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Cabinet (Extraordinary)

7 May 2020



Time: 3.00 pm

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Membership:

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair); Councillors James MacCleary (Vice-Chair) Matthew Bird, Julie Carr, Chris Collier, Johnny Denis, William Meyer, Emily O'Brien and Ruth O'Keeffe

Quorum: 4

Published: Wednesday, 29 April 2020

Agenda

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2020 (Pages 5 - 16)

2 Apologies for absence

3 Declarations of interest

Disclosure by councillors of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the councillor regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.

4 Urgent items

Items not on the agenda which the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances as defined in Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972. A supplementary report will be circulated at the meeting to update the main reports with any late information.

5 Public question time

To deal with any questions received from members of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11 (if any).

6 Written question from councillors

To deal with written questions which councillors may wish to put to the Chair of the Cabinet in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12 (if any).

7 Matters referred to the Cabinet

Matters referred to the Cabinet (whether by the Scrutiny Committee or by the Council) for reconsideration by the Cabinet in accordance with the provisions contained in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out in part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

None.

8 Council response to Covid-19 (Pages 17 - 36)

Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Zoe Nicholson

9 Initial financial assessment of Covid-19 (Pages 37 - 56)

Report of Chief Finance Officer
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Zoe Nicholson

Information for the public

Accessibility: Please note that the venue for this meeting is wheelchair accessible and has an induction loop to help people who are hearing impaired. This agenda and accompanying reports are published on the Council's website in PDF format which means you can use the "read out loud" facility of Adobe Acrobat Reader.

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Public participation: Please contact Democratic Services (see end of agenda) for the relevant deadlines for registering to speak on a matter which is listed on the agenda if applicable.

Information for councillors

Disclosure of interests: Members should declare their interest in a matter at the beginning of the meeting.

In the case of a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), if the interest is not registered (nor the subject of a pending notification) details of the nature of the interest must be reported to the meeting by the member and subsequently notified in writing to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

If a member has a DPI or other prejudicial interest he/she must leave the room when the matter is being considered (unless he/she has obtained a dispensation).

Councillor question: A member of the Council may ask the Chair of a committee or sub-committee a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the District and which falls within the terms of reference of that committee or sub-committee.

A member must give notice of the question to the Head of Democratic Services in writing or by electronic mail no later than close of business on the fourth working day before the meeting at which the question is to be asked.

Other participation: Please contact Democratic Services (see end of agenda) for the relevant deadlines for registering to speak on a matter which is listed on the agenda if applicable.

Democratic Services

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Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held in Ditchling Room at Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes, BN7 1AB on 10 February 2020 at 2.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair)

Councillors James MacCleary (Vice-Chair), Matthew Bird, Julie Carr, Johnny Denis, Emily O'Brien and Ruth O'Keeffe

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Homira Javadi (Chief Finance Officer), Ian Fitzpatrick (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning), Tim Whelan (Director of Service Delivery), Catherine Knight (Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services), Andrew Clarke (Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Financial Planning)), Oliver Dixon (Senior Lawyer and Data Protection Officer), Gary Hall (Head of Homes First), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance), Simon Russell (Committee and Civic Services Manager), Millie McDevitt (Performance and Programmes Lead), Ola Owolabi (Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Corporate Finance)), Leighton Rowe (Development Project Manager), Seanne Sweeney (Strategy and Commissioning Lead for Community and Partnerships) and Tondra Thom (Planning Policy Lead)

Also in attendance:

Councillor Roy Burman, Councillor Isabelle Linington (Leader of the Opposition), Councillor Joe Miller (Chair of Scrutiny Committee) and Councillor Julian Peterson (Chair of Audit and Standards Committee)

Mr John Langley (Tenants' Representative)

47 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2019 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

48 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were reported from Councillors Collier and Meyer and Ms Debbie Twitchen, Tenants Representative.

49 Declarations of interest

Councillor O’Keeffe declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 (Voluntary sector support) as a trustee of Lewes Citizens Advice Bureau and stayed in the room but did not participate in the vote on the matter.

50 Public question time

Dr Jennifer Chibnall submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Zoe Nicholson.

Question

I am mindful that the present Council probably have more sustainable ambitions for North Street than has previously been the case. And also that the issue is a difficult one. However questions are asked of those of us who have considered these plans so I wonder if there is any information that the Council can give to reassure those who have objected to the Santon/MAS rei plans as not conforming to the policies of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) Local Plan and the Lewes Neighbourhood Development Plan?

The SDNPA Policy SD57 on North Street is described as ‘designed to be sufficiently flexible to allow other proposals to come forward to achieve National park objectives should the consented scheme (or phases of the consented scheme) not proceed and/or other proposals come forward’. (p214). This cannot help but give us hope. Some of us indeed hope this may include, not least on grounds of sustainability, saving especially the significant Every buildings as work and community space.

Councillor Nicholson confirmed that the Director of Regeneration and Planning or a representative would arrange a meeting with Dr Chibnall to answer her question fully.

51 Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 3 - 2019-2020

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning regarding the Council’s progress and performance in respect of key projects and targets contained in the Corporate Plan 2016-20 for the second and third quarters of the year (July- December 2019) as shown at appendix 1 to the report.

There were 25 performance indicators contained in the report, with 17 performing at or above the target set and 5 performing below target. Further commentary was contained within the report.

Resolved (Non-key decision)

To note progress and performance for Quarter 3 and Quarter 2.

Reason for decisions:

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the Council's progress and performance.

52 Corporate plan 2020-24

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning regarding the draft Lewes District Council Corporate Plan 2020-24.

The draft Plan was currently out for public and key stakeholder consultation using a range of methods. This would strengthen the document in advance of its submission to Full Council in February 2020.

Subject to the addition of a reference to the phone as a channel to respond to customer enquiries in the section titled "Customer Service Charter" the Cabinet unanimously agreed the report recommendations.

Resolved (Non-key decision)

That the draft Corporate Plan for 2020-2024 be considered.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

That the new Corporate Plan for 2020-2024 be adopted.

Reason for decision:

To enable the Council to set out its strategic vision, objectives and priority projects for the next four years and provide a firm basis for forward planning and performance management.

53 Voluntary sector support

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning providing them with an overview of how funding provided by the Council in 2019/20 has been spent by funded organisations, to initiate a policy review and to seek their agreement to confirm the planned grant allocation for 2020/21.

Councillor O'Keeffe declared a prejudicial interest in this item. She remained in the room but did not vote on the matter.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To confirm the planned allocation of funding to voluntary organisations for 2020/21, as set out at paragraph 3.19 in the report.

(2) To undertake a fundamental review of the Council's grant policy in line with the new corporate plan, with recommendations for potential options being reported to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

(3) To agree that any alteration to the grants policy will not impact on the current 3 year funding plan, so as to minimise impacts on planned activities by Council's funded partners.

Reason for decisions:

(1) To allow continuation of funds to key voluntary organisations to enable the programmed delivery of services in the district.

(2) To enable Members to consider whether they wish any changes to be made in the way that grants are allocated in the future.

54 'Making' the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning regarding the potential adoption of the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan following the successful referendum on 6 February 2020.

5,566 voted in support of the Neighbourhood Plan, with 673 voting against.

Thanks were conveyed to Seaford Town Council and officers from the District Council who were involved and contributed to the production of the neighbourhood plan.

The Cabinet would continue to work closely with Town and Parish Councils to ensure all relevant information for future neighbourhood plan processes was as accessible as possible for all interested parties.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

To recommend that the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan is formally adopted/'made' as part of the statutory development plan for the district.

Reason for decision:

To ensure the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' within the timeframe set out by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

55 Adoption of the Lewes District Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations & Development Management

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning seeking adoption of the Lewes District Local Plan Part 2, incorporating the modifications set out in the Examination Inspector's report, as part of the statutory development plan for the district.

Subject to the adoption of the Seaford Neighbourhood Plan, minor revisions would be made to appendix 2 and 3 of the Plan.

Thanks were conveyed to officers for their work in progressing the plan and the previous administration for starting the process.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

(1) To recommend that the Lewes District Local Plan Part 2, amended to incorporate the main modifications set out in the Examination Inspector's report, is adopted as part of the statutory development plan for the district in accordance with Section 23 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation 26 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;

(2) To recommend that the Lewes District Local Plan Part 2 is published, together with the relevant adoption statements, Policies Map, and Sustainability Appraisal in accordance with Regulations 26 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012;

(3) To recommend that the Director of Regeneration & Planning be authorised to agree any minor editorial corrections identified prior to publication of the adopted Lewes District Local Plan Part 2.

Reason for decisions:

To ensure that the Council has an up-to-date and comprehensive statutory development plan to guide decisions on individual planning applications for development in that part of the district outside the South Downs National Park.

56 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-Year Business Plan Update

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Regeneration and Planning presenting a new Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-Year Business Plan covering the years from 2019/20 to 2048/49, describing the assumptions that underpin it and highlighting the changes in approach, policy and aspirations when compared to previous plans.

The Director of Regeneration and Planning commented that the process in producing the proposals was developed in collaboration with the Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD).

In response to a question around an increase in management costs, it was clarified that the new Business Plan would enhance services to HRA tenants and residents. Enhancements would focus on areas that were highlighted by residents during service reviews and general feedback. Areas that could be targeted were anti-social behaviour, multiple complex needs, social inclusion, sheltered housing, customer engagement, fuel poverty and neighbourhood area improvement. It was also anticipated that further support would be provided to those most affected by Universal Credit or suffering from reduced incomes.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (1) To adopt Lewes' HRA 30-Year Business Plan as a basis for operating the future HRA business.
- (2) To agree the assumptions underpinning it.
- (3) To note that the plan has been used as the starting point for setting the 2020/21 HRA Revenue Budget and Rents and the HRA Capital Programme 2019-23, which is the next report on the listed agenda.

Reason for decisions:

The Council now has an opportunity to increase its HRA stock holding and improve its offer to tenants and leaseholders (both current and future) as a result of the HRA debt cap being lifted and HRA rents increasing each year (with effect from 1st April 2020).

57 Housing revenue account budget 2020/21

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer regarding the detailed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget proposals, rent levels, service charges for 2020/21, and the HRA Capital Programme 2019-23.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

- (1) To agree the HRA budget for 2020/21 and revised 2019/20 budget as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.
- (2) To agree that social and affordable rents (including Shared Ownership) are increased by 2.7% in line with government policy.
- (3) To agree that private sector leased property rents are increased by 3.4% (RPI+1%).
- (4) To agree that the revised service charges are implemented.
- (5) To agree that garage rents are increased by 3.4% (RPI+1%).
- (6) To agree that the HRA Capital Programme as set out at appendix 2 to the report.

Reason for decisions:

The Cabinet has to recommend to Full Council the setting of the HRA revenue and capital budget and the level of social and affordable housing rents for the forthcoming year.

58 The Werks Group - Creative Hub Lewes

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning asking them to note proposals for the Werks Group to take a lease on 4 Fisher Street, Lewes, BN7 2DG for the creation of a creative hub and to agree that up to £250,000 be earmarked from the Council's capital programme.

It was clarified that the proposal had originated from an amendment to the 2019/20 budget that had been supported by the administration at the time.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (1) To note proposals for the establishment of a creative hub at 4 Fisher Street;
- (2) To agree that the Council enter into lease agreement in line with the terms outlined within section 2 of the report;
- (3) To agree that up to £250,000 be earmarked from the Council's capital programme to support the creative hub project;
- (4) To delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning in consultation with Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Prosperity to conclude lease arrangements with The Werks Group and to sign or execute the agreement for lease, the lease and any related documentation.

Reason for decisions:

To enable the creation of a creative co-working hub at 4 Fisher Street.

59 Avis Way Waste Vehicle Depot - Revised Funding

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration of Planning and Director of Service Delivery seeking approval to a request for additional funding to construct the previously approved new waste depot and vehicle servicing facility at Avis Way, Newhaven.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (1) To allocate an additional £800k funding to the £4.1m already approved to deliver the new waste vehicle depot facility.
- (2) To allocate up to £200k from the £4.1m already approved to enable early demolition of the derelict, unsafe and unlettable buildings at 9/10 Avis Way.

Reasons for decisions:

- (1) To enable the new waste vehicle depot and vehicle servicing facility in Newhaven to be built, so that we can vacate the outdated Robinson Road facility.

(2) To enable short term letting of the cleared site and free the site for construction to commence once finally approved.

(Note: Visiting member, Councillor Joe Miller left the meeting following the conclusion of this item)

60 Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy- progress update

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning, providing an update to the Climate Emergency Resolution of July 2019.

In response to a question from visiting member, Councillor Peterson, it was confirmed that a lot of work would be undertaken around biodiversity net gain and the requirement that any future planning development should enhance biodiversity. The Planning Policy Lead also advised that the Council was currently undertaking an Open Spaces strategy and was currently at the consultation phase with Town and Parish Councils.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To note the report and approve the 'Next Steps' actions outlined in section 5 of the report.

(2) To approve the 'Consultation and Engagement Proposals' set out in section 4 of the report.

(3) To delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Lead Member for Sustainability, to;

- (i) investigate the viability of moving the Council on to a green electricity tariff; and
- (ii) if appropriate, to sign the Council up to this tariff.

Reason for decision:

To progress towards the aims of the Climate Emergency Resolution of July 2019.

61 Former Police Station, South Road, Newhaven

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning seeking approval to the acquisition of the sites in Newhaven formally housing the Police and Fire stations for development as affordable housing.

As part of their consideration of the officer recommendations, the Cabinet noted the exempt appendix associated with this item.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To approve the purchase of two sites in Newhaven known as the Former Police Station, and the former fire station detailed at Appendix A to the report, either separately or together.

(2) To authorise the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, to finalise the terms of the purchase of both sites and to sign or execute as appropriate the purchase agreements, transfers and all related documentation including the Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) return.

(3) To approve in principle the development of the two sites (or either one of them if the other cannot be acquired) for Council housing within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), funded through the annual Council budget.

(4) To authorise the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, to finalise the terms of the building contract and any related appointments and contracts. The approval to sign or execute as appropriate the building contract, the appointments and all related documentation and to start works on site will be subject to a subsequent Cabinet report

(5) To approve the acceptance of a grant from Homes England to part finance the development. To authorise the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, to finalise the terms of and sign the Grant Agreement.

Reason for decisions:

The overarching reason for the recommendations is to maximise the Council's ability to provide affordable housing within the District, partly through the full utilisation of receipts received from Council homes sold under the Right to Buy.

62 General Fund Revenue Budget 2020/21 and Capital Programme

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer to agree the updated General Fund budget and updated medium term financial strategy (MTFS), together with the updated capital programme.

Thanks were conveyed to officers and the Leader for their work as part of the process in producing the budget.

In response to a question from visiting member, Councillor Burman around contingency planning, the Chief Finance Officer confirmed that there was an increase in unallocated reserves by around £300,000.

Cabinet unanimously agreed to an additional resolution and this was detailed at point 1 below.

Resolved (Key decision)

(1) To note and lament the late issue of the Local Government Financial settlement on 6 February 2020 and to authorise the Chief Finance Officer to make the appropriate financial adjustments to inform the budget.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

(2) To approve the General Fund budget for 2019/20 (Revised) and 2020/21 (original) set out at Appendix 1 to the report including growth and savings proposals for 2020/21 as set out at Appendix 3 to the report.

(3) To approve an increase in the Council Tax for Lewes District Council of £5 resulting in a Band D charge for general expenses of £192.08 for 2020/21

(4) To approve the revised General Fund capital programme 2020/21 revised as set out at Appendix 5 to the report.

(5) To note the section 151 Officer's sign off as outlined in the report.

Reason for decisions:

The Cabinet has to recommend to Full Council the setting of a revenue budget and associated council tax for the forthcoming financial year by law.

63 Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2020/21, Capital Strategy & Investment Strategy

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer seeking their approval to the Council's annual treasury management strategy, capital strategy and investment strategy, together with the treasury and prudential indicators for the next financial year.

Ola Owolabi, Deputy Chief Finance Officer presented the report and advised that minor corrections to the Strategy would be made in advance of its submission to Full Council in February 2020.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

(1) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21 as set out at Appendix A to the report;

(2) To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2020/21 as set out at paragraph 8 of the report;

(3) To approve the Prudential and Treasury Indicators 2020/21 to 2022/23, as set out at paragraph 6 of the report;

(4) To approve the Capital Strategy set out at Appendix E to the report.

Reason for decisions:

It is a requirement of the budget setting process for the Council to review and approve the Prudential and Treasury indicators, Treasury Strategy, Capital Strategy and Investment Strategy.

64 Council tax and business rate base 2020/21

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer seeking approval of the Council Tax Base and net yield from Business Rate Income for 2020/21, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended in 2018/19.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (1) To agree the provisional Council Tax Base of 36,811.2 for 2020/21.
- (2) To agree that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, determine the final amounts for the Council Tax Base for 2020/21.
- (3) To agree that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, determine net yield from Business Rate income for 2020/21.

Reason for decisions:

Cabinet is required to approve the Tax Base which will be used for the purposes of calculating the 2020/21 Council Tax.

65 Annual Review of Fees and Charges

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Office, proposing the schedule of fees and charges to apply from 1 April 2020.

Following a point raised by Councillor Carr around car parking charges, officers agreed to check and confirm that the charges proposed would not be applicable to the two car-parks in Newhaven Town Centre that currently offered one hour free parking.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (1) To approve the scale of Fees and Charges at Appendix 1 to the report, to apply from 1 April 2020.
- (2) To implement changes to statutory fees and charges for services shown at Appendix 1 to the report as and when notified by Government.

Reason for decisions:

The Council's Constitution required that all fees and charges, including nil charges, be reviewed at least annually and agreed by Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 4.13 pm

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair)

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	7 May 2020
Title:	Council response to Covid 19 - the establishment of a Community Hub and wider business impacts on service delivery
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of the Council
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To update Cabinet on the establishment and operation of a Community Hub and other changes in business operation to respond to community needs as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	Cabinet is recommended to note the report
Reasons for recommendations:	The Community Hub has been an important part of the council's response to the Covid 19 pandemic locally and this report updates the Cabinet on progress, performance and next steps in this work. The report also provides a summary of the impact of the pandemic across the council's business, focusing on the support provided to staff and on those areas most affected by current circumstances.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Jo Harper Post title: Head of Business Planning and Performance E-mail: jo.harper@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01273 085049

1 Summary

- 1.1 The reach of the Covid-19 crisis and the pace at which it changed everyday life as we know it has been unprecedented. In a matter of days, the council had to completely refocus operations to meet the multiple and complex challenges posed by the pandemic. It has been without doubt the most demanding chapter in the history of local government in living memory.
- 1.2 The council moved quickly to activate contingency plans, ensuring the frontline services that residents rely on are maintained and enabling both authorities to

fully respond to the challenges of the coronavirus crisis. Members and officers have worked in collaboration with key local partners including East Sussex County Council, other Boroughs and Districts, Sussex Resilience Forum and participated in national networks such as the Local Government Association, District Councils Network, liaising with relevant central Government departments and briefing local MPs.

- 1.3 A key strand of our response was preparing for staff redeployments across business critical areas. We undertook assessments of skills and experience and were overwhelmed with the flexibility staff have shown in their agreement to change roles. 110 council staff were identified who could be redeployed from their normal day-to-day duties to other roles.
- 1.4 While the intensity of the emergency has abated to some degree at the time of writing this report, the need for the council to remain in a state of high alert and preparedness has not changed. Supporting residents, especially the most vulnerable, and our business community through the crisis is being achieved alongside the maintenance of day-to-day services, albeit with adaptations in some areas.

2 Background

- 2.1 In late March the Government announced that it would be setting up a centralised system of help for those it categorised as 'extremely vulnerable' and who would need to self-isolate for 12 weeks. This help would include provision of food, delivery of medicines and other social support. Alongside that central provision for the most vulnerable, local authorities were asked to establish 'Community Hubs' which would complement this, focusing on others in the community who might also be vulnerable, isolated, without support networks or suffering financial hardship.
- 2.2 The 'extremely vulnerable' category has now come to be known as the 'shielded group'. In the Lewes district we currently have 1,857 people who have registered for help in this category. However, we are aware that there are many more people in the district who are experiencing hardship or who are isolated and without local friends, relatives or neighbours who are able to help.
- 2.3 In response to this need, the local Community Hub was established and has been operating since 30 March 2020.

3 The Community Hub

- 3.1 The Hub is for people who are vulnerable, isolated and without friends, family or neighbours near by to support them, and for those experiencing financial hardship at this time. The purpose of the hub is to connect these people to local voluntary and community organisations who can provide the basic help they might need. This could include doing shopping for them, collecting medicines, just keeping in touch so they do not feel alone, or providing food parcels where money is a problem.

3.2 Setting up the Hub

The council has redeployed and trained a team of staff who can deal with requests coming in through our website via an online form, or via our dedicated phone line. This team is made up of people who were previously working in the council's contact centre, along with other staff redeployed from teams such as tourism.

3.3 They have had to familiarise themselves with a huge amount of new information about voluntary sector services very quickly, as well as navigating their way around the complex landscape of needs assessment and eligibility. As well as receiving calls they also pick up requests submitted by e-form and call these people back to discuss their needs further. The volume and complexity of the calls together with the sometimes difficult and harrowing circumstances of the customers have put considerable pressures on this team. To ensure their wellbeing, a range of support measures have been put in place including free phone counselling for any staff needing it.

3.4 The on-line form and other technology needed (including a new dedicated phone line) was very quickly put in place in late March so that the hub could be operational with the short timescale required. The Service Design team worked extremely quickly at the outset to put IT systems in place enable the hub to start its operation. With this technical backup, the front line Customer First team have then been able to take calls from those requesting help and find out what they need.

3.5 A script for staff prompts them to ask key questions of callers, to make sure they have a real need of support and to check that they are not part of the Shielded (Extremely Vulnerable) group (whom they redirect to ESCC services). Call handlers then use a directory of community contacts to choose the best local service for the caller to be in touch with, and give them details about when that group operates and how to get in touch. The caller is then able to contact their local group to get the assistance they need.

3.6 The role of the Community and Voluntary Sector

Staff from the Business Planning and Performance team worked quickly at the outset to build up a directory of around 70 different voluntary and community groups across Eastbourne and the Lewes District who have agreed to help with this work. Some of these groups have been established for many years, and others have formed recently, specifically to help people in need through this crisis. Putting the directory together required some considerable effort and investigation, as many groups were just a Facebook presence or a local phone number or email address. By making personal contact and using local networks (including Councillor and town and parish clerk knowledge) a pretty comprehensive support network was unearthed. Some groups just cover an individual neighbourhood or village whilst others work across wider areas. Most are run entirely with volunteers, although a few of the larger groups have some paid staff as well. In all cases, their enthusiasm and commitment have been extraordinary.

- 3.7 The council is working in a close and strong partnership with 3VA, a local voluntary sector 'umbrella' organisation, whom the council already funds on an annual basis. 3VA put out a call for new volunteers and have had almost 200 sign up to help. Three council staff from the Business Planning and Partnerships team have been seconded to 3VA at this busy time and are making contact with all those volunteers to make sure they can be matched up with appropriate voluntary work. Council and 3VA staff are also talking regularly to the 70 community and voluntary organisations to make sure they have all the help, advice, guidance and volunteers they need to keep delivering local help. In the initial stages this also involved ensuring all groups were aware of safeguarding and safe food handling advice, and were following safe practices, both for themselves and the people they were helping.
- 3.8 Provision of Food
- There was real concern at the outset that people might run short of food during this difficult time. The shielded group are able to request a regular delivery of food from the government but we were aware that others may also be struggling financially, or for other reasons have an urgent need for food. We have worked closely with the network of local Food Banks who have been helping to provide food for these people.
- 3.9 In response to the initial 'emergency' phase of the response, to ensure the Food Banks had enough supplies, the council's Tourism and Enterprise team used its existing supply chains to source food to provide a local resource. Within a couple of days they had a fully set up food parcel assembly line at the new Welcome Building in Eastbourne and have, since then, amassed a central store of over 2,500 food parcels.
- 3.10 The council now keeps in regular contact with the 12 local Food Banks to check on their stocks. Where these are depleted, then the council's Neighbourhood First team make regular deliveries of batches of food parcels to them, for local distribution as needed. So far 885 parcels have been distributed this way. In addition, when the Food Banks are closed the Neighbourhood First team have undertaken direct deliveries to people in urgent need of food. For the first three weeks of the Community Hub operation, the Neighbourhood First team also provided all the deliveries for Eastbourne Food Bank, until other volunteers and vehicles could be found.
- 3.11 In addition to the core food parcel provision, the council has also sourced household cleaning and personal hygiene items for distributions by some Food Banks, where this has been needed.
- 3.12 As other councils came to hear about the food parcel operation in Eastbourne they also approached us to prepare parcels for them, which we have been able to do and sell to them at cost. 800 parcels have so far been prepared for other councils in East Sussex.

3.13 It was noted early on in the Community Hub's operation that a large proportion of calls were from people needing food but unable to access delivery slots at supermarkets. Having noted that a number of local food shops and other businesses were offering delivery options, the council has developed a directory for local people to search to find suitable services. Initially this was hosted on the councils 'Visit Lewes' tourism website, but now a separate 'Eat Local' website has been set up www.eatlocal.info.

3.14 We have also monitored the changing offers being made by supermarkets and have provided up-to-date information through our helpline, where possible, about priority delivery slots, basic boxes and other new shopping options. In addition we have been accepted by DEFRA to participate in a new pilot scheme which, we hope, will enable the Community Hub to directly allocate a limited number of supermarket priority delivery slots to those who are vulnerable and isolated, without support networks.

3.15 Communication

We have promoted the Community Hub through our website, through press releases and through Facebook Live broadcasts. ESCC produced a leaflet for all the Community Hubs in East Sussex which we have distributed widely. People have been encouraged to make use of the on-line form in preference to the phone line where possible, although over time the phone line has had heavier usage.

3.16 In addition, a letter (see appendix A) was sent to all residents from the Leader of the Council providing information about support available, and including a copy of the Community Hub leaflet (appendix B). This has resulted in an increase in calls to the Community Hub helpline. It is hoped that the letter has ensured those who do not have access to digital media are now aware of the support available to them. Very positive responses have been received to the letter, one of which is attached (appendix C).

4 **Hub Performance**

4.1 The Community Hub, at the time of writing, had received over 2,000 calls and on-line requests for help since it started its operation on 30 March 2020. Over time the types of requests have varied, but in general the greatest demand has been for food (up to 90% of calls on some days). This has either because someone needs assistance with shopping, or for financial reasons, they need a food parcel delivered. The second most frequent request has been for help with collecting medicines from pharmacies. Over time we are also starting to see an increase in requests for social contact and befriending.

4.2 Data on Community Hub usage is collected and reported both to management and ESCC on a daily basis. Trends are being analysed and discussed with community and voluntary sector partners to ensure that local provision is still able to meet changing needs. So far providers are proving able to keep up with demand but support is also being given to community organisations to help them source grants and other funding to help support their work.

5 Next steps

- 5.1 It is intended that the Community Hubs will continue to operate for the duration of 'lock-down'. However, as it is not known how long this will be, or how the exit will be facilitated or phased, future planning is difficult. Partners meet on a regular basis to discuss next steps and to check that the system is still able to operate and to be sustained.
- 5.2 When considering our exit strategy, the council needs to be mindful of not doing this too quickly, or without careful consideration of the potential impact on both vulnerable people and the voluntary and community groups with whom we have been working.
- 5.3 Based on the trends we are seeing already, demand for food provision, above the 'normal' levels experienced by Food Banks, in particular, may well continue beyond 'lock down' as a result of the changed economic conditions. The council will need to consider, therefore, at what point it ceases to offer supplies of free food. In anticipation of this challenge, the council is working closely with Food Banks to explore other ways in which food can be sourced for their use in the longer term. The council would not want to encourage long term reliance on food banks.
- 5.4 The Community Hub operation will continue to be closely monitored and its performance reported as part of wider covid-related performance management information reports which are currently under development.

6 Impacts on Service Delivery

- 6.1 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the council has been much wider than setting up the Community Hub response. Services across the council have been impacted and have responded fast and effectively. Such responses have included in the customer contact centre, housing benefit, Homes First and Environment First. A summary of these areas is set out below.

6.2 Customer First

Since the Covid-19 crisis began we have seen a significant increase in contact with the public on the telephones and online via email and webchats. This is at the same time as dealing with staff self-isolating; staff shortages have been mitigated by redeployments of council officers from others service areas to Customer First. As a snapshot, between 20 and 23 April, 2,500 contacts were received with 98% of those calls answered within 27 seconds.

- 6.3 Our external communications have consistently encouraged a greater use of online contact. Increasing interactions through email and webchats clearly show an encouraging channel shift from the main telephone line, which has enabled us to deal with a larger volume of enquiries despite the staffing pressures.

- 6,663 emails received between March 23 and April 19 - a 70.63%

increase since Jan 27.

- 4,103 webchats carried out between March 23 and April 17 – a 1557% increase since January 27.

6.4 Housing Benefit

Significant increases of new housing benefit claims and change in circumstances enquiries continue to be received, however, existing staff supported by colleagues redeployed from other services with relatable experience are managing the increased caseload effectively. Again, as a snapshot, between 20 and 23 April 225 new benefit applications were received in Lewes district along with 971 claimants reporting a change in circumstances needing to be processed. Despite this significant workload, new benefit claims are being dealt with in an average of 11 days and changes in circumstances eight days.

6.5 Business Grants

The Business Grants Portal went live on April 9. The automated system put in place ensures payments are made between three to four working days from registration. It automatically checks submitted information with the Council's and Government's databases to assess eligibility, thereby reducing the need for time consuming manual verification. At 28 April, 1,467 businesses in Lewes district had taken advantage of the scheme, equating to the payment of £18.1m in grants. All business which applied at the time of writing have been paid, some 68% of the total eligible. Council officers have written, emailed and telephoned qualifying businesses to encourage them to register and we await a further 670 to sign up. A dedicated team of eight officers have been making calls to this outstanding cohort of businesses. Given the significant progress made all eligible businesses that apply before the end of the month will receive payment in three days.

6.6 Homes First

There have been two particular focus areas in Homes First. One being our response to the national directive relating to the housing of the street homeless (through the Rough Sleepers Initiative), and the second being consideration for our older and more vulnerable tenants.

6.7 *Support for Tenants*

Daily welfare calls are being made to tenants in sheltered accommodation and calls to all tenants over the age of 69. Regular newsletters with help and guidance for tenants have also been distributed. Additional cleaning of sheltered accommodation has continued over the last six weeks. Cleaning staff who previously cleaned public toilets (now shut), have been redeployed to support our higher frequency cleaning regime. Our contractor is continuing to carry out essential repairs in our properties, ensuing appropriate social distancing arrangements are in place.

6.8 *Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI)*

Since the Covid-19 government request to find accommodation for all rough sleepers by 29 March, we have made nine placements in the Lewes district. The RSI team is focused on working closely with the voluntary sector to provide support packages and shopping deliveries to those we have placed. We are working hard to ensure that those who were previously rough sleeping are now offered support in line with social isolation guidance.

6.9 Environment First

Our teams have received very positive feedback from residents as collections have continued as normal. Recycling and garden waste collections have continued uninterrupted. Only bulky waste isn't being collected at this time and this is under constant review.

6.10 We have taken every step possible to keep every member of Environment First staff safe at this time by introducing a range of heightened safety and hygiene measures. Vehicle cabs and door handles are being regularly wiped down and alcohol wipes and sanitising gels have been given to staff, in addition to their normal health and safety and protective equipment. We continue to keep up-to-date with all government advice and liaise on daily basis with our health and safety advisers.

7 **Looking after our staff**

7.1 The safety and wellbeing of staff has been paramount throughout this period. Particular focus on staff communications has been central to this, given the high proportion of staff that are now working from home. We have been sending communications to staff and managers regarding Covid 19 since early March and initially, given the evolving situation, these were daily. By the time of the government announcement regarding restrictions on 23 March we had:

- Individually contacted all staff aged over 60 or known to have what might be considered a high risk health condition to ensure that we were supporting them and signposting to relevant advice and information
- Ensured the offices were stocked with increased supplies of hand sanitiser, soap and wipes. The cleaning at all offices was also enhanced so that desks and phones were cleaned every night and door handles twice a day.
- Displayed the Public Health advisory posters in all of our offices and updated staff daily regarding information we were receiving from them.

7.2 Following the government announcement on 23 March we have:

- Published information to staff about; support available for their mental health and wellbeing during this time, working from home. resources for those who are home schooling as well as working from home with

children.

- Eased the terms of our agile working policy (which states that working from home is not a replacement for childcare) and said that staff can work from home with their children if appropriate and also eased the terms of our flexi time policy so that staff can work between 7 and 10 pm (instead of between 7 am & 7 pm) which hopefully gives them greater flexibility around their working hours.
- Adjusted our working environment in the office to ensure that only every other desk is being used (every other not being used) so that we are complying with social distancing. Wherever possible we have enabled customer service advisors to work from home with phones acquired so that work can be done from home.
- Encouraged the public to use web chat redeployed staff from other areas to help with the increased numbers of these. We have a rota whereby we can manage with just 10 customer service advisors in the office and their office space has been increased to ensure they are socially distanced.
- Ensured that our managers have regular contact with their staff and HR so that we know daily which of their staff are well and working and which may be isolating either as they have symptoms themselves or a member of their household does.
- Reminded our staff of the employee assistance programme which provides confidential counselling 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. We have also reminded staff of the details of our mental health first aiders, we now have about 20 of these (all trained) in the workplace)
- Added to our On line learning platform some specific course on how to work successfully from home; managing teams remotely; personal resilience; Mental Health awareness; stress awareness and fun things like 5k project
- Sent a regular weekly message from the Chief Executive thanking them, acknowledging the challenging environment and the exceptional work they are doing as well as reminding staff how valuable their contributions are and how much they are valued
- Communicated with staff regarding the government's changes to annual leave for keyworkers.
- Regularly asked staff for feedback of their experience of work during this time and about our communications and anything else they might consider would be helpful.

7.3 Redeployments

We have been asking all managers to identify those of their staff who are not

business critical for either some or all of their hours to support our effective delivery of the Covid 19 response. We undertook assessments of skills and experience and have been overwhelmed with the flexibility staff have shown in their agreement to change roles.

- 7.4 We have about 120 that we can consider redeploying, based on their skills and experience to business critical matters as needed. Part of this redeployment means that staff may be working at another location, including at their own home and doing a different kind of work to what they would normally – but it is all essential to the current crisis. This information is updated by managers daily and all requests for additional help are responded to within hours.
- 7.5 We also have some staff that have volunteered to work outside of their normal hours to help our response and support our communities, again these are recorded for when an appropriate request may be received.
- 7.6 This is being managed centrally and has enabled us to provide help to the voluntary sector as well as internally moving staff as needed. To date some of the examples of redeployment have included Theatres Staff working on the production of food packages for our vulnerable residents, Tourist Information centre staff helping customer services to deal with increased calls and web chat as well as answering calls to our Community Hub, Democratic Services staff making phone calls to our local businesses regarding the grants available and a Fraud Investigator going to the Crematorium to assist the team working there.

7.7 Covid related sickness

We have been recording information about our workforce daily since Mid-March in a number of ways for example (but not exhaustive) – those that are off sick with Covid symptoms those self-isolating with symptoms and those self-isolating as someone in their household has symptoms. At its 'peak' this figure was 85 staff but has now reduced to 11 whilst we accept this may continue to fluctuate daily.

- 7.8 Fortunately a large number of our staff are able to work from home. For some this is neither appropriate nor possible, so we are continuing to redeploy staff and they are able to continue to work from the office as long the social distancing guidance is adhered to alongside the hygiene requirements. Some teams are working on a rota basis, allowing some minimal staff numbers in the office once or twice a week. Managers and HR speak to each member of staff before they return to work (after a period of absence or self-isolation) to ensure they have followed the NHS guidance on this.

8 Financial appraisal

- 8.1 The Community Hub has been an important part of the Council's response to the Covid 19 and the financial costs regarding core food parcel provision are being set out in the other report to be presented for consideration at this meeting. Any other direct cost and financial implications that arise as part of the establishment and operation of the Hub will be contained within future reports to Cabinet.

- 8.2 Staff time and other immediate indirect costs arising from the Community Hub establishment and operation will be met from existing revenue budgets within the Regeneration and Planning.

9 Legal implications

- 9.1 In carrying out the activities detailed in this report, the Council has had due regard to the 'Coronavirus (Covid-19): guidance for local government' issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

- 9.2 For data privacy reasons, the sharing of residents' personal data with the voluntary sector must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The grounds under which sharing of this data is considered lawful under the GDPR are as follows.

(i) Sharing of confidential patient information for purposes relating to the Covid-19 Community Hub is a legal requirement under the Secretary of State's 'Covid-19 – Notice under Regulation 3(4) of the Health Service Control of Patient Information Regulations 2002' issued on 20 March 2020.

(ii) For the less sensitive data (names, addresses, contact details and non-medical needs), sharing with the voluntary sector is necessary in pursuit of a legitimate interest (i.e. the customer's best interests) and, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, doing so would be a reasonable expectation of those customers who qualify for Community Hub support. The Council's use of this personal data is proportionate to the benefits likely to stem from that support.

Lawyer consulted 29.04.20

Legal ref: 009159-LDC-OD

10 Risk management implications

- 10.1 The following risks have been identified and are being managed/mitigated in relation to the Community Hub. The Strategic Risk register has been updated and risks within other service areas are being closely managed as service demands change over time;
- a. That those most in need will not be aware of the Community Hub – this is being mitigated by wide promotion of the Hub through a range of media both electronic and paper based.
 - b. That insufficient food will be available to meet local needs – this in part has been mitigated, in the short term, by establishing a council stock from which Food Banks can be replenished but in the longer term this may still be a risk.
 - c. That the Community Hub helpline will not be able to respond to the level of need in the community – this has not been the case. All requests for help have been responded to, and the wait times have continued to be very short on the phones.
 - d. The voluntary and community sector would not be able to meet the level of demand – this has not been the case. Three council staff seconded to 3VA have kept in regular contact with local organisations who have

confirmed that they continue to be able to respond to local needs.

11 Equality analysis

- 11.1 A full E&FA of the Community Hub will be undertaken shortly. However it should be noted that in setting up the Community Hub operation consideration was given to ensuring it was accessible to all by providing both telephone and on-line options. The promotional leaflet produced by ESCC about the Community Hubs across East Sussex has been translated into multiple languages and this is available on our website. Hub performance data is monitored on a daily basis.

12 Environmental sustainability implications

- 12.1 This report contains no direct environmental sustainability implications although it is worthy of note that current ways of working, with most staff working remotely, has a positive impact in terms of the council's carbon emissions with significantly reduced car usage.

13 Appendices

Appendix A – letter from the Leader to all residents

Appendix B – Community Hub leaflet

Appendix C – response from a resident

Appendix D – summary of service delivery across Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils

14 Background papers

None



Lewes District Council

Lewes District Council
Southover House
Southover Road
Lewes
BN7 1AB

Dear Resident

We are writing today to let you know that Lewes District Council is doing everything within its power to support you and every other member of our community at this difficult time.

Our most vulnerable residents (described by government as ‘extremely vulnerable’) will have received a letter from the NHS telling them how they can get food and prescriptions delivered to them directly. However, we know there are many more who are isolated and vulnerable or experiencing financial hardship. We have implemented a local system to support those people.

For those unable to afford food, we have people packing food parcels which are being distributed by local food banks. We’ve implemented the emergency funding arrangements for businesses, for people receiving support with their council tax, we are crediting their accounts with £150. Refuse and recycling continues to be collected and our housing officers are giving older tenants the reassurance they need.

We know that these are difficult times for local businesses. We are delighted by the number of local food shops who have managed to set up delivery services so that local people can continue to get the food they need.

To help promote these businesses, and to signpost local people needing food, we have set up a directory with the latest information for customers.

You can find it at www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/food-delivery

For residents who are isolating and don’t have friends and family and other support networks around them, we have set up ways to help. Perhaps you can’t make it to the shops to buy groceries or you have essential medicines that need picking up? We all know modern families are often spread across continents, not just towns and cities, so it isn’t unusual for older people to find themselves alone. But you’re not alone, we’re here for you.

If you are in this position and need help visit www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/requestsupport and fill in a simple form to request the help you need. If you don’t have access to a computer or smart phone, then call us at Lewes District Council on 01273 099956. We will give you advice, guidance and information and signpost you to the best local organisation to help you.

pto

Please, if you can use our on-line form, then do. Our telephone lines are very busy and we want to prioritise those who are not able to use the on-line form. Be patient on the phone line, we will get to you.

Much of the help on offer is being provided by volunteers in small, local community organisations. It is humbling that so many people have offered to help and volunteer at this time and they all deserve our thanks – if that's you, a huge thank you from everyone at Lewes District Council.

We are very proud too of the way our council officers have responded. From the teams that collect your waste and recycling to our customer advisers who answer your emails and telephone calls, they are working tirelessly in really challenging circumstances.

The good news is our contingency plans are in operation and these frontline services are running well and we intend to keep it that way. Lots of helpful information for residents and businesses can be found on our website – www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

We are also posting information on Twitter, so follow us if you can @lewesdc and Facebook @lewesdistrictcouncil. And please share the messages with others. Most importantly, our residents must follow the government advice, stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Zoe Nicholson
Leader of Lewes District Council



Councillor James MacCleary
Deputy Leader of Lewes
District Council

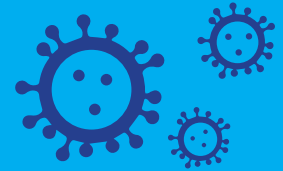
Coronavirus: need help?

Your community
hub is here!



Coronavirus: need help?

Support for everyone in East Sussex



If you are struggling to cope with the effects of coronavirus, your community hub may be able to help. **No one in East Sussex will be left on their own.** But some people may be able to get the support they need from family, friends or neighbours instead.

Get in touch with your community hub if:

You're struggling to cope with coronavirus because you're alone, worried, unwell, short of money or can't get medicine, food or other essentials

AND

There is no one living near you who you know and can trust to help

Get in touch with your community hub if:

Your GP has contacted you to say you have an extreme medical condition and you are getting food delivered to your home while you shield yourself for 12 weeks

AND

There is something else you need

Consider NOT getting in touch with your community hub if:

You have family, carers, friends or neighbours nearby who you can trust and rely on to help you (and who are not vulnerable themselves)



Contact your community hub:

Eastbourne

01323 679722

www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/requestsupport

Lewes

01273 099956

Hastings

01424 451019

www.hastings.gov.uk/my-council/covid19/help

Rother

01424 787000, opt 4

www.rother.gov.uk/community-support

Wealden

01323 443322

my.wealden.gov.uk

If you would like to request this information in a different language or format contact escccoronavirusenquiries@eastsussex.gov.uk

Transcript of letter received by Cllr Nicholson in response to letter sent out at appendix A

“Dear Cllrs Nicholson and McCleary

I was so impressed with the wonderful letter received from you this morning, outlining all the amazing facilities that you have set up to ensure that we (the older residents in the community) need not be afraid of feeling ‘left out’ or ‘abandoned’ in the current worrying times! It is wonderful to hear about all the ‘in-put’ received from the various different sectors of the community that you have gathered together and coordinated so expertly.

These things don’t just ‘happen’ – a great deal of hard work goes into coordinating and setting them up!!! It is for this reason that I’m writing to you today (and please excuse the dreadful handwriting!). I just wanted to let you know how grateful people of my generation are! (I am 90 now – widowed 2 years ago – and with no known relatives, so you can imagine how vulnerable I could have felt!) I am not ‘au fait’ with the mysteries of the computer I’m afraid, but you have very kindly included a phone contact number as an alternative. Thank you – (I sincerely hope I never have to use it, of course, but it is so reassuring to know that it exists).

Please don’t feel the necessity to use your valuable time to respond to this little note – you must be ‘worked off your feet’ (as the saying goes). Please just be aware of how grateful people like me are feeling.

Many, many thanks!

[Name withheld]

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Demand for our services during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis

CUSTOMER FIRST

Lewes and Eastbourne Councils
working together for you

Since the Covid-19 crisis began, we have seen a significant increase in demand for many of our services, in particular responding to customers getting in touch.

The information below illustrates the scale of this increase in a few key service areas. We are proud to say that we have maintained our performance in the face of this increase, despite a reduction in staff due to the need to self-isolate.

We would encourage residents with access to the internet to contact us via our website, live chat and social media where possible. This will help free up our phone lines for the most vulnerable in the community.

Online Webchat Service

Lewes and Eastbourne Councils

(Figures show four-week periods)

24 Feb - 20 Mar
254 Chats

27 Jan - 21 Feb
221 Chats

Emails received by Customer First

(Figures show four-week periods)



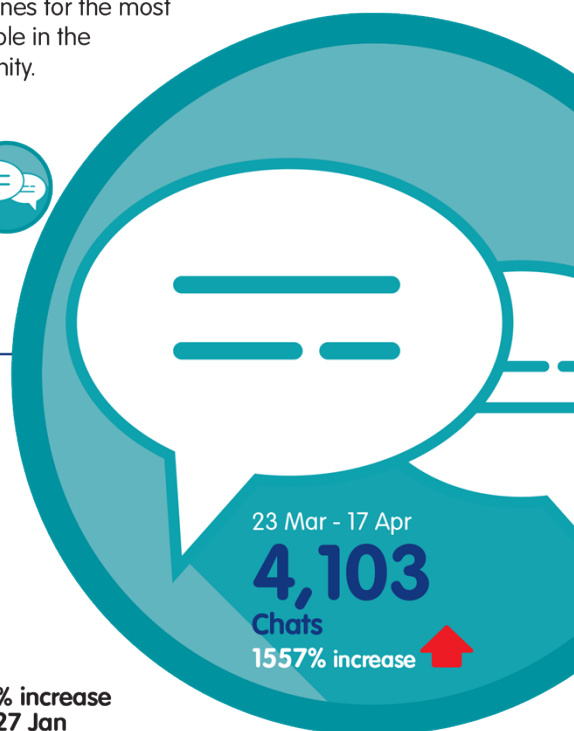
27 Jan - 23 Feb
3,905



24 Feb - 22 Mar
4,520



23 Mar - 19 Apr
6,663
70.63% increase since 27 Jan



'Request Support for Vulnerable Adults' form completions



Total number of completed 'Request Support for Vulnerable Adults' forms (27 Mar - 22 Apr)

514

Customers making homeless approach: new presentations



Households that are either homeless or at risk of homelessness (1 April - 22 April)

92

Telephone calls to our Coronavirus Community Hub Helpline



Total calls since 30 March (Helpline launch date) to 19 April

1,362 Calls

Business enquiry forms

Since 24 Mar (first form received)

250

MP emails (since 3 April)

200

Business Grant Portal

Since going live on 9 April:

2,336

Completed applications received in first six days

1,230

Emails asking for assistance, of which 1,100 have so far been responded to

Garden waste permits processed

Since 6 January 2020

9,131 Renewals

1,422 New requests



Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	7 May 2020
Title:	Initial financial assessment of Covid-19
Report of:	Chief Finance Officer
Cabinet member:	Zoe Nicholson, Leader of Council, Cabinet member for finance
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To update on the initial financial impact of Covid-19 and associated budgetary implications
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	1) Cabinet notes the initial financial impact of Covid-19 and associated vulnerability of the authority's budget 2) Cabinet notes the assumptions being made about the ongoing financial impact of Covid-19
Reasons for recommendations:	The Council's response to Covid-19 has been and continues to be fast paced. Budgetary assumptions are liable to change and are only given as an indication. This report provides a position statement at this time to keep Cabinet informed.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Homira Javadi/ Millie McDevitt Post title: Chief Finance officer/ Performance lead Email: Homira.Javadi@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Millie.Mcdevitt@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

1 Background

- 1.1 The budget for 2020/21 was approved by Full Council on 24 February 2020. As the Council no longer receives any Revenue Support Grant, the cost of its services are met from locally generated sources of income such as commercial operation, fee earning services, council tax and business rate retention. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in demand for some key services namely, addressing homelessness and housing need including provision of temporary and emergency accommodation. These have resulted in additional revenue and capital funding being allocated to these services. In meeting these increased costs, the budget also includes some challenging and robust savings and income targets.
- 1.2 In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government was clear that any council who made an immediate response to the COVID19 outbreak would be financially supported in their decision making by the government. In addition over the last 6 weeks the government has been making a series of ongoing policy announcements, initially at Budget 2020, and then over the last few weeks. This has meant that local authorities have had to respond quickly to new announcements and understand the financial implications arising.

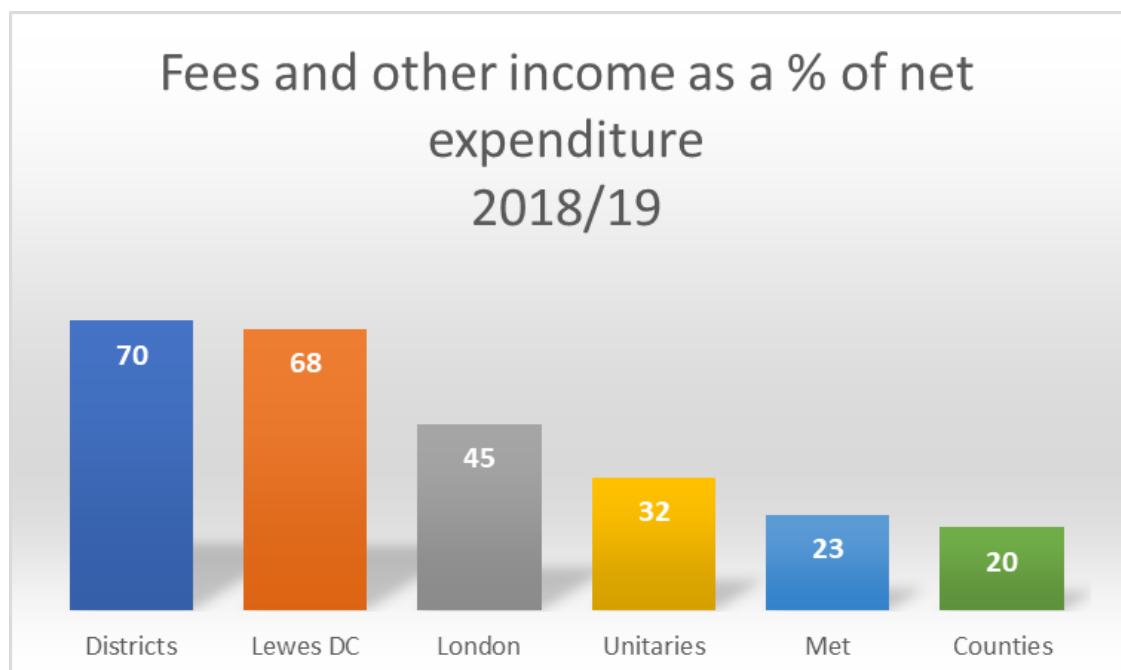
A complex picture of initiatives has emerged, some of which have been supported by

- 1.3 additional funding; some that will lead to reductions in both council tax and business rates receipts; some that require administration by local authorities of grants to businesses; and then a range of measures with wider financial implications for local authorities.
- 1.4 The table below shows a summary of the announcements to date and their implications for local government funding. Each announcement is then covered in greater detail below.

	Payment received LDC Share	Additional Funding/ to Offset reductions to other sources/ Ring- fenced Funding
£1.6bn Emergency Response Funding	£39.5k	Additional Funding
£0.5bn Hardship Fund	£816k	Additional Funding- ring-fenced for those in receipt of Council Tax Relief Scheme £150 per household.
100% Business Rates Relief 2020/21	£2,216k	Offset
Small Business Grant Funding and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund	£25,840k	To Fund Grant Payment with ring-fenced and specified nationally set criteria
*A further £1.6bn Emergency Response Funding	TBC	Additional Funding

Table 1

*As many district councils await the distribution of the additional £1.6bn of government financial support, the following chart clearly demonstrates why district councils are arguing for a fairer share when a significant percentage of their funding from fee income have all but disappeared in lockdown (source LG Improve).



2 Emergency Response

- 2.1 On 16 March, Local Government Secretary of State Robert Jenrick announced that the government stands ready to do whatever is necessary to support councils in their response to coronavirus. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting councils to focus their efforts on the priority area of social care, providing vital support for vulnerable people and supporting their local economy.

As reported elsewhere on the agenda, immediately following the outbreak of Covid-19 and the announcement of a national lock-down, the Council diverted resources to assist and support the most vulnerable in the district working in partnership with voluntary sector partners. As is detailed in a separate report on this agenda, the Council has, at the request of government, established a Community Hub helpline and related services which have been operating since 30 March 2020.

- 2.2 It is intended that the Community Hub provision continues until the end of the lock-down period and possibly beyond, although at the time of writing it is unclear when and how lock down measures will be lifted. Therefore it is very difficult to estimate the time-period over which this additional service (and related costs) will need to be provided.
- 2.3 On 19 March, the government allocated £1.6 billion to councils to assist with Covid-19 related support. Lewes District Council received £39,501 from this allocation.
- 2.4 Only a small part of the costs associated with the council's immediate response to support the community was covered by the initial grant provided by central government. A significant proportion is being paid for from council own limited resources. Table 2 below sets this out.

National allocation	£1,600m (£1.6bn)
LDC expenditure on direct Covid-19 costs food package, etc.- (monthly -approx.)	£0.180m
19 March government funding	£0.039m

Table 2: Immediate response

3 Financial impact on Council's resources

- 3.1 The above grants are intended to provide funding for additional emergency response costs as well as enabling councils to provide additional hardship support via their Council Tax Reduction Schemes. However, a fundamental issue for the council is that, its services are now largely reliant on locally generated income and taxation rather than government funding which after continuous reductions since 2010, finally diminished in 2019.
- 3.2 In 2020/21, the main sources of funding for the Council's General Fund services are as follows (the RAG status provides an overview of the projected risks in relation to COVID-19):

2020-21 Summary	£'000	RAG
Revenue Support Grant	Nil	
Retained business rates (baseline)	(2,243)	A
Retained business rates (growth)	(2,497)	R
Business rates pool	(250)	R
Business rates (Newhaven EZ)	(660)	G
Council Tax	(7,796)	A
New Homes bonus	(464)	G
Other government grants	(344)	G
Total Financing	(14,254)	

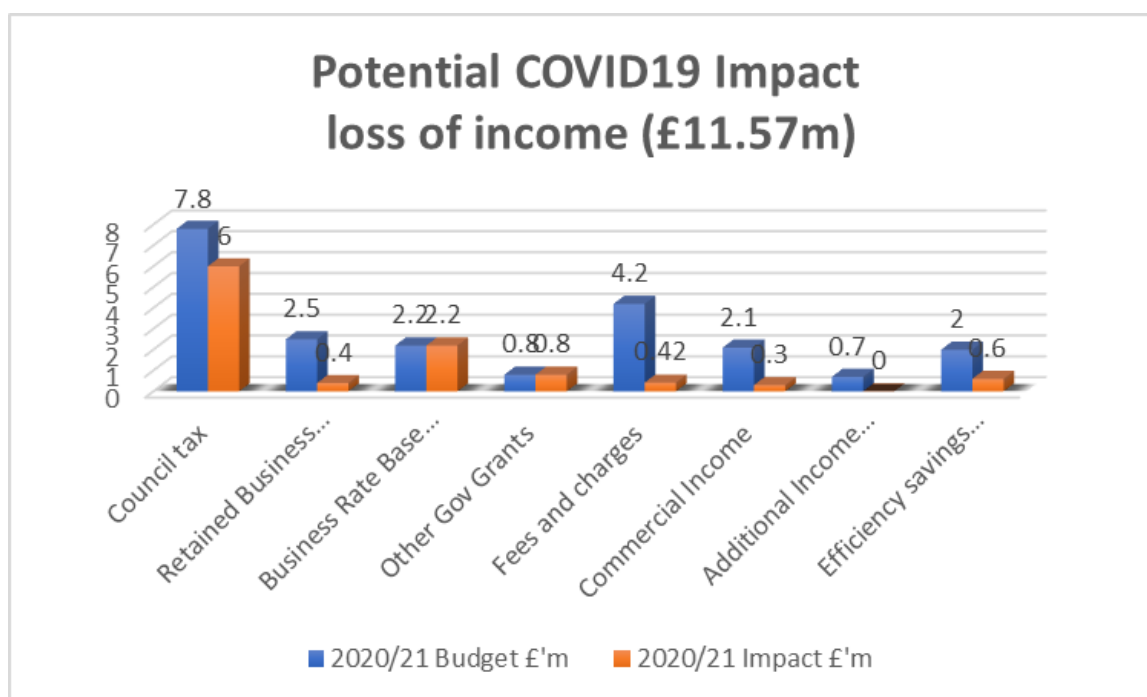
- 3.3
- a) Retained business rates – as a result of a likely reduction in the number of businesses in the District, as some are not able to recover following the lock-down period and subsequent likely economic downturn.
 - b) Business rates (Newhaven EZ)
 - c) Council tax payments - as residents experiencing financial hardship may find it difficult to pay their bills or may seek council tax support as a result in changed financial circumstances; increased bad debt, reduced collection rate etc.

4 Other Income

4.1 In addition, in line with revised government economic growth figures, and the forecasted economic downturn, we are assuming a reduction in the following sources of income:

- d) Rental income from our commercial estate – where our tenants may vacate, due to businesses winding up, may be unable to pay their rent
- e) Events and other income generating activities
- f) Car park, planning and other fees & charges

4.2 The Following chart summarises the potential impact of income streams:



4.3 Following table provides an extract from the MHCLG submission providing an estimated position on Covid-19 impact on income :

	Mar-20	Apr-20	Full Year 2020-21
1 - Retained Business Rates	£0.1m	£0.3m	£2.1m
2 - Council Tax	Mar-20 £0.2m	Apr-20 £0.5m	Full Year 2020-21 £1.8m
3 - Sales, fees and charges	Mar-20 £0.4m	Apr-20 £0.5m	Full Year 2020-21 £4.5m
4 - Commercial income	Mar-20 £0.4m	Apr-20 £0.7m	Full Year 2020-21 £3.17m

Table 3: **Reduction of fees and income £11.57m**

4.4 Set against this, demands on our services have increased and are predicted to remain higher than forecast for the rest of the financial year. Table 5 sets out the additional costs to service areas for April alone, above what was originally forecast for the 2020/21 budget. These headline figures reflect likely increases in demand, in particular in relation to;

- a) Homelessness – both increases in those experiencing homelessness and the council's current additional duties in relation to providing temporary accommodation to ensure there is no rough sleeping.
- b) Benefits – a significant increase in benefits applications has already been seen and is likely to continue through the lock-down period and beyond.

4.5 Following table provides an extract from the MHCLG submission providing an estimated position on Covid-19 impact on additional costs :

Question B1	Mar-20	Apr-20	Full Year 2020-21
11 - Housing (including homelessn	£0.3m	£0.4m	£2.6m
12 - Cultural Services	Mar-20 £0.2m	Apr-20 £0.2m	Full Year 2020-21 £1.3m
13 - Environmental and regulatory	Mar-20 £0.1m	Apr-20 £0.18m	Full Year 2020-21 £1.454m
17 - Finance/ corporate services	Mar-20 £0.08m	Apr-20 £0.12m	Full Year 2020-21 £0.5m
18 - Other services	Mar-20 £0.15m	Apr-20 £0.18m	Full Year 2020-21 £2.4m

Table 4: increase in costs £8.254m

5 Capital Investment

- 5.1 The Council's capital programme is currently under review. A further update and impact assessment will be provided on this area once this review is about to complete and make recommendations as appropriate.

6 Cashflow

- 6.1 The Council's treasury management team have modelled a number of scenarios for cashflow over the next 6 months. This is heavily influenced by the timing of government support, in particular the timing of the Section 31 grant to replace the loss of business rates, as well as the flow of income from local taxation.
- 6.2 On 16 April the government announced it will defer Business Rates payments to government. Section 31 grants to cover the loss of retail relief will also commence in May. The impact of these measures will be to improve cashflow position over the next 5 months which will help offset the reduced cashflow arising from income losses. With these revised government measures in place, the council should avoid the need to borrow to support cashflow until the end of August at the earliest.
- 6.3 It is important to recognise that these measures provide us with temporary cashflow assistance and not a much needed financial support.

7 Reserves

- 7.1 The 2020/21 budget included the Council's Chief Finance Officer Report (Section 25 Report). It included the following analysis of the reserves held by the Council. The reserves were estimated to be £10.083m at 31st March 2021 and at the time, adequate to meet the commitments and forecast expenditure facing the Council, as well as providing a degree of resilience against changes in Business Rates income forecasts and the impact of a continuing economic downturn.

	01 April 2020 £000's	Transfers In / (Out) £000's	31 March 2021 £000's
General Fund Balance	2,862	400	3,262
Earmarked Reserves			
Asset Management	2,316	-	2,316
Newhaven Enterprise Zone	266	660	926
Economic Regeneration	1,124	-	1,124
Revenue Grants and Contributions	468	-	468
Strategic Change	1,771	(500)	1,271
Vehicle and Equipment Replacement	18	-	18
Business Rates Equalisation	200	202	402
Managing In-Year Economic Downturn	296	-	296
Total Earmarked Reserves	6,459	362	6,821
Total Reserves	9,321	762	10,083

- 7.2 It is clear that without adequate government financial support, Lewes like many other councils will find it impossible to manage the medium and long-term financial impact of Covid-19 relying solely on its own scares and limited resources.

8 Summary of overall position

- 8.1 This demonstrates that the Council's finances are very vulnerable in the current situation. Council Tax revenues could be impacted if taxpayers' financial circumstances are impacted and more people claim Council Tax Reduction discounts (CTR). Similarly, Business Rate revenues, excluding government support for expanded reliefs, could be impacted by the effect on the local economy and the visitor-driven economy both in the short and medium term depending on recovery.
- 8.2 Most concerning are fees and other commercial income as these are now a very large source of funding for council services. The pandemic will see many income streams being severely impacted by closures, or reduced business and tourism activity, and/or the general impact on the economy (e.g. commercial rents and planning fees).
- 8.3 In setting its budget and meeting the cost of its key services, the Council committed to a range of efficiency savings and additional income targets much of which are now unlikely to be delivered.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) recently collected financial data from local authorities on 15 April to begin to understand the costs and income pressures facing local authorities. At this early stage these are difficult to estimate accurately, however, the assumptions included in our submission are under constant review and will be updated regularly.

Based on our current experience, the Council estimates that the additional costs in the arising from the pandemic so far, including delayed savings programmes, of approximately £380k per week. This is an approximate impact and worse-case scenario which takes into account significant loss of income, additional costs including increased demand in homelessness and housing need. There will be some offset to these costs from reduced purchases of non-essential supplies and services, however, this is not anticipated to be significant. These costs may be mitigated more substantially by, for example, increased economic activity, income and employment levels associated with the easing of lockdown restrictions. Conversely, if businesses and households continue to experience lower incomes then lower Council Tax, Business Rates and other income to the Council will remain below those anticipated in the Budget. These longer term risks emphasise the importance of additional government financial support to local authorities as a consequence of the pandemic and the extra vital work we are carrying out in supporting vulnerable households and local businesses. These matters will be monitored closely and modelled with regular updates to members.

It is also of considerable concern that the financial impacts on taxation, business rates and fees incomes could take a considerable amount of time to recover, giving rise to a significantly greater medium and longer term financial impact.

The impact of Covid-19 on the council's finances will be significant. Detailed figures are still being calculated, but it can be assumed;

- a) That income levels will be reduced from the levels projected when the budget was set
- b) That there will be additional pressures on expenditure

- c) That there may be challenges in achieving the efficiency savings that formed part of the adopted budget as service pressures on the organisation require higher staffing levels to be maintained.

Outlook

The above are our projected budgetary pressures. We will continue to closely monitor the impact Covid-19 is having on our budget and revert to Cabinet in a timely manner. We are also continuing to lobby for additional funds to offset the budgetary costs of Covid-19.

The government (MHCLG) have already set up 3 different monitoring processes via their DELTA on-line portal. These capture Business Rate Reliefs, Business Grants and general financial implications. The information to be captured by the latter will be collected monthly and the first submission was provided on 15 April 2020. It captures all spend against the emergency funds, estimated losses or income and taxation, expected cash flow requirements and provides 'free text' fields for local authorities to raise other matters if required. The other returns are weekly and the first data returns were made on Friday 3 April.

Locally, financial updates will be provided to the Cabinet and Members on an ongoing basis.

9 Corporate plan and council policies

- 9.1 Lewes District's Corporate Plan was adopted in February 2020. The service and support provided during the first month of Covid-19 to residents, businesses, voluntary organisations and others in the district is in line with the corporate plan's priority to getting our services right for you.

10 Financial appraisal

- 10.1 The financial implications are set out in the body of the report. The key point to note is that it is not possible to currently quantify all of the costs, losses and exceptional expenses that the authority will incur due to Covid-19. It is also not currently possible to say whether or not the government emergency funding streams, including any future announcements, will off-set these financial impacts. Should these funds be insufficient, Cabinet is advised that the council will need to call on its reserves.

11.0 Legal implications

- 11.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

12 Risk management implications

- 12.1 The council is acutely aware that the focus is currently on responding to the crisis and is mobilising its staff and resources to support this effort. However, it is also fully aware that after the crisis has subsided there are likely to be a wide range of long term impacts on individuals, the business and local economy, the third sector and public sector agencies. The council is working to assess the impact and develop its policy and approach to managing recovery and sustainability once the logistics of the immediate crisis have been put in place and are operating effectively. In the meantime, the Leader and Chief Executive are ensuring the Council's own financial position is represented at various local government and government forums.

13 Equality analysis

- 13.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The COVID-19 outbreak affects all areas of society. Government are making specific provisions to 'shield' those expected to be most affected. The council will monitor impacts on protected characteristic equality groups as the crisis continues.

14 Environmental sustainability implications

- 14.1 This report contains no direct environmental sustainability implications although it is worthy of note that current ways of working, with most staff working remotely, has a positive impact in terms of the council's carbon emissions with significantly reduced car usage.

15 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – MHCLG submission
- Appendix 2 – Performance data

16 Background papers

The background papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

- Budget report
- COVID-19 related links
https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/_resources/assets/inline/full/0/286143.pdf

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COVID-19 local authority financial management information

COVID-19 local authority financial management information

You are reporting on behalf of

Lewes District Council

The purpose of this data collection is to help departments across Central Government understand the financial impact, both direct and indirect, that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on local authorities. This is for planning purposes; to help us identify where the greatest pressures are likely to be going forward and to inform our ongoing assessment of likely future costs. The information you provide will not be used for reporting or auditing purposes. We will also share a summary of the findings with you in due course.

We recognise that the situation your authority faces is continually changing and we will repeat this collection on a rolling monthly basis. We appreciate that you are unlikely to have precise figures to begin with, but your indicative estimates will be extremely useful.

Please submit your response by close **Wednesday 15 April 2020**.

Section A: Allocation of £1.6bn emergency grant funding

On 19 March 2020, £1.6bn emergency funding was announced to help local authorities respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The questions in this section relate specifically to this £1.6bn emergency COVID-19 funding and not any other additional funding which your authority might be receiving to respond to COVID-19.

Of this £1.6bn funding, your authority received:

£ 39,501.00

Question A1: What proportion of your grant funding have you allocated to the following service areas?

Although the funding was primarily aimed at social care, we recognise it may be used to ease a variety of different pressures. We also recognise that some COVID-19-related activities may be cross-cutting, and that you may not have treated the additional funding separately across key service areas. However, where appropriate, please estimate as best you can.

Please provide percentage figures for each service area ensuring that they sum to 100%. If your authority does not provide a service area or has not allocated any of this grant funding to a particular service area, please enter 0%.

Service Area	Estimated proportion of grant funding likely to be deployed in this area, (%)
1 - Adult Social Care – (not pooled with CCGs)	0 %
2 - Adult Social Care – (pooled with CCGs)	0 %
3 - Children's Social Care	0 %
4 - Education	0 %
5 - Highways and Transport	0 %

6 - Public Health

0 %

7 - Housing (including homelessness services)

0 %

8 - Cultural services

0 %

9 - Environmental and regulatory services (including excess death management)

0 %

10 - Police

0 %

11 - Fire and rescue

0 %

12 - Planning and development

0 %

13 - Finance/corporate services

0 %

14 - Other services

100 %

15 - Not yet allocated to a service area

0 %

Total Percentage Check

100%

Question A2: If you have allocated any funding to 'Other services', please specify the type of service

The Council has incurred £180k in provision of food packs, community hub, redeployment costs etc.

Question A3: If you would like to provide some additional commentary on the figures you have submitted above, please do so here.

The allocation is considered significantly inadequate.

Section B: Additional spending pressures due to COVID-19

Question B1: Please estimate how much additional money you have spent, and plan to spend, on the following service areas due to pressures caused by COVID-19. This includes spend which was funded by the emergency additional funding captured in Section A.

We recognise that COVID-19 activities may be cross-cutting across service areas, and it may not be possible to apportion additional spend due to COVID-19 with 100% accuracy. However, where appropriate, please estimate as best you can. In future collections we will be looking for data on more specific spending pressures, and guidance on this will be provided ahead of time.

Please note that additional spend should include foregone savings which are no longer achieved but exclude losses in sales, fees and charges income (the latter are covered in Section C).

For additional information on the service areas, where available, please click the information (i) button.

You should report your additional spend estimates in millions, though you can provide figures to the nearest thousand pounds (up to 3 decimal places) if you are able to do so. If your authority does not provide a service or you have not spent any more as a result of COVID-19, please enter 0 (zero) and select a green RAG rating.

The final column asks for your assessment of the confidence you have in the accuracy of the figures provided. This uses a standard RAG rating system where red reflects estimates based on limited evidence/weak assumptions, and green reflects strong evidence and clearer assumptions.

Service Area (1 to 4)	Estimated additional pressure in (£m):		
	March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
1 - Adult Social Care – additional demand	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="GREEN"/>		
2 - Adult Social Care - supporting the market	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="GREEN"/>		
3 - Adult Social Care - workforce pressures	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="GREEN"/>		
4 - Adult Social Care - other (including PPE)	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="GREEN"/>		
Service Area (5 to 8)	Estimated additional pressure in (£m):		
	March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
5 - Children's Social Care – workforce pressures	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="GREEN"/>		
6 - Children Social Care - other	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.000 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="GREEN"/>		

7 - Children's Services - SEND

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
GREEN		

8 - Education – excluding SEND

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
GREEN		

**Service Area
(9 to 13)****Estimated additional pressure in (£m):****9 - Highways and Transport**

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
GREEN		

10 - Public Health

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
GREEN		

11 - Housing (including homelessness services)

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.300 m	£ 0.400 m	£ 2.600 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
AMBER		

12 - Cultural services

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.200 m	£ 0.200 m	£ 1.300 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
AMBER		

13 - Environmental and regulatory services (including excess death management)

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.100 m	£ 0.200 m	£ 1.400 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
AMBER		

**Service Area
(14 to 18)****Estimated additional pressure in (£m):****14 - Police**

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
AMBER		

15 - Fire and rescue

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
AMBER		

16 - Planning and development

March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
£ 0.150 m	£ 0.250 m	£ 0.800 m

Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

17 - Finance/ corporate services

March 2020

April 2020

Full Year 2020-21

£ 0.100 m

£ 0.200 m

£ 0.750 m

Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

18 - Other services

March 2020

April 2020

Full Year 2020-21

£ 0.200 m

£ 0.500 m

£ 2.800 m

Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

Estimated Total Spending Pressure

March 2020

April 2020 (£m)

£ 1.050 m

£ 1.750 m

Question B2: If you have recorded spending pressures under 'Adult Social Care – other', 'Children's Social Care – other' or 'Other services', please specify the type of service.

Question B3: If you would like to provide some additional commentary on the figures you have submitted for Question B1, or the assumptions that underpin them, please do so here.

The Council's financial resilience is being severely tested and is at the risk of being irreparably compromised. An immediate financial support to reset its planned expenditure, budget assumptions and safeguard its reserve levels is urgently required.

Section C: Income reductions due to COVID-19

Question C1: Compared to what you budgeted for, how much have the following sources of income been reduced due to pressures caused by COVID-19?

You should report your estimates in millions, though you can provide figures to the nearest thousand pounds (up to 3 decimal places) if you are able to do so.

If income has not been affected by COVID-19, please enter 0 (zero) and select green RAG rating. Additionally, if you are a county council in a two-tier area, please enter 0 (zero) in the Retained Business Rates line.

For additional information on the income sources, where available, please click the information (i) button.

The final column asks for your assessment of the confidence you have in the accuracy of the figures provided. This uses a standard RAG rating system where red reflects estimates based on limited evidence/weak assumptions, and green reflects strong evidence and clearer assumptions.

Income Source (1 to 5)	Estimated reduction in (£m):		
	March 2020	April 2020	Full Year 2020-21
1 - Retained Business Rates (net rates payable)	<input type="text" value="£ 0.100 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.300 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 2.100 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="AMBER"/>		
2 - Council Tax	<input type="text" value="£ 0.200 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.400 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 1.800 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="AMBER"/>		
3 - Sales, fees and charges	<input type="text" value="£ 0.400 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.500 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 4.600 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="AMBER"/>		
4 - Commercial Income	<input type="text" value="£ 0.400 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.600 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 3.800 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="AMBER"/>		
5 - Other	<input type="text" value="£ 0.100 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 0.200 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 1.000 m"/>
	Confidence in accuracy of estimates (RAG rating)		
	<input type="text" value="AMBER"/>		
Estimated Total reduction in Income	March 2020	April 2020 (£m)	
	<input type="text" value="£ 1.200 m"/>	<input type="text" value="£ 2.000 m"/>	

Question C2: If you have recorded any income reduction under 'Other', please specify the income source.

Question C3: If you would like to provide some additional commentary on the figures you have submitted for Question C1, or the assumptions that underpin them, please do so here.

The longer term impact of CV19 is likely to be more complex than initially thought. At this point, it is considered inevitable to experience increased demand for services, significant loss of income, urgent use of reserves.

Section D: Cash flow difficulties due to COVID-19

Question D1: Do you anticipate any difficulties in meeting cash flow requirements over the next three months as a result of pressures caused by COVID-19?

We are interested in any difficulties in meeting ongoing costs from your existing resources or through normal treasury management activity such as short-term borrowing. Please use the drop-down list provided.

Question D2: Are you able to quantify the extent of any cash difficulties? Please enter cash requirements for the following months below.

You should report your estimates in millions, though you can provide figures to the nearest thousand pounds (up to 3 decimal places) if you are able to do so.

If you are unable to quantify your cash flow shortfall, you may omit this question.

	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020
Cash flow shortfall	£ m	£ m	£ m

Question D3: If you would like to provide some additional commentary on the answer you have submitted for Question D1 or D2, please do so here.

Thank you for completing this form.

Please press 'Save' and 'Submit'. If there are any errors, you will need to review them before being able to 'Submit'.

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Service demands and performance -1

Demands on the council's services have increased. However, through redeployment of staff to provide additional support and resilience in the most pressurised areas, the council has been able to meet the demand. Redeployment of staff has largely been away from discretionary and corporate services (eg tourism and strategy teams) and not from key frontline statutory services.

Below are some figures which reflect the increased demand on council's services:

- Online webchats: increased by 1557% since 27 January*
- Email enquiries: increased by 70.63% since 27 January*
- Phone calls to Coronavirus council number since launch on 30 March: 1362*
**Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough combined*
- Business grant portal applications since going live on 9 April-22 April: 1179
- Benefits: 350% increase compared with same period last year in Lewes district

Despite the increase in demands, performance has remained within target, including in the processing of benefits applications which is within target processing times.

We expect to see a continued rise in benefits applications, and discretionary housing awards.

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