Contribution to Orbis Partnership	3,747	-	3,747	3,747	-	3,747	-	-	-	
Total BSD	56,038	(26,728)	29,310	67,250	(38,338)	28,911	(11,212)	11,610	398	viii

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
SALIX Contract	700	700	350	56	294	294	-	-	ix
Lansdowne Unit (CSD)	75	75	65	26	39	-	39	-	
Youth Investment Fund	7,624	7,624	1,510	621	889	-	889	-	x
Special Educational Needs	3,198	3,198	1,114	1,029	85	-	85	-	
Special Educational Needs - Grove Park	19,179	19,179	150	172	(22)	-	-	(22)	
Disabled Children's Homes	786	786	716	743	(27)	(27)	-	-	
14 Westfield Lane	721	721	53	36	17	-	17	-	
Core Programme - Schools Basic Need	98,444	98,444	2,066	2,093	(27)	-	19	(46)	
Core Programme - Capital Building Improvements Corporate	44,749	44,749	3,509	3,747	(238)	-	-	(238)	xi
Core Programme - Capital Building Improvements Schools	42,049	42,049	4,218	4,419	(201)	-	-	(201)	xii
Core Programme - IT & Digital Strategy Implementation	72,956	72,956	4,055	3,372	683	100	583	-	xiii
Core Programme - IT & Digital Strategy Implementation MBOS	13,125	16,514	7,530	7,088	442	-	442	-	xiv
IT & Digital - Utilising Automation	24	24	24	-	24	-	24	-	
Total BSD Gross	303,630	307,019	25,360	23,402	1,958	367	2098	(507)	

Children's Services – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Early Help and Social Care

Inspection of East Sussex Children's Services

The inspection of the Council Local Authority Children's Services by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) took place from 11 – 15 December 2023. This was a short inspection. Ofsted published the inspection report 6 February 2024, and Children's Services was awarded an overall effectiveness grading of Good with the experiences and progress of children in care graded as Outstanding. The report notes that '*Children in East Sussex continue to receive consistently strong and effective support*' and '*Social workers know the children they support exceptionally well*'. An action plan addressing the issues identified has been submitted to Ofsted.

Review of modelling and placements

In 2023 Children's Services worked with IMPOWER to focus on placement sufficiency and enhancing our ability to secure the right care for the right child for the right length of time. Very ambitious targets are in place to achieve reduced spend, but only by meeting children's needs more appropriately. We continue to embed Valuing Care, which we developed in 2023 with support from IMPOWER. We have focused on:

- implementation of the Valuing Care model
- enhancing our in house foster carer offer
- placement sufficiency to improve our market management and ability to secure the right care for the right child for the right length of time

We have developed a reunification framework to support children to return home where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Valuing Care aligns well with our Connected Practice approach, and we have already seen some significant positive results in terms of good outcomes for children whose plans have been reviewed using the Valuing Care approach. Since the practice started last year, we've had 9 children either step down in the level of care needed or reunify with parents/carers, resulting in a calculated 12-month cost avoidance of £1.1m. An additional £3.2m cost avoidance has been identified based on a further 8 child moves.

Rate of Looked After Children (LAC) (per 10,000 children) and children on a Child Protection plan (CP Plan)

We have seen a further reduction in the rate of LAC (**ref vi**) to 61.5 (655 children) at Q4 from 63.0 (671 children) at Q3. This meets our target rate of 63.4 (676 children) and is below the 2022/23 outturn of 62.3 (664 children). The decrease is the result of a focus on reunification work with children and their birth families, and discharges from care into Special Guardianship, Adoption and Child Arrangement Orders.

The rate of children with a CP Plan at Q4 was 64.6 (688 children) which is above the target of 62.0 (661 children). However, this is a reduction from 70.6 (753 children) at Q3 and is just below the 2022/23 outturn of 64.8 (691 children). There has been significant scrutiny and activity around the safe reduction of CP Plans. There has been a greater focus on thresholds for ending a plan and mid-way review activity on all cases approaching second review. The focus has been on what needs to change for the plan to end. A recent audit of CP Plans in place for 18 months or longer found in some cases improvements could be made to SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) planning with more regular reviews and some cases drifting due to delays in service provision such as awaiting a SWIFT (Specialist Family Service) assessment. The locality team and safeguarding unit have reviewed planning to ensure pace and purpose of all CP Plan cases over 16 months and Children in Need (CIN) cases over 9 months. The work of

Connected Families is expected to have a positive impact on our rate of CP Plans as enhanced support to parents/carers enables improvements to be made and risks safely reduced.

Connected Families Service

We formally launched Connected Families Intervention Practitioners in January 2024. The team are adult facing specialist practitioners, delivering support and interventions with parents/carers of children on CIN or CP Plans, who are experiencing domestic abuse, problematic mental health and/or problematic drug and alcohol use. The new team are actively working with parents across the county. The aim is to provide dedicated support for parents to address their personal issues to support families to stay together and improve the wellbeing and life chances of children. Since the launch we have supported 177 parents with 155 parents currently open to the service across the teams. We have received consistently positive feedback from parents, social workers, social care managers and child protection advisers regarding the support that the service is offering. We have seen an 8.7% reduction in CP Plans across the county in the 4 weeks to 12 April 2024.

Connected Coaches

Connected Families works with young people (aged 11+) who are identified as being on the edge of care or are being supported back into the care of their family. This work is informed by multidisciplinary planning and intensive support delivered by a team of connected coaches. Alongside an allocated Social Worker, the team plan and deliver interventions that support the young person, address parent/carers needs and wider systemic issues. The aim is to reduce risk, increase stability and promote the care of young people within their family. Over the last 12 months 60% (38/63) of young people supported have been enabled to stay living safely at home with their families, with some no longer needing a Social Worker. Those who have remained open to Children's Services are stable on their current care plan or have stepped down the continuum of need (from CP to CIN).

Checks for sustainable change, for young people closed to the service, shows that 86% (24/28) have remained at home once the Connected Coach has ended their involvement. Where young people have needed to enter into care, having a Connected Coach involved has supported placement matching and planned transitions. There is a large proportion of young people with complex needs who are actively engaged with the service (53 young people currently open to the team). This allows them to remain within their family network, avoiding foster care, hospital admissions or residential care. As at Q4, £4.6m of estimated cost avoidance has been achieved in 2023/24 as a result of Connected Coaches' interventions within families.

Foundations

The Foundations Project is part of our preventative work. It provides support for people who have had children previously removed. The service helps them to make positive changes to their circumstances and to reduce the likelihood of future care proceedings. 95% of the women who have engaged with Foundations have not gone on to have subsequent children removed in the last four years (based on the 2020/21 cohort).

Lansdowne Secure Children's Home

In February 2024, we reopened Lansdowne Secure Children's Home. Lansdowne has been remodelled over the past 12 months to create a sustainable service. Lansdowne has a more resilient workforce structure including a new multi-disciplinary team. It will expand provision for some of the country's most vulnerable children throughout 2024/25.

Children in Care Council

In February 2024, the Children in Care Council met with members of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP). They discussed a range of issues from how decisions are made regarding access to gaming/social media when you live in foster care, to working with schools and helping them understand the specific needs of children in care. The councillors from the Corporate Parenting Panel praised the young people, whose ongoing commitment to engaging with and supporting

other children in care is so important. Their views and ideas are critical in developing our Corporate Parenting Strategy which includes enhancing wider participation opportunities for children in care and care experienced young people and engagement with the wider Council.

The CPP members have been instrumental in engaging the wider Council in a range of developments such as:

- fostering recruitment
- the care to work programme
- increasing the fostering allowance for carers

This is already showing early signs of success with 16 new applicants currently being processed at the end of March 2024.

Children in Care achievement celebration

Our annual celebration of the achievements of the younger children in our care took place at Bedes School in March 2024. The event included the presentation of certificates to recognise significant progress, attainment and achievement.

The Early Intervention Partnership Strategy

The Early Intervention Partnership Strategy was published in Q4. This strategy is based on the understanding that investing in early intervention is the best way to support families. This strategy builds upon the very strong partnerships and services already in place. Principles and key deliverables have been collectively identified through broad system engagement and form the foundation for the delivery of this whole system early intervention offer. Our ambition is to collectively achieve the very best outcomes for children and their families. We will do this by using our joint resources as efficiently as possible to equip our combined workforce to deliver outstanding relational and compassionate services, which are based on what we know works. We believe that early intervention works as a 'system' rather than one service, a community of services that is a way of working. We want to develop and invest in this system to achieve the very best for our children and families in East Sussex. In addition, we will be working with colleagues in Adult Social Care who are currently developing their whole system prevention strategy to make sure there is good alignment.

Children and families' feedback

The proportion of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of getting targeted support from the 0 – 19 Early Help Service was 87% at Q4. This is above the target of 80% for 2023/24.

Family Hubs

In 2023/24 we opened 11 family hubs. Family hubs provide support and advice from midwives, health visitors, early communications support workers, early years practitioners and more. Activity sessions give children, parents and carers the chance to socialise and support their children's needs and development.

Youth Investment Funding for Youth Centres

We have been successful in securing more than £7m in funding through the Government's Youth Investment Fund to significantly improve youth centres in Heathfield and Peacehaven by December 2024. Planning permission has been granted with plans to extend, improve accessibility and increase energy efficiency. The funding is part of a £300m commitment by the Government to transform and level up the out-of-school youth sector in levelling up priority areas.

Education

Early Years

For the spring funding period 1,045 two-year-olds accessed a funded early years place in East Sussex. This is an 84% take-up against the Department for Education published list of 1,242 eligible two-year-olds. The target for the year was to equal or exceed the national average which is 73.9%.

69.9% of pupils achieved a good level of development at the early years foundation stage in academic year 2022/23. This is 2.6 percentage points above the national average, meaning we have met our target to be at or above the national average.

Supporting childminders in East Sussex

On Saturday 16 March 2024, we hosted our second annual childminder conference. This is part of our drive for diverse and sustainable Early Years provision in East Sussex. The theme of the event was “The wonders of wellbeing.” The event is part of our work on the sufficiency of Early Years places, and preparation for the expansion of Early Years places. There are challenges with meeting the numbers of Early Years places required in September 2024 both locally and nationally.

The Therapeutic Thinking team and the Early Years Funding team delivered sessions at the conference. Delegates networked, and Council colleagues were available throughout the day to offer support and advice. We are planning further opportunities to support and enable childminders to share their practice.

Allocation of primary and secondary school places for 2024/25

The allocation of places for secondary schools took place in March 2024 and for primary schools in April 2024.

- 94.2% of East Sussex residents who applied on time for a secondary school place have been allocated a place at one of their preferred schools. 83.3% were offered their first preference.
- 93.7% of East Sussex residents who applied on time for a primary school place were offered their first preference, and 98.8% were offered one of their preferences.

Improving school attendance

Attendance is a key priority for children’s services and our partners. We are committed to identifying and exploring key drivers around attendance in East Sussex. This was the key focus of our first Annual Attendance event in January 2024. Staff from 132 schools, including senior leaders, health colleagues and the Department for Education took part. The event provided an opportunity for schools, key support services, and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) youth ambassadors to develop good practice together.

Insights from the event informed our Attendance Delivery Plan 2024-25, which launched in February 2024. The plan provides education settings with tools to help improve attendance for our most vulnerable young people. We consulted widely on the plan, which aligns with national policy on attendance. Between September 2023 and March 2024:

- overall attendance, for all schools, was 92.12% compared to the national rate of 93%
- primary attendance improved by 0.28 percentage points to 94.09% with overall absence at 5.91%
- secondary attendance was been more challenging and fell by 0.91 percentage points to 89.43% with overall absence at 10.57%
- special school attendance fell by 0.59 percentage points to 84.87% with overall absence at 15.13%

Our Early Help offer has been further enhanced by a significant corporate investment in our Early Help Level 2 keywork team. The team work in collaboration with education colleagues to ensure a joined up approach to improving attendance. 91 families were open to Level 2 Early Help as at 19 March.

Transition activities to support attendance

In the summer holidays (Q2), we funded positive activities to support young people with low attendance at primary school. It supported their transition to secondary school. 313 young people participated, with 1,125 individual sessions attended. The sessions enabled the attendees to:

- make new friends
- meet staff at their new school
- familiarise themselves with the new site

It also provided fun and engaging holiday activities. As part of the programme, providers delivered sessions to address young people's concerns about school and identify barriers to attendance.

77% of the young people who took part made an improvement in attendance. The average improvement in the rate of attendance was 7.46%

Proportion of new Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans issued within 20 weeks

In 2023/24 76.3% (521 out of 683) of all new EHC Plans including exceptions and 76.5% (521 out of 681) excluding exceptions were issued within the statutory timescale of 20 weeks. The targets for these measures were 65% and 70%.

The latest national published data (published June 2023) shows 49.2% of new EHC plans excluding exceptions were issued within 20 weeks while for those including exceptions it was 47.7%.

In Q4 we successfully met this year's statutory deadline for completing the Phase Transfers for children and young people with EHC plans across early years, primary, secondary and Post 16.

SEND children and families' feedback

The proportion of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of SEND Services was 87% at Q4.

SEND Governance Board and the National SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Change Partnership Programme

We welcomed the new facilitator of the East Sussex SEND Governance Board in January 2024. The Board oversees the East Sussex SEND strategy and drives efforts to embed coproduction across our SEND system. We are at the midway point of our strategy, which launched in November 2022. Our strategy sets the strategic direction for children and young people with SEND and their families. It represents a joint approach to service provision and commissioning across education, health, and social care. The Board oversees East Sussex's participation in the area pilot for the National SEND and AP Change Partnership Programme. In Q4, we reviewed our SEND Governance arrangements in light of these developments.

Alternative Provision Directory

We launched an [Alternative Provision Directory](#) in Q1. The Directory lists education providers that offer provision for children and young people at school in East Sussex. Schools started to use the Directory in September 2023 to commission providers for children who are struggling to engage with a full time school curriculum.

iCan Careers fair

The iCan careers fair is a bespoke annual event for young people with SEND. We held the seventh event in Eastbourne in March 2024, and brought together 40 local employers, education,

and training providers, and 450 young people from 29 schools and settings. It empowers young people to prepare for their future education and employment pathways.

Education East Sussex

Our restructured education division, Education East Sussex, was launched in Q2. The new division will help the Council to deliver its core roles more effectively in leading the local education system and championing vulnerable children including children with SEND.

Average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools, the average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils and the average Attainment 8 score for LAC

- The average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools (**ref i**) in academic year 2022/23 was 43.6. This is below our target of 46.5 and below the national average of 46.4.
- The average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils (**ref ii**) in academic year 2022/23 was 30.3. This is below our target of 33.3 and below the national average of 35.1.
- The average Attainment 8 score for LAC (**ref iii**) in academic year 2022/23 was 18.9. This is just below our target of 19 and the national average of 19.4.

Improvement is needed in Hastings and Bexhill where four academies are judged by Ofsted as Requires Improvement. Their underperformance impacts significantly on the overall outturn for East Sussex. The young people attending these schools account for approximately one fifth of all secondary pupils in year 11.

Our programme of support focuses on enabling school led improvements with a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. It includes providing every secondary school tailored support, through our External Advisers. We also provide subject continuing professional development for middle leaders in secondary schools. Attendance is a critical factor when considering attainment and progress outcomes for all key stages and pupil groups.

The cohort of LAC students is small and they experience a range of barriers, which can impact on the overall results. For our LAC students we offer high quality academic intervention with a focus on our year 11 students. In addition, this year we have funded a series of 20 lessons over two weeks during the Easter holidays, aimed at securing a level 4 or a level 5 in their GCSE this summer.

The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 16 and academic age 17

The percentage of young people who are in NEET at academic age 16 (year 12) (**ref iv**) is 4.4% against a target of below 4%. For academic age 17 (year 13) (**ref v**), 6% of young people are NEET against a target of below 6%.

The proportion of academic age 16 (year 12) and academic age 17 (year 13) pupils whose Education, Employment or Training (EET) situation is not known in East Sussex was only 1.0%. This is well below the South East average at 4.0% and national average at 2.2%. We are effective at finding and confirming where all our young people are. This means we can provide young people with support, where needed. However, this means we identify higher numbers of NEET young people.

We have been successful in a bid for Education and Skills Funding Agency funding to increase the vocational offer for young people in 2024/25.

Communication, Planning and Performance

East Sussex Youth Cabinet

In February, young people from the Youth Cabinet met with East Sussex Members of Parliament (MPs). They discussed the Council's youth service offer and wider opportunities for young people's activities. The MPs fed back that they found it very helpful.

In March 2024, the new Youth Cabinet was elected. There are now 16 young people who were selected by their peers in schools and other youth group settings.

6,251 children and young people across the county have voted to choose the issues that the East Sussex Youth Cabinet will address in 2024/25.

- Health and Wellbeing received 1,109 votes
- Jobs, The Economy, and Benefits 995 votes
- Culture, Media and Sport 826 votes

The new Youth Cabinet will work with other children and young people's groups and develop campaigns on the top two issues. They will promote current strategies and inform and influence decision-makers to develop new ones.

Climate Change Summit

In January 2024, we held Our Chance to Change, a climate change summit for education settings with the Youth Cabinet. The event brought together nearly 50 schools with 60 children and young people. Several schools showcased the work they are currently doing around climate change. At the event the East Sussex Climate Change Charter was launched to help support schools in creating and developing their own action plan. The day included workshops around behaviour change, funding opportunities, waste and nature.

Children and Young People's Partnership Trust

The East Sussex Children and Young People's Trust held an event with partners in November 2023. Partners heard from children and young people on the issues that matter to them. The event then focused on three key areas:

- climate change
- poverty proofing
- early help through social prescribing

The Children and Young People's Plan sets out how we will work together to improve outcomes for children and young people particularly those who are vulnerable to poor outcomes.

Revenue Budget Summary

The Department's net revenue budget was £120.517m and at financial year-end, the spend was £150.937m. This was an overspend of £30.42m and in an increase of £1.944m from the Q3 forecast (**ref xi**).

The biggest area of overspend was £29.82m within Early Help & Social Care. This has increased by £1.896m from the Q3 forecast (**ref viii**).

Central Resources underspent by £0.081m, an increase of £0.005m from Q3 (**ref vii**).

Education underspent by £0.585m this year, which was a decrease of £0.088m from Q3 (**ref ix**).

Communication, Planning and Performance overspent by £1.266m, which was an increase of £0.141m from Q3 (**ref x**).

Central Resources increase in underspend of £0.005m to £0.081 (ref vii)

This outturn includes an in-year transfer of £0.5m from Central Resources to Early Help and Social Care to contribute to the increase in the National Minimum Allowances for foster carers and Special Guardianship Orders.

The small movement in Q4 was due to increased legal fees offset by funding received from South East Sector Led Improvement Partnership contributing to senior management salary costs.

Early Help and Social Care increased overspend of £1.896m to £29.82m (ref viii)

Funds are still outstanding from the Home Office relating to Asylum Seekers. Grant claims have been submitted which haven't been confirmed. The estimated income has been included in year-end calculations and this resulted in an increased spend of £0.078m and an overspend of £0.054m.

The Connected Families service ended the year on budget with an agreed reserves drawdown of £1.049m. Reductions in staff costs have been achieved plus there was a contribution from Supporting Families income which brought spend in line with the budget.

The Early Help 0-19 service ended the year £1.487m under budget. This was a reduction in spend of £0.753m from Q3. The service carried a large number of vacancies all year within its teams. The expectation was for Early Help to expand its staffing within Family Hubs using the grant funding available but there were significant issues in recruiting to these posts owing to the fixed term nature of the contracts. This meant that a greater proportion of Early Help existing posts were funded by the grant, freeing up core underspend. There were also delays in recruitment within the Level 2 Keywork team and 10% of the posts within the Keyworker teams were vacant at year-end.

There was an overspend of £0.186m within the Social Work & Education team (an increase of £0.004m from Q3) relating to 3 roles in the recruitment team and 1 role in the Connected Practice team.

Youth Justice ended the year with a £0.105m underspend, which was a decrease of £0.116m from Q3. Expected costs from a placement within Secure Remand didn't materialise, plus there was additional income of £0.057m received within Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Keywork.

Looked After Children finished the year with an additional overspend of £1.946m, bringing its total overspend to £26.639m. Additional pressures materialised within:

- Children's Homes, where an additional overspend of £0.074m was incurred for agency wraparound costs.
- Lansdowne increased by £0.409m in Q4. It is now open, but the planned opening was delayed by the Ofsted registration. This meant that the income reduced from its estimated figure by £0.518m. In March, there was a £0.074m charge from Wealden District Council for revalued national non-domestic rates dating back to 2021/22. This will be appealed by the Council Property team in 2024/25. These pressures were partially offset by some staff vacancies and a revised CSD management charge.
- The Placements spend worsened by £1.835m in Q4.
 - £1.829m of this was related solely to Agency Residential placements, continuing the trend demonstrated this year of a small number of children placing high pressure on the budget. The Looked After Children (LAC) numbers in general plateaued within the year, but within Q4 there were: 14 agency residential placements with increased fees, 18 new placements (11 of which were completely new to LAC), 2 new wraparound support packages agreed, and 10 agency support packages extended.
 - Additionally, an increased spend of £0.521m in Q4 was identified relating to prior year invoices for agency residential LAC. These should have been paid in previous financial years, but the correct accounting adjustments weren't made. Significant progress with the LAC data has been made within 2023/24 and there is a high level of assurance that this won't occur again in 2024/25.
 - Agency Fostering spend increased by £0.046m due to 2 new support packages, 10 wraparound support extensions, and 2 Education support package increases. These were offset by reductions in 2 support packages.
 - In-house Fostering improved by £0.04m with various minor placement changes.

These new LAC pressures were partially mitigated by:

- £0.248m credit notes within Careleavers Housing
- £0.068m various minor improvements within Adoption Services
- £0.055m additional staffing costs being coded to Unaccompanied Aylum Seeking Children within the Through Care Team

Localities ended the year with an additional £0.233m of overspend, bringing them to £3.843m over budget. There were significant pressures within:

- Section 17 Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) children - £0.313m for increased family support and accommodation
- Wealden Family Support Team - £0.132m for increased travel for foster care contact, kinship care, and playgroups
- Locality Legal East / West - £0.135m with new cases and higher family court proceeding fees.

Mitigations within Localities included:

- Family / Friends Allowances - £0.345m for lower Special Guardianship Order payments
- Disability Long-Term Agency Placements - £0.274m reduced agency placement costs
- St Leonards Family Support Team South - £0.209m for correct recharges to the LAC budget.

Finally, Specialist Services worsened by £0.572m within Q4, with a year-end overspend of £0.530m. Income was less than previously projected and expenditure on Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust was higher.

Education increased underspend of £0.088m to £0.585m (ref ix)

Education underspent by £0.585m this year due to challenges with recruitment, which was a favourable movement of £0.088m from Q3.

£0.425m was also drawn down from the School Improvement Grant reserve to offset staff expenditure.

Communication, Planning and Performance (including Home to School Transport) increased overspend of £0.141m to £1.266m (ref x)

Buzz Active worsened by £0.038m in Q4 due to receipts for equipment not received. This meant an overspend of £0.049m.

Additional grant income was received within Safeguarding of £0.022m but this was offset by agency staff extensions to the end of March and a small reduction in training income. The service was £0.149m over budget at year-end.

The Home to School Transport spend worsened by £0.156m within Q4 and ended the year at a £1.187m overspend. There has been an increase in pupil numbers qualifying for transport and contract costs have also increased for the new academic year cohort, where they couldn't be added to existing routes.

The Music, Equalities and Participation, Organisational Development, and E Business services all ended the year with small underspends.

Capital Programme Summary

The Capital Programme for 2023/24 was £1.884m expenditure against a budget of £1.868m (**ref xiii**). The additional spend is the Council's contribution towards housing adaptations for disabled children's carers' homes (**ref xii**). These projects are funded by the disabled facilities grant managed by the districts and boroughs. The overspend will be funded from Capital reserves.

Performance exceptions (See How to read this report for definition)**Priority – Driving sustainable economic growth**

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools, and the average	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: 46.5 Nat Av: 48.9	Ac Year 2022/23 46.5	G	A	A	R	Ac Year 2022/23 ESCC: 43.6 Nat Av: 46.4	i
Average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: 33.3 Nat Av: 37.7	Ac Year 2022/23 33.3	G	A	A	R	Ac Year 2022/23 ESCC: 30.3 Nat Av: 35.1	ii
Attainment 8 score for Looked after Children (LAC)	AC Year 2021/22 ESCC: 23.9 NAT AV: 20.3	Ac Year 22/23 19	G	A	A	R	Ac Year 2022/23 18.9 Nat Av: 19.4	iii
The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 16	New Measure	Less than 4%	G	G	A	R	4.4%	iv
The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 17	New Measure	Less than 6%	G	G	A	R	6%	v

Priority – Keeping vulnerable people safe

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Rate of Looked After Children (LAC) (per 10,000 children)	62.3 664 children	63.4 676 children	A	R	A	G	61.5 655 children	vi

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
Total	0	0	0	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Central Resources	2,268	(1,332)	936	2,187	(1,332)	855	81	-	81	vii
Early Help and Social Care	102,575	(17,476)	85,099	134,001	(19,082)	114,919	(31,426)	1,606	(29,820)	viii
Education and ISEND	112,475	(8,207)	104,268	115,391	(11,708)	103,683	(2,916)	3,501	585	ix
Communication, Planning and Performance	31,255	(4,310)	26,945	36,124	(7,913)	28,211	(4,869)	3,603	(1,266)	x
DSG non Schools	-	(96,730)	(96,730)	-	(96,730)	(96,730)	-	-	-	
Schools	153,948	(153,948)	-	153,948	(153,948)	-	-	-	-	
Total CSD	402,521	(282,003)	120,518	441,651	(290,713)	150,938	(39,130)	8,710	(30,420)	xi

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
House Adaptations for Disabled Children's Carers	1,090	1,118	50	78	(28)	(28)	-	-	xii
Schools Delegated Capital	30,326	30,326	1,803	1,803	-	-	-	-	
Conquest Centre redevelopment	356	341	15	-	15	15	-	-	
Total CSD	31,772	31,785	1,868	1,881	(13)	(13)	0	0	xiii

Communities, Economy & Transport – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Economy and environment

Levelling Up Partnerships

As part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda, the Levelling Up Partnerships programme was announced in March 2023. Hastings and Rother were each allocated £20m capital funding to be spent by March 2025 to deliver a tailored approach to place-based regeneration. Over the last year, the Council has worked with other partners and Government officials in preparing a package of proposals for Ministerial sign-off, which were announced on 25 March 2024. The Council directly secured over £7m of funding for five projects, including: Queensway Gateway Road; Hollington youth facility and family hub; and other family and youth support services, and a combined skills capital pot for both areas.

Long Term Plan for Towns

As part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda, the Long Term Plans for Towns programme was launched in October 2023. Hastings, Bexhill and Eastbourne have been allocated £20m each under this programme. The grant funding is to be awarded as an endowment fund to be spent over a 10-year period (with 75% capital and 25% revenue). The priority investment themes to support the regeneration of the towns include safety and security (community safety); high streets, heritage and regeneration; and transport and connectivity.

Employability and Skills

Over 950 people have been supported to improve their numeracy skills in 2023/24 as part of the Multiply programme. 17 numeracy interventions were delivered in partnership with local training and community organisations. These programmes have included maths for managing finance, maths in catering, and maths in railway engineering.

The Employment and Skills Team have delivered two programmes in 2023/24, Moving on Up and Support into Work, that have supported over 265 homeless and refugee residents into work. The team also secured £250,000 of Government funding to support people in the construction sector to gain new retrofit skills. This will help boost the local economy, while also reducing carbon emissions in the county. The Careers Hub secured funding in 2023/24 to undertake a Steps to Success pilot programme to try to prevent young people becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), through bespoke work experience and one to one support.

234 Industry Champions were supporting schools and colleges at the end of 2023/24, exceeding the target of 210. 1,113 pupils attended Open Doors visits in Q4 alone, providing young people with experiences of the workplace.

Apprenticeships

117 staff enrolled on a new apprenticeship during 2023/24. A wide range of apprenticeships are offered covering the vast majority of the roles at the Council. We also expect to see an increase in uptake from Schools when the undergraduate Teaching apprenticeship is introduced in 2024/25.

In total, we now have 252 staff undertaking an apprenticeship. These range from entry level through to degree level and the focus of the team this year has been on the growth of corporate apprenticeships. There has been an increased uptake in the various management apprenticeships offered, as these are applicable to all departments. These apprenticeships also feed directly into other management development initiatives such as the Ladder to Leadership programme.

Almost all the 25% annual levy spend that can be passed onto small and medium employers throughout the county has now been allocated. This totals over £275K in 2023/24. The Government has recently announced that with effect from April 2024, the 25% will be increased to 50%. The existing framework of the Transform project means that the Council is in a strong position to benefit from this change and increase our levy spend accordingly.

Cultural investment and recovery

The Sussex Story work has been delayed due to performance management issues needing to be addressed on the overall contract awarded to the consultants (**ref i**). As a result, the Council, as the lead contractor on behalf of partners, severed the contract and withheld 25% of the contract fee. A new supplier will be identified to complete the work in 2024/25, with the cost for the outstanding work to be met by the remaining 25% budget. The subsequent second phase of the work will follow once the first stage of the work is completed satisfactorily.

Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) work has continued in Q4, in partnership with Local Visitor Economy Partnership members and Visit England. A MICE education session for businesses, in partnership with Visit England, is being planned, and the team are also booked to present at two more exhibits in the summer and autumn.

Broadband

The Broadband Project has completed its final build and is moving into formal contract closure. The Broadband Team is continuing to engage with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) on its centrally run Project Gigabit programme. The contract for East and West Sussex and Brighton & Hove has been let by BDUK to CityFibre. We understand that the Gigabit Voucher scheme run by BDUK is currently closed in East Sussex and we have no indication of future plans. The Broadband Team is continuing to push BDUK for details of how they plan to cover the very hardest to reach properties in the county.

Job creation

East Sussex Invest provides loans and grants to local businesses to help create local jobs and support businesses to become environmentally responsible. As part of a wider corporate approach, applications for funding through the scheme were suspended in Q2, while an independent Strategic and Operational Review of the scheme was undertaken. The review was completed in Q4, and options for the future of the fund are now being developed.

Environment and climate change

We have continued to work together with partners to develop and deliver carbon reduction and climate change adaptation work. In 2023/24 this included:

- securing funding from the South East Net Zero Hub for a feasibility study for a potential solar farm on a former landfill site, the study has now begun
- securing £245,000 from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to develop a plan to provide people with the skills to enable the retrofit of domestic properties to reduce their carbon emissions
- assisting 44 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to measure their carbon footprint, and awarding grants to 21 SMEs to improve energy efficiency and install renewable energy systems, which will reduce their energy bills
- identifying Council fleet vehicles potentially suitable for EV transition at the end of their current leasing periods and starting work on cost analysis
- starting a county-wide assessment of climate risks and vulnerabilities to inform our climate adaptation work

Planning

100% of County Matter applications were determined with the statutory determination period in 2023/24, against a target of 70%. 100% of County Council development applications were also determined within 8 weeks or within an agreed extension of time during 2023/24, against a target of 70%.

Highways, transport and waste

Highways improvements and road condition

Work continued in Q4 using the additional funding for highways approved by the Council. 183 patches across 116 sites were completed bringing the total completed in 2023/24 to 564 patches across 337 sites. This has had a significant impact on the condition of the network and has enabled us to carry out works above and beyond our usual programmes. 102 signs have been replaced in 2023/24 with a further 427 signs scheduled to be replaced in 2024/25. This work will focus on the repair and replacement of damaged or missing signs. Further work has begun cleaning signs and clearing vegetation or obstructions around signs where necessary.

The focus for the additional drainage spend has been on delivering schemes that are quick and simple to design and will address the most urgent drainage issues. Around 180 schemes have been delivered in 2023/24, including replacing gully covers and clearing significant blockages. 53 larger schemes have been identified and will be delivered in 2024/25. The remaining budget for the refresh of road markings has now been fully allocated and will include renewing the lining along the A22 Hailsham bypass and around 600 further sites across the county. However, due to high levels of rainfall in the winter, the majority of these works will not be delivered until Q1 2024/25.

9,691 potholes were repaired in Q4, with 8,579 of these being carriageway potholes, the remainder were primarily footway potholes. Amongst the carriageway potholes, 70% of these were completed within the required timescales. 29,357 potholes were repaired in 2023/24, with 24,411 of these being carriageway potholes, the remainder were primarily footway potholes. 117 road improvement schemes were completed in 2023/24 to improve the condition of the roads. 100 larger scale schemes were also delivered across the county, including schemes such as Diplocks Way in Hailsham and Bunny Lane in Frant.

The road condition outturns (where a lower figure indicates better road condition), were published in Q3. These figures are only available at one point each year and are based on specialist laser surveys undertaken in summer 2023. The outturns refer to the percentage of road length across the entire county, and all roads are likely to have a mixture of green, amber and red road condition sections. The surveys measure road condition in 10m sections. The road condition outturns reported here are the percentage of 10m sections that should be considered for maintenance. So, for example, a proportion of 5% indicates that 5% of all 10m sections surveyed of that road type should be considered for maintenance. The percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance was 4%, against a target of 4%. The percentage of Non-Principal roads requiring maintenance was 5% against a target of 4%. The percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance was 17%, against a target of 14%.

Road safety

24 road safety infrastructure schemes were completed in 2023/24 on identified high risk sites/routes to improve road safety, against a target of 24. During 2023/24, 551 Bikeability courses were delivered to 4,428 individuals. 343 'Wheels for All' sessions were delivered to 3,862 attendees. The targets for the year were to deliver Bikeability training to 4,000 people and to also deliver 100 'Wheels for All' sessions.

Transport and parking

Improvements have been implemented in 2023/24 using the £41.4m of funding assigned to East Sussex as part of the Government's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) including:

- £13m of bus service improvements, including the Flexibus, Digital Demand Responsive Transport service covering over 90% of East Sussex. The service has seen continued passenger growth due to continued marketing and improvements to the service
- £5m for reduced fares in the county which are scheduled to run until April 2025
- improvements have been made to the bus stop Infrastructure, including the installation of 2,560 QR code plates, new hard standing areas and the installation of new Real Time Information signs at a number of stops
- 32 traffic light junctions have been identified for bus priority improvements and these schemes are due to commence in 2024/25

Following the approval of a business plan and draft contract submitted in November 2023, the Council has now received 90% of the £4.441m allocated to East Sussex from the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund. The remaining 10% will be paid once the final contract has been approved. The funding will support the delivery of on street electric vehicle chargepoints in the county. It is expected that procurement of the contract will begin in Q2 2024/25, and that initial work to deliver chargepoints will follow in Q4 2024/25.

A Hastings Parking review made several recommended changes to parking restrictions in the town and the majority of these have now been implemented, with the final changes expected to be in place by May 2024. A review of parking in Rother was considered by the Planning Committee in July 2023, and all the agreed changes have now been implemented.

The Home to School Transport Team successfully arranged transport for over 5,000 children at the start of the new school year in September 2023. The team have also completed several projects to improve the efficiency of the service and help mitigate cost increases. The Team worked with Children's Services to review possible mitigations to pressures in the service. The review identified opportunities to increase efficiency, strengthen the transport market and avoid costs. Improvements have also been made to the service, following the implementation of Pax, the new client and contract database. The integration with QRoutes, a route optimisation tool, has delivered efficiencies in the processing of applications and route allocation.

Waste

Changes were made to the chargeable waste service in January 2024, allowing residents to bring small amounts of DIY waste for free to all of our Household Waste and Recycling Sites (HWRS). Hard plastic recycling was introduced at Seaford and Eastbourne HWRS, meaning half the sites in the county now offer this. The recycling of hard plastics, rather than sending them to the Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility, has reduced our carbon impact by an estimated 125.5 tonnes in 2023/24. Eastbourne HWRS began to open early as part of a trial to help residents recycle more and reduce queues at the site in 2023/24. The trial proved a success and early opening has continued, allowing residents access 30 minutes earlier than previously on Monday to Friday. Recycling containers for vapes were added to all East Sussex HWRS in 2023/24.

The projected 2023/24 outturn for the amount of waste re-used, recycled or composted or used beneficially is 56.0%, based on the outturn at the end of December 2023 (reported in arrears). Residual waste and kerbside recycling rates are slightly lower than forecast. This might be partly due to cost-of-living increases. However, green waste and waste sent for beneficial use are higher than forecast, which has helped to maintain the rate.

Rights of Way (RoW) and Countryside Sites

Due to the very wet winter weather, the Rights of Way Team have managed several significant flooding, landslide and cliff fall events around East Sussex in recent months. These have affected public access and are typically longer-term issues which may require a diversion or closure of the affected path. Funding from High Wealth National Landscape (HWNL) has enabled the team to set up a 'free gates for stiles' scheme. Once complete, this will see 120 stiles replaced with gates in the HWNL area. The funding has also provided several new benches for the Forest Way County Park. The team have also begun to install Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) bridges in appropriate locations on the path network. Glass Reinforced Plastic is stronger and has a longer lifespan than timber, so will improve the longevity of the larger bridges we manage.

We completed 95% of high priority maintenance work on schedule in 2023/24, against a target of 80%. Due to continued wet weather in Q4, rangers undertook both reactive and planned work, particularly at countryside sites, where access was possible.

Communities

Trading Standards

79 businesses and individuals received training and advice from Trading Standards in Q4. During 2023/24 a total of 653 businesses and individuals received training and advice, against a target of 350. Trading Standards made 886 positive interventions to protect vulnerable people in Q4. During 2023/24 Trading Standards made 2,669 positive interventions in total, against a target of 200, which included installing call blockers to protect vulnerable people from scammers.

Libraries

7,198 children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge during summer 2023, against a target of 5,100, the highest total since 2018. The challenge aims to encourage primary school children to read books during the summer holidays. 4,258 participants completed the challenge, a 23% increase compared to 2022.

The Libraries team have worked with colleagues across the Council and schools to reintroduce work experience placements at libraries across the county. 65 young people started placements in libraries during 2023/24.

387 people enrolled on Family Learning Programmes at East Sussex libraries in Q4. 197 of these were in Family Learning, English, Maths and Language programmes. 190 were in Wider Family Learning programmes. Throughout 2023/24, 2,051 people enrolled, against a target of 500, with 1,008 of these in Family Learning, English, Maths and Language programmes and 1,043 in Wider Family Learning programmes.

28 people passed online learning courses, including in IT, English and Maths in our libraries in Q4. In total during 2023/24, 88 people passed courses, against a target of 70.

Revenue Budget Summary

The CET revenue budget is £71.641m and has underspent by £1.733m. The largest underspend is in Transport and Operations where current market prices mean that electricity and recycling income exceeded budget in the Waste Service and the budgeted draw down of £2.335m was not required (**ref vi**). The underspend in Communities is mostly due to staff vacancies in Trading Standards and Road Safety with additional income from Emergency Planning training (**ref v**). Customer and Libraries have underspent due to staff costs and additional income in libraries, and slippage in maintenance at the Keep (**ref iv**). The largest overspend is in Highways and is due to the estimated increased cost of electricity for streetlighting (**ref vii**). The overspend in Planning and Environment is mostly within the Transport Development Control budget and can be attributed to the lack of up-to-date Local Plans in the county, which has led to an increase in speculative planning applications for

residential developments, which often have challenging transport issues that need addressing. Consequentially, we have seen a rise in the number of applications that have required specialist input (e.g. transport modelling) and/or have become subject to planning appeals, which are particularly resource intensive and have often required short-term consultancy support (ref ix). The overspend in Economy is mostly due to the cost of consultants engaged to help transition South East Local Enterprise Partnership funded projects back into Council control (ref viii). The Parking saving was not achieved this year and is covered by a one-year budget increase (ref ii). The Environmental Services saving was not achieved and will be addressed going forward (ref iii).

Capital Programme Summary

The CET capital programme has a gross budget of £57.393m and there is slippage of £7.317m, overspend of £566k, and spend in advance of £542k. The slippage is mostly in the Highways Structural Maintenance programme where design work must be completed on larger drainage schemes before construction which will now take place in 2024/25 (ref xv). There have been delays in progressing project briefs which has delayed construction on Other Integrated Transport Schemes (ref xiii). Slippage in the Bridge Strengthening programme is due to wet weather and delays in securing Environment Agency permits (ref xvii). Exceat Bridge has slipped due to outstanding project design, discharging planning conditions and ongoing land acquisitions (ref xiv). The prioritisation of gangs onto carriageway patching works along with high levels of rainfall has caused slippage in road signage and marking schemes (ref xvi). The phase three Broadband contract has now ended however the accrual for the final settlement was overestimated resulting in a negative spend this year (ref x). Slippage in the Bus Service Improvement Plan Bus Priority scheme is due to a public consultation review which may require a rescoping of works in the new year (ref xii). The Bexhill to Hastings Link Road overspend is due to the outstanding archaeology, ecology, and Part 1 compensation claims (ref xi). There are additional schemes with smaller variations to their budgets.

Performance exceptions (Q4 – See How to read this report for definition)

Priority – Driving sustainable economic growth

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Create a pan-Sussex visitor economy group to re-start the leisure, hospitality, culture, retail and tourism economy and enhance existing marketing vehicles	Sussex Tourism Leadership Group established	Develop a shared Sussex Story and assets to promote the region. Develop a shared Sussex Meetings, Inceptive, Conferences and Events (MICE) initiative	G	G	G	R	Completion of shared Sussex Story and assets delayed until 2024/25	i

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
Parking	-	745	-	745	-	ii
Libraries	105	105	105	-	-	
Environmental Services	-	60	-	-	60	iii
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	105	910	105	745	60	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	105	910	105	745	60	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
Parking	745	-	745	
Environmental Services	-	60	60	
Total	745	60	805	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Management and Support	6,214	(4,804)	1,410	4,180	(2,768)	1,412	2,034	(2,036)	(2)	
Customer, Library and Registration	9,986	(4,501)	5,485	9,764	(4,573)	5,191	222	72	294	iv
Communities	3,279	(877)	2,402	3,478	(1,473)	2,005	(199)	596	397	v
Transport & Operational Services	111,471	(69,533)	41,938	107,119	(67,226)	39,893	4,352	(2,307)	2,045	vi
Highways	21,127	(3,578)	17,549	23,492	(5,363)	18,129	(2,365)	1,785	(580)	vii
Economy	3,297	(1,581)	1,716	3,404	(1,548)	1,856	(107)	(33)	(140)	viii
Planning and Environment	4,383	(3,242)	1,141	5,306	(3,884)	1,422	(923)	642	(281)	ix
Total CET	159,757	(88,116)	71,641	156,743	(86,835)	69,908	3,014	(1,281)	1,733	

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
The Keep	1,096	1,096	228	-	228	-	228	-	
Peacehaven Refurbishment and Conversion	70	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Libraries	5,139	5,139	580	442	138	-	138	-	
Broadband	33,800	33,800	160	(269)	429	-	429	-	x
Bexhill and Hastings Link Road	126,247	128,347	-	566	(566)	(566)	-	-	xi
BHLR Complementary Measures	1,800	1,800	100	48	52	-	52	-	
Economic Intervention Fund	8,884	8,884	75	72	3	-	3	-	
Economic Intervention Fund Loans	3,000	3,000	80	53	27	-	27	-	
Stalled Sites Fund	916	916	13	13	-	-	-	-	
EDS Upgrading Empty Commercial Properties	500	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Community Focused Road Safety Interventions	750	750	206	175	31	-	31	-	
Climate Emergency Works	9,929	9,929	3,005	2,831	174	-	174	-	
Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme	963	963	905	1,135	(230)	-	-	(230)	
Flood Management SuDS	420	420	190	202	(12)	-	-	(12)	
SALIX Decarbonisation - Ninfield School	145	145	-	-	-	-	-	-	
SALIX Decarbonisation	369	369	-	12	(12)	-	-	(12)	
Newhaven Port Access Road	23,271	23,271	28	(36)	64	-	64	-	
Real Time Passenger Information	3,181	3,181	155	132	23	-	23	-	
Bus Service Improvement Plan	18,500	18,500	500	188	312	-	312	-	xii
BSIP Passenger Transport	3,815	3,815	2,045	2,174	(129)	-	-	(129)	
Replacement Lewes Road Bus Station	100	100	4	4	-	-	-	-	
PAX Software System	37	37	26	21	5	-	5	-	
Hastings and Bexhill Movement & Access Package	9,583	9,583	(79)	(125)	46	-	46	-	
Eastbourne/South Wealden Walking & Cycling Package	6,936	6,936	79	89	(10)	-	-	(10)	
Hailsham /Polegate/ Eastbourne Movement & Access Corridor	2,251	2,251	350	260	90	-	90	-	

APPENDIX 6

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
Eastbourne Town Centre Movement & Access Package A	6,936	6,936	800	521	279	-	279	-	
Eastbourne Town Centre Movement & Access Package B	5,454	5,454	100	78	22	-	22	-	
Other Integrated Transport Schemes	66,753	66,753	2,695	1,639	1,056	-	1,056	-	xiii
A22 Corridor Package	1,143	1,143	207	207	-	-	-	-	
Community Match Fund	780	780	95	29	66	-	66	-	
Area-wide traffic management scheme – Schools Streets	200	200	175	169	6	-	6	-	
Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2	1,456	1,456	-	(3)	3	3	-	-	
ATF Eastbourne Liveable Town Centre	274	274	37	58	(21)	-	-	(21)	
Hastings Town Centre Public Realm and Green Connections	9,689	9,689	574	359	215	-	215	-	
Exceat Bridge	10,591	10,591	1,259	632	627	-	627	-	xiv
Queensway Depot Development	1,956	1,956	104	(16)	120	-	120	-	
Core Programme - Highways Structural Maintenance	498,675	498,675	35,893	33,877	2,016	-	2,016	-	xv
Visibly Better Roads	5,800	5,800	1,293	789	504	-	504	-	xvi
Core Programme - Bridge Assessment Strengthening	38,785	38,785	2,740	1,955	785	-	785	-	xvii
Core Programme - Street Lighting - Life Expired Equipment	39,561	39,561	2,000	2,150	(150)	-	-	(150)	
Core Programme - Street Lighting - SALIX scheme	2,961	2,961	219	219	-	-	-	-	
Core- Rights of Way Surface Repairs and Bridge Replacement Programme	10,417	10,417	552	534	18	-	18	-	
Total CET Gross (Planned Programme)	963,133	965,233	57,393	51,184	6,209	(563)	7,336	(564)	

Governance Services – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)

Planning for 2024/25 and beyond, culminated with the agreement of the budget and the Council Plan by County Council in February 2024. The plan and budget were informed by engagement events with strategic partners, young people, business representatives and Trade Unions as well as input from scrutiny committees and a survey of local people. The Council Plan and Portfolio Plans 2024/25, which set out our priority and delivery outcomes for the coming year and our plans for delivering them, have been published online. The plans and budget reflect the increasingly challenging financial position facing the Council. This is due to the growth in need for statutory, demand-led, services for vulnerable children and adults, an escalation of costs, and national support and funding not meeting the new costs facing the authority. For the first time, the 2024/25 budget relies on making a significant withdrawal from our limited reserves to bridge the shortfall in funding. This is not a sustainable position, and the forecast for the forthcoming years shows that our reserves would be exhausted within 2 years if we remain reliant on using these to keep our core services running. We will continue to work with our local, regional and national partners to highlight the specific needs of East Sussex, and to press for fair and sustainable allocation of funding that enables us to continue to meet the needs of our residents. In light of the financial position the Council will also need to instigate work to identify a range of actions that it will need to take to set a balanced budget for 2025/26, without the need to draw on reserves.

Our integrated planning process, RPPR, has allowed us to continue to focus and protect our spending where it will deliver our priority objectives most effectively. Through the process we have ensured that we have the demographic trends and performance information to monitor progress through the year, as well as the evidence we need to support lobbying at a local, regional and national level. We began the planning process for 2025/26 in Q4 in preparation for State of the County and are continuing to review our processes to ensure that we are maximising the value for money that we deliver.

Transport for the South East (TfSE)

Regional Centre of Excellence

TfSE has begun delivery of its Centre of Excellence website. Steering groups have been created to shape and inform its development. Seventy local transport authority officers are already registered and there will be an in-person event to launch the work.

We are engaging with professional institutes, partner organisations, national agencies and constituent authorities to understand what resources, tools, knowledge and expertise are desired and can be hosted on the platform.

We are capturing the priorities of local transport authority officers through our capability and capacity survey, which closed on the 22 April 2024. Then, working with our partners, we will develop a pipeline of content to best meet these needs. This data will also be shared with the Department for Transport to support them in their programme of work to boost capacity and capability nationally.

Active Travel

Work on the TfSE Regional [Active Travel](#) Strategy is progressing with the draft strategy due to be completed in summer 2024. The Regional Active Travel Steering Group has met 5 times since the project commenced and their input has been integral to shaping the development of the strategy.

Stage 3 included developing a methodology to identify a strategic active travel network for the region, taking account of input from the project team and Steering Group. The second Technical Report (Strategic Network Identification) has been produced and reviewed by the Steering Group members, and feedback is now being addressed for the final version. The next steps will be to

finalise the strategic network and apply the prioritisation framework developed with Steering Group members to the network.

Freight Forum

England's Economic Heartland (EEH), Transport East (TE), and Transport for the South East (TfSE) have established a Wider South East Freight Forum, which brings together freight and logistics industry representatives such as Logistics UK, the Road Haulage Association, local authorities, business representatives, and ports and airports.

The Forum met for the first time in December 2023. The second meeting in April 2024 focused on the associated with the provision of additional lorry parking and driver welfare facilities. The third meeting in June 2024 will focus on the decarbonisation of the freight and logistics sector.

Delivering the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)

Our Strategic Prioritisation Framework and Methodology was approved by the Partnership Board in January 2024. A key role for Sub-National Transport Bodies (STBs) is to provide advice to Government on transport investment priorities in their areas and this tool provides a robust evidence-led process through which we can respond to such requests.

Corporate Lobbying

Throughout 2023/24 corporate lobbying work focussed on using our partnerships and networks at the local, regional, and national level to influence policy development in a range of areas, including investment in highways and children's services, as well as local authority funding more generally. During Q4, we took the opportunity to outline to East Sussex MPs the severe financial pressures the council is under, and to ask for their support in lobbying ministers to increase the funding provided in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) 2024/25. This successfully resulted in a number of local MPs signing a letter organised by the County Councils' Network that called for more funding in the LGFS and an additional £600m of national funding for social care subsequently being made available in that settlement.

The Leader and Chief Executive have continued to raise issues and priorities for the county with our local MPs, including through specific updates on our Council Plan and the final budget position for 2024/25. In Q4, ahead of a debate in the House of Commons, the Director of Children's Services provided a written briefing to MPs on pressures in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system, which included proposed solutions to address these pressures. This briefing was mentioned during the debate and a copy provided to the Minister for consideration. Chief Officers also continue to influence service specific national policy developments through national professional associations and networks. The Chief Executive has contributed to national policy development throughout 2023/24 as representative for the South East region on a national grouping of local authority Chief Executives. In Q4, this work included discussions on community cohesion, local government performance, productivity and audit and preparations for delivering forthcoming elections.

Supporting democracy

During 2023/24 we supported 159 meetings (40 in Q4) including: 4 County Council meetings (1 in Q4); 8 Cabinet meetings (2 in Q4); 48 Lead Member meetings (11 in Q4); 54 Scrutiny Committees and Review Boards (15 in Q4); and 45 other committees and panels (12 in Q4). We also despatched agendas for a further 24 meetings (7 in Q4). We supported 3 Whole Council Forums (1 in Q4). The webcasts of Council meetings were viewed 7,686 times (2,229 times in Q4). The most viewed meetings were the Planning Committee meeting in July 2023, which was watched 582 times and the Full Council meeting in February 2024, which was watched 573 times, either by live view or as a recording.

The Member Training and Development Programme delivered a wide range of training and briefing sessions to Members throughout 2023/24 (a total of 16 sessions were delivered). Courses included sessions on the role of public health in local government, a climate change update, the

fiduciary duties of the Council, member interests and the code of conduct, race equality in East Sussex and training to support scrutiny committee members in their scrutiny role. To help ensure courses continue to meet the needs of Members, a survey of training needs will be undertaken in Q1. Feedback from the survey will inform the development of a fresh training offer for Members for 2024/25. To help make participation as easy as possible, most training sessions will continue to be delivered remotely with resources, such as slides from training sessions, being saved to the Councillors' area of the intranet for future reference. The Member Reference Group also met on 4 occasions and discussed a range of issues including, for example, a draft social media guidance for councillors.

The Council's scrutiny committees delivered varied work programmes during 2023/24, including a range of scrutiny reviews, reference groups and committee meetings, all of which have provided additional scrutiny and constructive challenge to the work of the Council and partners. In Q4, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee completed a review of changes to paediatric services at Eastbourne District General Hospital. Two scrutiny reviews were completed during Q4 on School Exclusions, and Pothole Management. Scrutiny comments were reported to Cabinet and Council as part of budget and Council Plan setting for 2024/25, following the Place and People Scrutiny RPPR Boards held in December.

During 2023/24 the Place Scrutiny Committee completed its scrutiny work on a draft corporate carbon offset framework and an updated corporate Environment Policy and provided input on the development of a new Economic Growth Strategy for East Sussex. It also continued with scrutiny work on the Local Transport Plan 4. The People Scrutiny Committee completed a scrutiny review of Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care, and continued its scrutiny work on the Health and Social Care Integration Programme and Prevention in Children's Services. The committee also engaged with work on the Adult Social Care Strategy and a Local Government Association peer review of Adult Social Care. In Q4, the People Scrutiny Committee held its annual meeting to review Educational Attainment and Performance.

The Health and Wellbeing Board met on 5 March 2024. The Board considered an update report on the delivery of the East Sussex Shared Delivery Plan (SDP) programme. The Board also received reports on School Attendance as a Public Health Outcome, a focus report on Men's Mental Health projects in East Sussex, and the Rye Listening Tour carried out by Healthwatch East Sussex. During 2023/24, the Board also considered annual reports from the Director of Public Health, Healthwatch, Sussex learning from lives and deaths report, the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board. It also considered reports on Sussex and East Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategies, public health work with planning and creative health, and an update report on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

The East Sussex School Appeal Service received 48 in-year appeals from families during Q4, which resulted in 8 virtual appeal hearing sessions taking place (at each hearing session a number of appeals are usually considered, with parents able to attend in-person if that is their preference). Of the appeals submitted during Q4, 6 were successful, 12 were dismissed by an Independent Appeal Panel, a further 15 were either withdrawn by the families or were not needed because a place became available at their preferred school before the hearing. The remaining 15 appeals are set to be heard in Q1 2024/25. A total of 262 appeals have been received for the September 2024 secondary school intake. These appeals will also be heard in Q1 2024/25.

The service successfully recruited and trained 4 new school appeal clerks. New volunteer Independent Appeal Panel members were also appointed, with training delivered early in Q4.

Also in Q4, an Independent Review Panel (IRP) was convened to review the permanent exclusion of 2 children from a school in East Sussex. The decision of the IRP was to recommend that the Governing Board reconsider the reinstatement of both children to the school.

Across the whole of 2023/24, a total of 615 school admission appeals were received and 52 appeal hearings conducted. A total of 6 school exclusion review requests were also heard by Independent Review Panels.

Legal Services

During Q4, Legal Services assisted Trading Standards to secure a confiscation order of £60,000 following a successful conviction for possession for sale of counterfeit footwear. The money, secured to repay the victims, include £22,500 payable to the Council in respect of the prosecution.

The Service advised in relation to 2 judicial review applications issued against the Council during 2023/24. The first claim was withdrawn following a settlement being agreed. The application for permission to apply, in relations to the second claim, was refused in March 2024; however, the application has been renewed and this is yet to be determined.

During 2023/24 the Service advised in relation to 268 Court of Protection cases and 84 matters involving safeguarding vulnerable adults (compared to 273 and 79 in 2022/23) and in relation to 232 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications in the Court of Protection (up from 191 in 2022/23).

The Service continues to work closely with Children's Services, providing advice and representation, including in pre-proceedings and court applications for care proceedings. Our priority is to keep children within their family when it is safe to do so, and for public law applications to be a necessary and proportionate response to achieve the best outcome for the child. At the end of 2023/24 there were 52 families open in pre-proceedings compared to 48 at the end of 2022/23. In 2023/24 the Service applied for care proceedings in respect of 72 families compared to 71 in 2022/23. At the end of Q4, there were a total of 59 ongoing care proceedings compared to 68 proceedings in Q4 2022/23. In 2023/24 we concluded 81 sets of care proceedings compared to 63 in Q4 2022/23. Of the concluded proceedings 43% were placed in the care of family under special guardianship or child arrangements orders. Concluded proceedings in East Sussex in 2023/24 took on average 47 weeks per child, this is 6 weeks less than in 2022/23. The Service has also continued to provide training and legal advice to Children's Services, including on court work for newly qualified social workers and on policy and operational instructions.

During 2023/24, the Service completed agreements to secure financial contributions to the Council of over £4m, together with the delivery of additions and improvements to the highway network across the county. The Service also advised on 187 new property matters compared to 129 in 2022/23. In addition, the Service advised on 241 new contract and procurement matters compared to 230 in 2022/23.

During Q4, the Service assisted Income Recovery in securing the recovery and repayment of debts totalling £74,671, compared to £39,007 in Q4 2022/23.

Coroner Services

During Q4 2023/24, 585 deaths were reported to the Coroner (compared with 627 in Q4 2022/23), averaging 195 deaths per month. Of those deaths, 46% (269) went on to have a post mortem (compared to 47% in Q4 2022/23). 85 Inquests were opened during Q4, a slight increase on 80 inquests that were opened during Q4 2022/23. 66 Inquests were closed in Q4 2023/24, lower than 125 closed in Q4 2022/23.

In total during 2023/24, 2,211 deaths were reported compared to 2,470 in 2022/23. This averages 184 deaths per month. 46% (1,026) required a post mortem. This is an increase in the percentage for 2022/23 of 42% (1,034), meaning marginally fewer examinations were carried out and averaging 86 postmortems per month. A total of 338 Inquest were opened and 266 Inquests concluded in 2023/24. In 2022/23, 352 inquests were opened and 290 concluded.

7 Inquests were held in 2023/24 with Juries. These are usually held between 1 day and 2 weeks and require additional planning/resources. 112 Inquests were held in writing which do not require court bookings. There are currently 311 open Inquests compared to 242 at the end of 2022/23.

During Q4 the Senior Coroner retired and Fiona King was appointed as Acting Senior Coroner.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

During Q3, Trading Standards reported on an existing Directed Surveillance Authority (DSA), which had commenced in November 2023. The DSA was set to run for a maximum of three months until February 2024. The Authority allowed officers to undertake covert observations on number of retail outlets in East Sussex, where illegal tobacco was on sale. For operational reasons, the DSA was reviewed and cancelled on the 18 January 2024, when it was assessed as no longer required.

Local Government Ombudsman complaints

The Ombudsman issued 22 decisions in Q4. 16 cases were closed before a full investigation for a variety of reasons. These reasons included insufficient evidence of fault, complaints being out of the Ombudsman's jurisdiction because the complaint had not been through our internal complaint process, or an appropriate remedy had already been applied, of which 4 were recorded as upheld.

Of the 6 cases that were fully investigated, 3 cases related to Adult Social Care (ASC) and 3 to Children's Services (CS). All 6 were closed with the complaint partly or fully upheld as follows:

ASC – The client complained that the Council charged her for care, which she thought was free and did not agree to pay for. She said the Council did not assess her finances correctly, as it only looked at incomings and not outgoings such as Disability Related Expenses (DRE).

The Ombudsman found the Council was at fault for delays during the assessment process after the client was discharged from hospital, and for failing to share important information about her care charges. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client and to pay her £400 in recognition of the avoidable distress she suffered. The Council has also agreed to issue a credit of £348 to the client's outstanding balance to account for the backdated DRE.

ASC – The client's spouse complained that the Council failed to deal properly with her husband's care or respect her position as his power of attorney for property and affairs and health and welfare, causing her significant expense and distress.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for failing to deal properly with the complaint, which caused avoidable distress. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client and make payments for the additional costs she incurred and to reflect the long delay in sending her its summary report on the investigation into her concerns.

ASC – The client complained that the Council billed him for top-up fees, which he had already paid directly to the care provider.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for providing duplicate invoices and for not clarifying their process. The Council has agreed to provide the client with a written apology and pay him £200 in recognition of the fault identified.

CS – The client's mother complained that the Council failed to provide suitable education to her son, who has special educational needs.

The Ombudsman found fault with the Council for a delay in considering whether the education it was providing was sufficient, whether its section 19 alternative education duty was triggered and for a delay in issuing the final amended Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan. The Ombudsman also found fault with the Council's communication with the client's mother. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client's mother and pay her £2,900 for the benefit of her son, who missed out on alternative education, and £750 in recognition of the avoidable stress caused by the faults identified.

The Council has also agreed to implement a timescale for decisions about whether its section 19 alternative education duty is triggered to prevent delays and ensure children do not remain out of education for longer than necessary.

CS – The client’s mother complained that the Council delayed processing her daughter’s annual review and failed to consider her safety and welfare during the request for a change of placement. The client’s mother also said that the Council failed to consider all her comments and evidence, when it responded to her complaint.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for its delays during the annual review process. Furthermore, it failed to evidence that it had considered all relevant information when deciding on a suitable placement. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client’s mother and pay £250 for her frustration and distress and £1,000 for the loss of her daughter’s educational provision from June to October 2023.

The Council has also agreed to ensure it has a robust process in place to monitor when the annual review of an EHC Plan is due; and to ensure it has a process in place to keep detailed and contemporaneous records of special educational needs panel meetings.

CS – The client’s mother complained that the Council failed to provide alternative education to her son after he was permanently excluded from school. She also complained that the Council delayed finding him another school and refused to issue him with an EHC Plan.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for not providing alternative education to the client. The Council has agreed to apologise and to pay the client’s mother £500 in recognition of the distress caused and £1,500 for the 11 weeks her son did not receive any provision.

Web activity

There were 1,954,700 unique pageviews of the Council website in Q4 (and more than 7.2 million across the whole of 2023/24). In Q4, the jobs section of the site was viewed more than 600,000 times. Customer satisfaction with the website was 64%.

Media and information work

During 2023/24 the press office handled 470 media enquiries and issued 108 press releases which generated 261 media stories. There were 1,415 stories published in total about the Council during 2023/24.

In Q4, the press office dealt with 157 media enquiries and issued 31 press releases. In March, there were 138 media stories about the Council, 94 of which were positive or neutral.

Effective publicity and campaigns

Examples of successful campaigns include a campaign to recruit more hosts for Ukrainian people settling in East Sussex, 5 new hosts have been attracted so far. The campaign used personal stories from hosts and Ukrainians, who’ve already thrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. We promoted the campaign through a mix of paid-for and organic social media posts with print advertising and editorial, posters at transport sites and digital screens at supermarkets. The recruitment of 5 new hosts equates to a saving of around £27,000 by avoiding the costs of emergency accommodation.

Three pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinics in East Sussex libraries were publicised through no-cost social media and web posts and with a library poster campaign. 300 at-risk people attended for a vaccination, filling the available capacity.

South East 7 (SE7)

Throughout 2023/24, the SE7 partnership continued to provide a valuable forum for sharing intelligence on the rapidly evolving national policy context and developing joint lobbying messages to position the partnership’s interests ahead of an expected general election. The SE7 partnership has also helped provide understanding on how neighbouring councils are responding to shared challenges, which this year has particularly focused on highways maintenance, asylum dispersal and demand and cost pressures in children’s services, including special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and Home to School Transport.

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
Total	0	0	0	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Strategic Risk Register – Q4 2023/24

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
5	<p>RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE & RESOURCE</p> <p>There is ongoing uncertainty in relation to future funding levels, the longer-term local government funding regime, and the impact of national reforms, particularly across Children’s Social Care and Adult Social Care. The impact of a period of high inflation/cost of living are leading to higher demand for Council services and have increased the direct cost of providing services. Together these create a risk of insufficient resources being available to sustain service delivery at the agreed Core Offer level to meet the changing needs of the local community.</p> <p>The proposed budget for 2024/25 requires a draw from the Financial Management Reserve to balance the budget.</p>	<p>We employ a robust Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process for business planning, which ensures a strategic corporate response to resource reductions, demographic change, and regional and national economic challenges; and directs resources to priority areas. We take a commissioning approach to evaluating need and we consider all methods of service delivery. We work with partner organisations to deliver services and manage demand, making best use of our collective resources. We take a 'One Council' approach to delivering our priorities and set out our targets and objectives in the Council Plan. We monitor our progress and report it quarterly.</p> <p>Our plans take account of known risks and pressures, including social, economic, policy and demographic changes and financial risks. However, we continue to operate in changing and uncertain contexts. Current and forecast economic conditions continue to shape a very challenging financial outlook both for the Council itself and many of the county’s residents and businesses. Alongside this we continue to face ongoing challenges as a result of the persistent legacy of Covid, the increased cost of living and other national and international factors. We will continue to use the latest information available on these challenges to inform our business planning. We will also continually review our performance targets, priorities, service offers and financial plans, and will update these as required. As part of this we will continue to take action wherever we can to mitigate financial and service delivery pressures – making best use of new technology, investing in our workforce, seeking efficiencies, and checking that our services are effective and provide value for money. We will look to develop and implement further measures to address the funding challenges we face.</p> <p>We lobby, individually and in conjunction with our networks and partners, for a sustainable funding regime for local government in general and for children’s social care and adult social care specifically, to meet the needs of the residents of East Sussex.</p>	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
12	<p>CYBER ATTACK</p> <p>The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has highlighted the substantial risk to British web infrastructure, with elevated levels of Cyber Crime being reported against all areas of government, particularly in light of current international unrest.</p> <p>Cyber-attacks are growing more frequent, sophisticated, and damaging when they succeed. With many additional functions now routinely carried out virtually and remotely, the change in working practice gives rise to more requests to relax security controls, with services more likely to take risks on the technology they procure and how they use it. Controls have been enhanced to manage these requests.</p> <p>The impacts of a cyber-attack are far-reaching, and it is difficult to put a figure on the cost, but authorities that have been subject to major attacks have calculated the disruption to have cost between £10m and £12m.</p>	<p>Most attacks leverage software flaws and gaps in boundary defences. IT&D use modern security tools to assure our security posture: Monitoring network activity and identifying security threats; Keeping software up to date with regular patching regimes; Continually monitoring evolving threats and re-evaluating the ability of our toolset to provide adequate defence against them; Ongoing communication with the Security industry to find the most suitable tools and systems to secure our infrastructure. IT&D continues to invest in new tools, which use pre-emptive technology to identify threats and patterns of abnormal behaviour. The Council achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation during 2022/23. Cyber Essentials Plus is the industry standard for the private and public sectors, underpinning safe sharing with partners and helping ensure sufficient controls are in place to minimise the risk of a cyber incident.</p> <p>Enhancing user awareness: Expanding E-Learning and policy delivery mechanisms to cover Cyber threat; educating staff around the techniques and methods used by active threats; and providing General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training and workshops to cascade vital skills and increase awareness of responsibilities under GDPR legislation. Business Continuity Scenario testing has been cascaded through Departmental Management Teams.</p> <p>Services hosted in ISO 27001 accredited Orbis Data Centres.</p>	Red
9	<p>WORKFORCE</p> <p>An inability to attract and retain the high calibre staff needed could lead to a reduction in the expertise and capacity required to deliver statutory services to our residents, including to prevent harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults at the required level and standards, impacting on the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives.</p>	<p>Following Cabinet's agreement to additional investment of £270k across 2022/23 and 2023/24, a number of strategies responding to the current significant recruitment and retention challenges have been put in place. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-going attendance at events such as careers fairs and shows to maximise our presence with job seekers. - The new Pre-Employment Coordinator postholder has linked in with organisations that support people back into employment to extend our reach into sections of the labour market that are underrepresented or face significant barriers to employment. - Continued use of apprenticeships, traineeships, intern arrangements and more flexible work arrangements etc as a way of bringing in new talent to the Council. - Continued delivery of our two leadership development programmes to support our talent management strategies: the 'Ladder to Leadership' programme and 'Head of Service Masterclasses'. The second cohort of the Ladder to Leadership programme started in September 2023 and are making good progress on the programme. <p>Additional work undertaken in Q4 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of an exit interview pilot which is running for 3 months in the first instance to enable an assessment of success. 	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement with all DMTs and other senior management forums to determine the Council's future strategic workforce planning approach - Delivery of a masterclass on the use of AI in the Council led by specialists from Microsoft - Provision of information sessions and training around application and interview techniques for candidates who want to apply for roles at East Sussex County Council (ESCC) - Engagement with employees at ESCC, who are under 25, to get feedback on what attracted them to the Council as an employer; and to begin establishing a forum for young people in the new year to highlight any issues, and to attract candidates from a younger demographic to the Council 	
15	<p>CLIMATE</p> <p>Failure to limit global warming to below 1.5°C above pre-industrialisation levels, which requires global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) to be reduced by about 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching 'net zero' by 2050 at the latest. The predicted impacts of climate change in East Sussex include more frequent and intense flooding, drought, and episodes of extreme heat, as well as impacts from the effects of climate change overseas, such as on food supply. This will lead to an increase in heat-related deaths, particularly amongst the elderly, damage to essential infrastructure, increased cost of food, disruption to supply chains and service provision, and greater coastal erosion.</p>	<p>Climate change mitigation: the science-based target is to reduce scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 50% every 5 years (equating to 13% per year). The focus is on buildings, as they made up 79% of carbon emissions in 2020/21. Internal oversight of progress is by the corporate Climate Emergency Board.</p> <p>Climate change adaptation: we work with partners on some aspects of adaptation, including flood risk management plans and delivering a Heat Alert service during the summer months.</p> <p>In Quarter 4 2023/24:</p> <p>A) Mitigation:</p> <p>1) Carbon Reduction Target: the target for 2023-24 is a 13% carbon reduction compared with 2022-23 and a cumulative reduction of 42% against the baseline year of 2019-20. Energy usage data for Qs 1-3 2023-24 indicates that we achieved about a 9% reduction in energy usage compared with Qs 1-3 in 2022-23. However, the carbon emissions from our energy usage increased because the national electricity grid has become temporarily more carbon intensive in 2023-24 due to an increase in fossil fuels and a reduction in renewables to run the system. This is beyond the control of the County Council. If energy usage in Q4 was similar to 2022-23 then the annual result for 2023-24 will be about a 1% overall decrease in carbon emissions compared with 2022-23. The final outturn will be available in August and will be reported to full Council in October 2024.</p> <p>2) Carbon Reduction Schemes: the target for 2023-24 was for the delivery of a further 23 capital schemes. 25 schemes were completed by the end of Q4.</p> <p>B) Adaptation:</p> <p>1) Adaptation Plan: In August the Climate Emergency Board agreed to the procurement of consultancy support to produce a climate change vulnerability and risk assessment, to help inform the development of a corporate adaptation plan. Arup have been appointed and are due to complete the assessment in May 2024.</p>	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
20	<p>PLACEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CARE</p> <p>Inability to secure sufficient high quality placements for children in our care, suitable accommodation for care experienced young people and respite provision, leading to significant financial pressure leading to significant financial pressure and poorer outcomes for children/young people.</p>	<p>Effective demand management, robust management of front door.</p> <p>Delivery of early help services, implementation of Family Hub programme throughout 2023-24, and Level 2 Family Keyworkers (Q3).</p> <p>Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of Edge of Care 'Connected Families', Family Safeguarding programmes ('Connected Families in Partnership' launch planned for January 2024), enabling more children to live safely with their families.</p> <p>Further delivery of kinship/Special Guardianship Order placements.</p> <p>Capital bid for Sorrel Drive.</p> <p>Consultancy project-IMPOWER to determine forecast trajectory and development of evidence-based business case to further improve sufficiency of placements.</p> <p>Fostering Recruitment & Retention Strategy completed. East Sussex County Council is part of the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme, Regional Fostering Strategy, and piloting Mockingbird hub.</p> <p>Uplift to fostering allowance (for in house carers, Special Guardianship Orders, Kinship carers) approved by the Chief Management Team to help secure sufficient supply of in house foster carers as an alternative to more expensive care packages.</p> <p>In Q3, the valuing care tools have been embedded into the business as usual with a strong focus on reunification.</p> <p>Fostering allowance uplift has been made part of the recruitment drive. Both elements are attempting to mitigate the increased costs due to the lack of placements for Looked After Children.</p>	Red
19	<p>SCHOOLS AND INCLUSION, SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (ISEND)</p> <p>For Children with Special Educational Needs. Inability to secure statutory provision due to lack of availability of specialist placement within the county and increasing demand for placements in this sector. This would put the Council at risk of judicial review and/or negative Local Government Ombudsman judgements for failing to meet our duties within the Children and Families Act 2014, with associated financial penalties and reputational damage.</p>	<p>Effective use of forecasting data to pre-empt issues.</p> <p>Work with statutory partners to develop contingency plans.</p> <p>Work with the market to increase provision where needed.</p> <p>Expanding internal interim offer for children.</p>	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
1	<p>ROADS</p> <p>Extreme weather events over recent years, including this winter, have caused significant damage to many of the county’s roads, adding to the backlog of maintenance in the County Council’s Asset Plan: and increasing the risk to the Council’s ability to stem the rate of deterioration and maintain road condition.</p> <p>The economic impacts of the pandemic and recent events in Ukraine have had some effects on service delivery during this year, particularly with increased costs and shortages of suitable contractors and materials.</p>	<p>The changing climate is now influencing the rate of road deterioration, with more extreme events such as warmer wetter winters; and drier summers punctuated by unseasonal heavy downpours (drying and shrinking the substructure of roads). Additional funding over the last few years has helped maintain road condition, however, the latest condition and funding modelling showed the potential for deterioration over the next 10 years. Additional carriageway patching, footway, signing, and lining works were carried out with additional budget allocated through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process in 2023 and Cabinet approved additional investment of £15.7m in June 2023 for highway maintenance. The improvements are well underway to provide greater network reliance. Deterioration in road surfaces in 2023/24 has continued with a generally cool and wet summer and wet start to winter and spring.</p> <p>Road Condition Indicator (RCI) scores for this year indicate we are on target for principal roads but slightly below target for non-principal and unclassified roads, this is what we expected from the modelling given the current conditions. The evidence shows the current wet weather is taking its toll on the condition of many of the county’s roads, with large numbers of potholes forming daily and roads deteriorating. Mitigations include encouraging road users to report potholes so we can intervene as soon as possible in accordance with our policies and lobbying Government for additional investment as, without it, it will be increasingly difficult to manage the risks of further decline.</p>	Red
18	<p>DATA BREACH</p> <p>A breach of security/confidentiality leading to destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data. This includes breaches that are the result of both accidental and deliberate causes. A personal data breach is a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of personal data regardless of whether information has been accessed, altered, or disclosed via electronic or manual means.</p> <p>Risks to individuals, reputational damage, fines from the Information Commissioner’s Officer (ICO), compensation claims.</p>	<p>Policy and guidance procedures in place to support practice.</p> <p>Data Protection Officer (DPO), Caldicott Guardians and Information Governance Officers monitor breach reporting and put in place mechanisms to minimise recurrence.</p> <p>Staff training to develop awareness. E-learning and policy delivery mechanism expanded to enhance skills and increase awareness of responsibilities under General Data Protection Regulation legislation.</p> <p>Technical security measures operated by Information Technology and Digital (IT&D), including access control and segregation of duties.</p>	Amber

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
8	<p>CAPITAL PROGRAMME</p> <p>There are risks and uncertainties regarding the capital programme over the current Medium Term Financial Plan period and beyond, which could impact on the ability to deliver the Council's priorities and set a balanced budget.</p> <p>Factors such as inflation, supply chain issues, unforeseen operational risks, and wider economic and geopolitical factors are likely to impact project deliverability and affordability.</p> <p>Additionally, if capital expenditure isn't profiled accurately, then significant slippage against the budgeted programme can undermine the planning process, particularly in relation to treasury management modelling and the impact of borrowing.</p> <p>Due to the complexity of factors and uncertainties impacting them, the level of government grants and other sources of capital programme funding such as developer contributions and capital receipts could be significantly reduced.</p> <p>A combination of the above risks, alongside a volatile interest rate environment, could significantly increase the cost of borrowing to fund the capital programme, increasing pressures on the Council's revenue budget in an already challenging financial environment.</p>	<p>The Council reviews and updates its 20-year Capital Strategy annually as part of the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process, which sets the framework in which the capital programme is planned and allows the Council to prioritise investment to support its objectives. The development and delivery of the capital programme is overseen by a Capital Strategic Asset Board (CSAB), which is a cross departmental group, who also hear from Departmental Capital Board/Sub Boards who oversee priority areas.</p> <p>The capital programme includes an element of 'normal' level of inflation for ongoing target-based core programmes (as opposed to programmes that have cash limited envelopes). Additionally, a capital risk provision in the form of additional borrowing flexibility is in place to provide the ability to react to emerging risks such as supply chain issues and inflationary pressures. The level of provision is reviewed and approved on an annual basis as part of the RPPR process and is maintained by the CSAB in adherence to financial regulations.</p> <p>As part of the RPPR process, services are asked to provide a profiled programme based on best knowledge, which is reviewed and challenged by CSAB, to ensure the programme is profiled as accurately as possible. A corporate slippage risk factor can be applied to the programme to reflect likely programme spend to provide greater robustness to the planning and monitoring process.</p> <p>The CSAB have oversight of all sources of capital funding, including grants, capital receipts and developer contributions, to ensure that assumptions are prudent and realistic, and funds are used effectively and to minimise the need to borrow. Funding announcements are actively monitored, and funding targets reviewed to minimise the impact on delivery of the capital programme, ensuring that there is sufficient liquidity to meet funding requirements. The cost of borrowing for the capital programme has a direct impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan position, therefore capital investment decisions are considered as part of the RPPR process based on Treasury Management capacity and affordability in the context of the Council's wider financial position. The Council's approved Treasury Management Policy and Strategy has been prepared in the context of the current financial situation and seeks to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable.</p>	Amber

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
6	<p>LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p>The transfer of South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) responsibilities and functions to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) does not successfully integrate the development of economic strategic planning, business support, and management of capital funded programmes, into Council operations as required by Government policy.</p> <p>Possible consequences if the transfer is not managed successfully include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Management, monitoring, and evaluation of the current capital programmes do not meet Government requirements, leading to potential clawback of £m funds; or an inability for ESCC to demonstrate it can manage funds successfully, affecting future allocations of growth funds. •Third parties with existing contracts may raise concerns if new / variation funding agreements are not put in place early from April 2024. •Loss of an effective 'business voice' through the current local economic growth board (Team East Sussex) and its various subgroups. •An inability to produce an agreed local economic strategy, which sets the ambitions, objectives, and key outcomes for East Sussex. 	<p>East Sussex County Council, working with partners, has successfully secured significant amounts of local growth funding totalling £127m since 2012 via the South East and Coast 2 Capital Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), to deliver a wide range of infrastructure projects in East Sussex. In August 2023, Government formally announced that direct funding for LEPs will be removed from April 2024. Upper tier local authorities (UTLA's) will then be required to take on the current non-statutory LEP powers, responsibilities, and functions. These include strategy development, business support and oversight/management of capital programmes. We submitted our proposal to Government in November 2023 to become an UTLA as per the guidance issued. East Sussex is eligible to be determined a 'functional economic area' to take on LEP responsibilities, but we still await a formal decision on this from Government.</p> <p>The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and East Sussex County Council have produced draft integration plans to mitigate the transfer risks on current and future capital programmes; and the financial, legal, and reputational risks. SELEP and our own Corporate Management Team endorsed the draft integration plans in Q3, and the plans have been taken to Lead Member in January 2024 and Cabinet in March 2024 to seek approval. Further Government guidance and an Assurance Framework are due to be released either in March or in new financial year to set out transition arrangements.</p> <p>Looking ahead, the lack of large-scale funding programmes to support economic growth across the county presents a big risk to us. Recent funds have been awarded directly to local Borough and District authorities (e.g., UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Levelling Up Funds and Long Term Plan for Towns) or funding has come from time-limited specific sources.</p> <p>The County Council and Team East Sussex, the local economic growth board, are jointly committed to producing a longer-term East Sussex Economic Growth Strategy to 2050. The strategy will set out our collective approach to take advantage of future funding sources as they become available. Significant work has been completed with consultants and stakeholder consultations and a draft strategy produced in March 2024. The draft strategy is currently being reviewed by partners and is scheduled for approval in 2024 and will help to mitigate economic strategic planning risks.</p> <p>The County Council is already in a good position to mitigate the risks on business support and ensuring business has a voice. We directly run the Business East Sussex Growth Hub services and Government have committed to fund this in 2024/25 although a contract has yet to be issued and funding not yet confirmed. We will also ensure the business voice continues to be heard through Team East Sussex, our local strategic advisory economic growth board for the county.</p>	Amber

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
4	<p>HEALTH</p> <p>Failure to secure maximum value from partnership working with the National Health Service (NHS). If not achieved, there will be impact on social care, public health and health outcomes and increased social care operational and cost pressures. This would add pressures on the Council's budget and/or risks to other Council objectives, as well as shared system objectives in the context of our Integrated Care System across workforce and patients who are medically ready for discharge (MRD) from hospital or community beds.</p>	<p>East Sussex was allocated £5,088m, as part of the national Government Discharge Fund Grant for 2024/25, to support local authorities to build additional adult social care and community-based reablement capacity to reduce hospital discharge delays by delivering sustainable improvements to services for individuals. Plans for 2024/25 take account of the Discharge Frontrunner Economic Modelling and review report focussed on improving discharge to home, alongside increased therapy and assessment provision and associated plans to reduce the use of bedded discharge pathways. Funding has been agreed for Q1 2024/25 and Q2, 3 and 4 will be determined alongside the actions required to achieve the recommendations from the review report. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) has retained the £4m uplift, to be used as transformation monies to cover dual running costs/ pump priming to affect the change and pace needed to avoid delays in hospital settings.</p> <p>In 2023/24 we have agreed our Integrated Community Team (ICT) footprints, which align with borough and district boundaries, and a pan-Sussex core offer for ICTs has been developed, focussed on proactive care for the most complex and vulnerable patients, and population health improvement. Alongside this, ICTs will also address local priorities based on intelligence and insight, and data and insight packs have been produced for each area to help further understand and address local health and care needs and inequalities. Building on our progress with integrated care in East Sussex, Hastings is our 'community frontrunner' area for developing the ICT model. The next phase of development will aim to identify current and relevant tests of change to further integrate service delivery, and action planning to support this.</p>	Amber