

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 16 July 2024

**Report By:** Chief Operating Officer

**Title of Report:** Ashdown Forest Trust Fund

**Purpose of Report:** To inform Cabinet of the movements on the Trust Fund during 2023/24 and the closing position as at 31 March 2024.

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet is recommended to note the report and the Ashdown Forest's Trust Income and Expenditure Account for 2023/24 and Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024.**

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### **1. Background**

- 1.1. The Ashdown Forest Trust, a registered charity, was set out by declaration of Trust in 1988. East Sussex County Council is the trustee and agrees grants made to the Ashdown Forest Conservators, from the Ashdown Forest Trust Fund.

### **2. Supporting Information**

#### **2022/23 Accounts**

- 2.1. Subsequent to the 2022/23 accounts being approved, the independent Examination process has now been completed in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011.
- 2.2. The Examiner's report is attached as Appendix 1. It does not identify any issues that require any further action by the Council as the trustees.

#### **2023/24 Accounts**

- 2.3. The Trust's Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet are set out in the attached Appendix 2. The Income and Expenditure Account shows a surplus in 2023/24 of £7,196, as a result of no legal cost being incurred during the year.
- 2.4. The main source of income to the Trust relates to the rent from the Royal Ashdown Golf Club at £70,000 per annum. The only other income this year was from bank interest.
- 2.5. The expenditure mostly relates to the £65,100 grant paid to the Ashdown Forest Conservators. The remaining expenditure was for audit fees.
- 2.6. The accumulative General Reserve totalled £179,284 at 31 March 2024.
- 2.7. A formal annual report and statement of accounts will be compiled in accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) by the end of January 2025, once the Independent Examiner report has been received.

### **3. Conclusion and Recommendation**

- 3.1. The trust made an operating surplus of £7,196 during 2023/24. The General Reserve as at 31 March 2024 amounts to £179,284. This fund is available to finance expenditure which meets the Trust's objectives.
- 3.2. Cabinet is recommended to note the final accounts for the Ashdown Forest Trust.

**ROS PARKER**  
**Chief Operating Officer**

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