

NOTICE OF MOTION – HIGHWAYS

AMENDMENT TO THE NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR OSBOURNE.

This Council Resolves to:

(delete the following wording)

~~Request the Cabinet to bring the highways service back into council ownership and control by 2030.~~

~~This will likely involve:~~

- ~~• Adopting an "In-house by Default" and Intelligent Client Policy, making direct delivery the baseline against which all future outsourcing proposals are measured.~~
- ~~• Mandating a formal Insourcing and Council Ownership Feasibility Study for the Highways Term Maintenance Contract (TMC) no later than 18 months before its expiry.~~
- ~~• Developing a "Public Interest Test" for all major contracts, assessing:~~
 - ~~○ Financial Transparency: Removal of contractor profit margins.~~
 - ~~○ Social Value: Ensuring the Real Living Wage and local apprenticeships.~~
 - ~~○ Agility: The ability to redirect resources instantly without contractual penalty.~~

[replace with the following wording]

1. Recognise the core issue is long-term national underfunding of highways maintenance, placing growing pressure on East Sussex residents and road users.
2. Call on Government to provide fair, sustained funding to enable proper planned maintenance and reduce costly reactive repairs.
3. Confirm that all delivery options — including in-house provision — are already fully and fairly assessed at each contract renewal and supports a fair and open approach to future service delivery decisions based on evidence, value for money, and the best interests of residents.
4. Note the significant practical and financial risks of bringing highways fully in-house, including:
 - Substantial upfront capital costs (vehicles, depots, equipment), likely requiring additional borrowing
 - Higher long-term pension liabilities falling on taxpayers
 - Loss of flexible access to regional resources during peak demand
 - Transfer of financial and operational risk from contractor to council
 - No guarantee of lower overall costs despite removal of contractor profit
5. Recognise that current contracts already deliver strong social value, including local employment, apprenticeships, and community investment.
6. Request Cabinet to continue securing best value for residents through robust procurement, strong contract management, clear performance standards, and taking firm action where contractors fail to deliver.
7. Request this motion is sent to Place Scrutiny Committee for the in depth and detailed analysis this issue needs before a decision is made.