

Cabinet

14 September 2023



Lewes District Council

Time and venue:

2.30 pm in the Room 209/210 on the Second Floor, The Marine Workshops, Railway Quay, Newhaven, East Sussex, BN9 0ER.

Membership:

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair); Councillors Christine Robinson (Deputy-Chair) Chris Collier, Johnny Denis, Wendy Maples, Emily O'Brien, Laurence O'Connor and Mark Slater

Quorum: 4

Published: Wednesday, 6 September 2023

Agenda

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 (Pages 5 - 12)

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 Policy and Performance Advisory

Committee or by the Council) for reconsideration by the Cabinet in accordance with the provisions contained in the Policy and Performance Advisory Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out in part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

None.

8 Appointment as Council Champion

The Cabinet is asked to formally approve the following appointment:

- Councillor Emily O'Brien to be appointed as the Council's Water Champion

The appointment was approved under delegated authority by the Head of Democratic Services, in accordance with Council Procedure Rules, pending formal Cabinet approval.

9 Cost of Living Update (Pages 13 - 18)

Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Christine Robinson

10 Revenue & Capital Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2023-24 (Pages 19 - 38)

Report of Director of Finance and Performance
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Zoe Nicholson

11 Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 1 - 2023-2024 (Pages 39 - 50)

Report of Director of Finance and Performance
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Chris Collier

12 Community Wealth Building Action Plan update (Pages 51 - 64)

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

13 Business support for Lewes District (Pages 65 - 74)

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

14 Funding Simplification Pathfinder Pilot (Pages 75 - 80)

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

(This report contains an exempt appendix. Any discussion of this must take place at item 17 following exclusion of the public.)

15 Robinson Road Depot - Capital Development Project Update (Pages 81 - 92)

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

(This report contains an exempt appendix. Any discussion of this must take place at item 18 following exclusion of the public.)

16 Exclusion of the public

The Chief Executive considers that discussion of the following items is likely to disclose exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and may therefore need to take place in private session. The exempt information reasons are shown beneath the items listed below. Furthermore, in relation to paragraph 10 of Schedule 12A, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. (The requisite notices having been given under regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.)

(Note: Exempt papers are printed on pink paper).

17 Funding Simplification Pathfinder Pilot - Exempt Appendix 1 (Pages 93 - 118)

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

Exempt information reasons 3 – Information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

18 Robinson Road Depot - Capital Development Project Update - Exempt Appendix 2 (Pages 119 - 120)

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

Exempt information reasons 3 – Information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Information for the public

Accessibility:

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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 right of address:

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 Room 209/210 on the Second Floor, The Marine Workshops, Railway Quay, Newhaven, East Sussex, BN9 0ER on 13 July 2023 at 2.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair).
Councillors Christine Robinson (Deputy-Chair), Chris Collier, Johnny Denis, Wendy Maples, Laurence O'Connor and Mark Slater.

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Homira Javadi (Director of Finance and Performance (Section 151 Officer)), Tim Whelan (Director of Service Delivery), Becky Cooke (Director of Tourism, Culture and Organisational Development), Luke Dreeling (Performance Lead), Nathan Haffenden (Head of Development, Investment and Delivery), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance), Steven Houchin (Interim Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Corporate Finance)), Mark Langridge Kemp (Head of Property and Asset Management), Parmjeet Jassal (Interim Head of Financial Planning), Simon Russell (Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer), Kate Slattery (Head of Legal Services) and Rebecca Wynn (Regulatory Services Lead (Operational Lead - Emergency Planning)).

Also in attendance:

Councillor Stephen Gauntlett (Chair of Audit and Governance Committee).

David Nicholson (Tenants' Representative)

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2023 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were reported from Cabinet member, Councillor Emily O'Brien and visiting members, Councillors Christine Brett and James MacCleary.

3 Declarations of interest

None were declared.

4 Public question time

The Cabinet received three written questions from Mary Campbell, in relation

to housing need in Peacehaven and biodiversity/ecological value of the Valley Road area of North Peacehaven ahead of the referendum on the Peacehaven and Telscombe Neighbourhood Plan. In accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rules, supplementary questions were asked to the Cabinet. All questions were verbally responded to at the meeting between Councillor Nicholson and Councillor O'Connor, except for the last supplementary question. It was agreed that a written response to this would be submitted following the meeting.

The Cabinet then received a written question from Frank Flood in relation to the Peacehaven & Telscombe Library service, following planning permission being granted for the redevelopment of the Meridian Centre in Peacehaven. In accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rules, a supplementary question was asked to the Cabinet. The questions were verbally responded to at the meeting by Councillor Nicholson.

5 Appointment to Outside Bodies

In accordance with Council procedure rule, the Cabinet formally approved the following changes in appointments to outside bodies:

- Councillor Emily O'Brien to be appointed as the Council's representative to sit on Lewes District Food Partnership's Steering Group.
- Councillor Mark Slater to replace Councillor Lucy Agace as the Council's representative on the Upper Ouse Flood Protection and Water Retention Works Working Group.

In addition to the above, Cabinet formally approved the following changes, that had been made under delegated authority since the agenda had been published.

- Councillor Isobel Sharkey to replace Councillor Christine Robinson as a representative on CIL Management Board.
- Councillor Lesley Boniface to replace Councillor Christine Brett as a representative on CIL Management Board.

6 LGA Peer Challenge

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Executive, asking them to consider the report of the Local Government Association (LGA), following completion of its Corporate Peer Challenge for Lewes and Eastbourne Councils, that took place in September 2022, and the council's response to the recommendations.

Thanks were expressed to the LGA and all who engaged in the process. This included officers and external stakeholders, officers who arranged the Challenge, the previous administration and Councillor MacCleary for his political leadership as Leader of the Council at the time.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 11 July 2023 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendation in full.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

To note the Local Government Association report and the council's response to its recommendations.

Reason for recommendations:

The LGA report is intended to provide the council with suggestions and advice that may help support future improvement.

7 Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 4 - 2022-2023

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and Performance, asking them to consider the council's progress and performance in respect of service areas for the fourth quarter of the year (January-March 2023), as shown at Appendix 1 to the report.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 11 July 2023 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendation in full.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

(1) To note progress and performance across council services for quarter 4 and for the 2022/23 year as a whole.

(2) To note delivery of corporate plan priorities to date.

(3) To agree arrangements for the establishment of a new Corporate Plan to run from 2024 to 2028.

(4) To agree the suite of performance indicators to be reported in 2023/24 (set out at Appendix 2 to the report).

Reason for decisions:

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the council's progress and performance and to initiate the preparation of a new Corporate Plan.

8 Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and Performance, updating them on the provisional outturn for 2022/23.

The report provided information and analysis on the Council's financial

performance and use of resources in the 2022/23 financial year in comparison to the revised budget set by Council in February 2023. The report preceded the production of the Council's formal Statement of Accounts and although it was not expected that any further material adjustments would be needed that will alter the final outturn position, it was possible that this could be the case.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To note and approve the revenue and capital provisional outturn for 2022/23 subject to final accounting adjustments;

(2) To approve the funding of revenue provisional outturn 2022/23 of £110k from general fund balances;

(3) To note and approve the housing revenue account provisional outturn for 2022/23 subject to final accounting adjustments; and

(4) To give delegated authority to Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for finance, assets and community wealth building in consultation with Chief Finance Officer to make final accounting adjustments.

Reason for decisions:

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the Council's financial performance for 2022/23.

9 Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and performance, presenting them with the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2022/23.

The report was also considered by Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 3 July 2023.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

(1) To approve the Annual Treasury Management report 2022/23.

(2) To approve the 2022/23 Prudential and Treasury Indicators included in the report (set out at Section 9.1).

Reason for decisions:

It is the requirement of CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Sector Code of Practice (the Code).

10 Private Housing Financial Assistance Policy 2023-25

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery, introducing an updated Financial Assistance Policy for Disabled Facilities

Grants, Housing Renewal Grants and loans.

The Private Housing Financial Assistance Policy set out the financial tools for providing assistance to households across Lewes District Council for adaptations for the disabled and housing renewal initiatives.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 11 July 2023 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendation in full.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To seek Cabinet endorsement of the Private Sector Housing Financial Assistance Policy for Disabled Facilities Grants, Housing Renewal Grants and Loans 2023-2025 ('The Policy') as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

(2) That delegated authority is given to the Director of Service Delivery, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Tenants and Those in Housing Need to make minor changes within the Policy where necessary.

Reason for decisions:

(1) Whilst Disabled Facilities Grants remain a statutory requirement, additional funding through the Better Care Fund provides a continued opportunity to support innovative measures to improve the housing in the District and enable residents to remain at home safely for longer.

(2) To ensure that the Policy can be kept up to date without needing to bring minor amendments back to Cabinet.

11 Property and Assets Update

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, providing an update on various properties and assets across the District, including The Marine Workshops (Newhaven), West Beach Promenade (Newhaven), Westgate Car Park Wall (Lewes) and Castle Rise Wall (Lewes).

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 11 July 2023 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendation in full.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To note the defective boundary wall at Westgate Car Park and approve the capital budget allocation of £150,000 for initial remedial investigations and surveys;

(2) To note the progress update regarding remedial work being undertaken at Castle Rise Wall, notwithstanding that it is not a corporate asset;

(3) To note the progress update regarding recommissioning of the Marine Workshops and approve the capital budget allocation of £400k to support phase 2 improvements at the property;

(4) (a) To note the progress update regarding West Beach Promenade;

(b) To purchase the West Beach Promenade from Newhaven Port and Properties Ltd subject to contract, valuation and full due diligence;

(c) To construct a new restaurant and destination facilities on West Beach Promenade;

(d) To invite expressions of interest for the grant of a lease of the restaurant and leisure facilities, and to enter into that lease; and

(e) To authorise the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building and the Chief Finance (S151) Officer to take all necessary actions to progress the proposals set out in (4) above including the approval and implementation of all processes and procedures, the negotiation of terms, authorising the execution of all necessary documentation and any ancillary matters.

Reasons for decisions:

(1) Westgate Car Park wall: the wall has become structurally defective, and a capital budget is required in order to support initial investigations and surveys. A further report will be brought back to Cabinet requesting additional capital budget once investigations are complete and design work has been undertaken on a remedial solution;

(2) Castle Rise Wall: to update on progress;

(3) Marine Workshops: the first phase of works to recommission the building is nearing completion, this report sets out a second phase of works to complete this multi-use business/community facility;

(4) West Beach Promenade: to enable delivery of this part of the Levelling Up Fund project.

12 Housing Development & Asset Update

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, providing an update on the housing development and delivery programme across Lewes District.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 11 July 2023 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendation in full.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To note the progress of the housing development and delivery programme as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

(2) To approve the purchase and development of land and assets at Peacehaven Golf and Fitness to deliver new Council homes in accordance at Appendix 2 (Exempt) to the report including making an allocation within the HRA Capital Programme 2023/24 of up to £3.1m, subject to contract, valuation, and full due diligence.

(3) To approve a waiver to the Council's Contract Procedural Rules (CPR) to allow the direct selection of the contractor(s) associated with the Peacehaven Golf & Fitness proposals for the reasons as set out in the report.

(4) To approve and implement a new Revolving Loan Fund within the capacity of the existing General Fund Capital Programme 2023/24 to support further sustainable community-led housing developments within the district.

(5) To approve the criteria for HRA rationalisation as set out and to dispose of assets in order to further the capacity of the Capital Programme to deliver more Council homes across the district.

(6) To authorise the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Chief Finance (S151) Officer and Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building, to progress recommendations 2, 3, and 4 in this report and to conclude them including the approval and implementation of all processes and procedures, negotiation and agreement of terms, award of contract(s), and authorising the execution of all related documentation.

(7) To authorise the Director of Service Delivery, in consultation with the Chief Finance (S151) Officer, Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building, Lead Member for Tenants and those in Housing Need, and the Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD) to progress recommendation 5 to dispose of identified HRA assets including negotiation and agreement of terms and authorising the execution of all related documentation, subject to any or all of the agreed criteria as follows:

- The cost of any repair work is prohibitive compared to the market value of the property
- The cost of running the property is unaffordable being of sub-standard quality / efficiency
- The sales receipt generated is capable of delivering an overall net gain in new homes
- The capital receipt generated from the sale is ring-fenced to support the HRA Capital Programme.

Reasons for decisions:

(1) To provide Cabinet with an update on the growing housing development and delivery programme, specifically in the context of the 'Reimagining Lewes District' Corporate Plan 2020-2024.

(2) To further community-led housing development opportunities within the district underpinned by a secure financial instrument.

(3) To support HRA finances in the context of current pressures and further the Council's objectives to build and maintain quality, affordable, and sustainable homes.

Notes: (1) Appendix 2 remained exempt. (2) Exempt information reason 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting ended at 3.42 pm

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair)

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	14 September 2023
Title:	Cost of Living Update
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning.
Cabinet member:	Councillor Christine Robinson, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing.
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To update Cabinet on work delivered by the Council in supporting residents through the Cost-of-Living crisis, with proposals to continue and build on key work-streams and partnerships.
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	(1) To note the initiatives undertaken to date in response to the cost-of-living crisis. (2) To agree that the coordination of cost-of-living responses and dedicated role continue for a further year. (3) To agree a one-off grant of £20,000 for Lewes District Citizens Advice to support the continuation of specialist UC advice.
Reasons for recommendations:	To enable the Council, in partnership with local organisations, to continue an effective and holistic cost-of-living response, helping residents as the crisis continues to impact negatively on households.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Seanne Sweeney Post title: Community Services Lead E-mail: Seanne.Sweeney@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01273 085630

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Country continues to face a range of financial challenges which together have formed an ongoing and entrenched cost-of-living crisis. Rising rents and interest rates (the 14th rise in a row has been announced at the time of writing), coupled with the sharp increase to household staples and consistently high

utilities mean that people continue to struggle, and this is only likely to deepen as we head into winter.

- 1.2 Despite various successful initiatives and interventions by both the Council and partners across the district, the impact of the crisis continues to bite. It is clear more needs to be done to help local people and the voluntary sector through the winter and beyond, and crucial to build on the successful foundations laid over the past year, as set out below.

2 Council initiatives to date

- 2.1 The Council's 'Safety Net' fund of £500,000 was created in 2022 to address a gap for low-income households that did not meet criteria for additional government support. The fund has been utilised with some flexibility to enable it to help as many residents as possible having funded upwards of 1,000 awards to date.
- 2.2 The Council Tax Reduction scheme is available to households on benefits or low incomes, with 100% reduction for eligible pensioners. Additionally, Discretionary Housing Payments continue to be available to those who are eligible and potentially facing eviction, with more than 1,000 awards confirmed this financial year.
- 2.3 The Council's Exceptional Hardship Payment (EHP) scheme has helped vulnerable residents who have seen a reduction in Government assistance towards Council Tax liability or are suffering extreme financial hardship.
- 2.4 The Council will shortly implement the Policy and Practice dashboard (also referred to as LIFT). The software enables local authorities to identify households at risk of debt and mounting payments, as well as maximising their income and preventing arrears, thus incurring less costs to the Council.
- 2.5 Recent editions of Tenants Open Voice have continued to offer tips and advice for tenants struggling with the ongoing reach of the crisis. It includes money saving tips and information on how to access free green energy advice, the local Food Partnership and Universal Credit.
- 2.6 District News is the quarterly magazine produced by the Council and delivered free of charge to households across the district. In addition to key updates from the Council more broadly, there remains a focus on cost-of-living support which the autumn edition will maintain also.
- 2.7 Following a successful first cost of living summit in October 2022, a second was held at Southover House at the end of February 2023. As with the first, the summit saw attendance from a range of partners with presentations from Lewes District Food Partnership, Ovesco (a local organisation working towards community owned renewable energy) and Warm Space schemes. A second round of funding was launched (as outlined in paragraph 3.2) along with a renewed commitment to facilitate the cross-sector Cost of Living Partners Action Group (CoLPAG).

- 2.8 Having declared a cost-of-living emergency at Full Council in the summer of 2022, the Council set up the Cost-of-Living Working Group. Made up of key officers from departments across the Council, the group ensures a joined-up response for residents and enables discussions, ideas, and flexibility so as to produce collaborative and considered interventions. The Deputy Leader and portfolio holder for Community Wellbeing (which includes oversight of the Council's cost-of-living response) also attends the meetings, ensuring strategic leadership.

3 Grant funding and support for the voluntary sector.

- 3.1 In July of 2022, Cabinet agreed a £250,000 Cost of Living Crisis Fund to provide vital support to voluntary sector partners in the district as they responded to extreme challenges faced by residents. A dedicated, part-time post was also created to mobilise and coordinate provisions across the district and administer the grant fund.
- 3.2 The fund enabled the Council to deliver two rounds of grant funding. The first – in the autumn of 2022 – focussed on emergency food responses, Warm Space schemes, enhanced advice provisions and addressing digital exclusion. The second round was delivered in spring 2023 and was designed to address needs and gaps identified by the Council led CoLPAG. Local charities and organisations were invited to apply for grants around sustainable food access (including cookery classes and community gardens), specific wellbeing support for volunteers, guidance around green energy and debt/money/welfare advice.
- 3.3 The dedicated post of Cost of Living Project Officer, has so far played a crucial role in responding to and coordinating partners across the district, playing a lead role in developing and implementing the Council's Cost of Living Strategic Action Plan. Along with identifying and building key relationships whilst strengthening the broader networked approach, the post-holder has:
- Delivered two summits
 - Supported various local partner 'one stop shops'
 - Collated and maintained a Community Directory
 - Supported targeted digital exclusion workshops
 - Facilitated both CoLPAG and the internal Cost of Living Working Group
 - Launched and administered a range of grants to local groups.

The above is a non-exhaustive list. In addition to this, the post supports a continuing holistic Council approach to the crisis, whilst identifying vulnerabilities and opportunities across the district.

4 Proposals

- 4.1 Although the Cost-of-Living Project Officer and the Council more broadly have made great progress in devising and galvanising multi-disciplinary solutions across the district, the resilience of communities will be tested again in the coming months. There remain several clear challenges and workstreams for the months ahead, and being able to respond flexibly and quickly through the winter will mean that successful inroads can be further strengthened. It is therefore

proposed that the role (which is part-time 20 hours per week) be extended for one year.

Several imminent areas of work have already been identified and include:

- Community Spaces (previously Warm Space Schemes): review/map of current offer and support a provision of social prescribers/ mental wellbeing info, digital exclusion and advice sessions for partners, with a workshop for schemes held in August.
- CoLPAG: continue this vital engagement and refresh outcomes.
- Further targeted engagement with rural communities: working with Neighbourhood First and retirement schemes in the rural areas and coordinating outreach.
- Build on the conclusions of the Poverty Truth Hearing which took place in June and was organised by Lewes District Food Partnership and well attended by Council representatives.
- Focus on further improvements to consistent and holistic approaches through communications, multi-discipline one-stop shops and officer awareness (the “no wrong door principle”).

4.2 Lewes District Citizens Advice (CitA) have continued to offer information, advice, and casework on a range of issues including debt, benefits and employment amongst others. As with the pandemic, CitA have seen a sharp increase in contacts from residents as the cost-of-living crisis has continued. With such things comes an inevitable increase in publicity for the charity as professionals (and the media) point to CitA as the go-to organisation to support people through challenges. However, the rise in referrals rarely reflects an increase to capacity and resources, and though CitA utilise volunteers to deliver services, these take a great deal of time to induct and cannot provide the advice of qualified specialist staff.

4.3 To support a continuation of specialist, free advice for residents around Universal Credit through Lewes District Citizens Advice, it is proposed that the Council provide a one-off grant of £20,000 to uphold this work.

5 Consultation

5.1 This area of work has included much engagement with the Council’s partners in the voluntary and statutory sectors. This shall be maintained as the Council moves through the winter months and continues to collaborate in order to support residents effectively.

6 Corporate plan and council policies

6.1 Much of the contents of this report places an emphasis on sustainability and will complement the Sustainability Policy. In addition to this the Council’s corporate plan places a central focus on helping the most vulnerable in the district, and the measures outlined support this priority.

7 Financial appraisal

- 7.1 Cabinet previously agreed to establish a Cost-of-Living Crisis Fund, with £250,000 being allocated to supporting the local voluntary sector to support residents with the cost of living.

This report proposes to continue this response and supports residents as the crisis continues to impact negatively on households.

As a result, there is a need to retain the administrative support required to coordinate this support for a further period of 1 year at a cost of £20,000. This additional resource would be time limited and will not form part of the council's future based budget.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Subject to the identification of a relevant and sufficient budget, Cabinet may lawfully agree recommendations 2 and 3 of this report.

Date of legal input: 16.03.23

Legal ref: 012300-LDC-OD

9 Equality analysis

- 9.1 The cost-of-living crisis is likely to impact many household budgets, with utilities, food products and fuel increasing in price. Working-age people on low-incomes or squeezed budgets are likely to be impacted more as the year progresses, and older people particularly by increased heating costs in autumn and winter. Residents in rural locations who rely on oil to heat their homes may be subject to increased oil costs. People reliant on cars, including those in rural locations, could be impacted by increased running costs. Food items have already seen some price increases, and those with children may see an increase in their weekly food cost.

10 Environmental sustainability implications

- 10.1 Although the primary consideration of this report is the alleviation of hardship, where residents are in a position to reduce their fuel costs through energy efficiency measures in their home, the current pressures on fuel costs may have the incidental benefit of reducing use of fossil fuels which contribute to global warming. The strategic action plan will include measures to improve food resilience therefore may bear some improvement around food waste and local produce.

11 Contribution to Community Wealth Building

- 11.1 By taking a collaborative approach to supporting local people, through giving grants to local voluntary and community organisation, the council is promoting the community wealth building principle of plural ownership.

12 Appendices

- 12.1 None

13 Background Papers

13.1 None

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	14 September 2023
Title:	Revenue and Capital Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2023-24
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance
Cabinet member:	Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for finance, assets and community wealth building
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	The report provides an assessment of the Council's financial performance against its approved 2023-24 budget, incorporating key financial risks, issues and opportunities identified since 1 April 2023 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
Decision type:	Non-Key
Officer recommendation(s):	It is recommended that the Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Notes the forecast outturn position for 2023-24 and associated risks.ii) Delegates authority to the Director of Finance and Performance and the portfolio holder for finance to apply any budget virements required to effectively manage the overall budget.iii) Notes Appendices 1 and 2.
Reasons for recommendations:	To update members on the financial position of the Council and ensure that the Authority complies with its financial regulations.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Homira Javadi Post title: Director of Finance and Performance E-mail: homira.javadi@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01323 485512

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Lewes District Council provides a range of services to residents and businesses across the area including the collection and disposal of waste, housing and support for the homeless, leisure and community wellbeing, planning and tourism and culture activities.
- 1.2. The Council successfully balanced its 2022-23 budget and published the details in the provisional outturn report that Cabinet considered.
- 1.3. However, the Council, alongside many other local authorities and organisations across the nation, has seen a significant impact on its finances as a result of external factors beyond its control. The main drivers of these cost pressures are highlighted below:
 - Inflationary and cost of living pressures impacting on the cost of providing services.
 - Ongoing financial impact of Covid allied with the withdrawal of significant Covid funding previously received.
 - Demand led and inflationary pressures within housing.
 - Risk of cost of living pay awards are greater than included at the time of setting the budget.
 - The ongoing negative impact of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union
 - The underlying uncertainty surrounding the cost of energy and utilities in particular gas and electricity.
 - The lack of clarity over Government funding for local government particularly around business rates and a long term settlement to enable planning over the medium term.
- 1.4. As a result of these externally driven financial challenges, Directorate Management Teams continue to be focused on reducing the cost of service delivery in their areas to support the Council to forecast spend closer in line with the budget, while ensuring that services are still delivered and that there isn't a corresponding reduction in service provision.

2. General Fund

- 2.1. The forecast outturn position for 2023-24 as at the 30 June 2023 is an overspend of £651k, as shown in Table 1. There are no previous positions formally reported to Cabinet this year.
- 2.2. This is an initial assessment of the forecast outturn position at the first quarter milestone and follows a more in-depth review than the initial high level key expenditure and income lines undertaken in period 1, which has now included regeneration and planning directorate, homelessness and waste services. More detailed financial monitoring will be undertaken over the coming months to inform the forecast outturn with service teams and reported to Cabinet.

- 2.3. Teams are working on mitigation options for the potential overspend with Service Delivery already highlighting some £1,083.1k of options under development.
- 2.4. The initial main underlying pressures which directorates are seeking to mitigate are as follows:
- Underlying levels of inflation and increased interest costs affecting contracts, operations and running costs.
 - Increase in homelessness and the use of expensive nightly purchase temporary accommodation.
 - Budget pressures associated with staffing and the long term delivery of saving programmes
- 2.5. The detailed forecast variations against budget are set out in section 4.

Directorate	Net Budget £'000	Forecast Net Expenditure at 31/03/24 £'000	P3 Forecast Outturn Variance at 31/03/24 £'000	Forecast Variance Against Budget %
Corporate Services	6,218	6,476	258	4.1%
Service Delivery	10,869	12,329	1,460	13.4%
Regeneration & Planning	1,367	1,592	225	16.4%
Tourism & Culture	292	292	0	0.0%
Recharges to the Housing Revenue Account	(4,111)	(4,111)	0	0.0%
Cost of Services	14,635	16,578	1,943	13.3%
Technical/Centrally Controlled Budgets	968	343	(625)	-64.6%
Total Budgeted Expenditure	15,603	16,921	1,318	8.4%
Less Funding	(15,603)	(16,270)	(667)	4.3%
Net Position 2023-24	0	651	651	-4.2%

Table 1: Quarter 1 Forecast Outturn 2023-24 by Directorate

3. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 3.1. The Housing Revenue Account is a ring-fenced account used to manage the Council's housing stock. The costs of managing and maintaining the properties, collecting rents, and meeting the interest cost of monies borrowed to pay for investment in the housing stock are all charged to the housing revenue account.
- 3.2. The HRA is reporting an overspend (deficit) position of £459k against the original budget, as shown in table 2. This is the first reported position communicated to Cabinet members for the financial year 2023/24.
- 3.3. The forecast overspend has predominately been driven by four main areas:
- Charges for Services – there is a forecast £271k of additional income above the budget set and agreed in February. This is due to the agreed budget being uplifted by 7% following the same guidance as percentage increases

adopted for Dwelling Rents. However, unlike Dwelling Rents service charges are purely a recharge of the underlying costs being incurred. The income for service charges have therefore increased following the detailed work undertaken on individual charges across the estate and have been affected by the underlying inflationary pressures within the UK economy including areas such as energy and wage pressures. These costs have worked their way through to the charging levels and the Council is only passing the actual costs incurred onward to tenants' charges.

- Dwelling Rents – the forecast reduced income of £232k (1%) is due to two factors; the underlying levels of voids being slightly higher than budgeted and the number of rental days within the fiscal year being reduced by two days as only commencing on the 3 April.
- Repairs and Maintenance – there is a forecast outturn pressure of £357k (6%) associated with repairs and maintenance due to a combination of the following factors:
 - Yearly contractual uplifts increasing higher than in a normal world with due to Covid 19, the war in Ukraine causing increasing labour and material costs.
 - Ageing housing stock with underfunding in major works leading in higher volume responsive repair call outs, with works completed reactively being at higher cost.
 - New development properties in theory should be cheaper to maintain but are actually more expensive due to higher specifications such as green roofs and misting systems.
 - Higher Voids numbers with new developments coming on stream.
 - Legislation changes, example fire, increasing costs required for certified works by certified contractors on fire doors. Compliance increased cost to come for increased inspection regime required for fire compliance.
- Depreciation - the cost of depreciation is forecast to be £134k above budget due to the increase in the value of the Council's housing stock following the valuation work undertaken by the Council's external valuation partners.

	Original Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's
INCOME			
Dwelling Rents	(17,039)	(16,807)	232
Non-Dwelling Rents	(351)	(359)	(8)
Charges for Services and Facilities	(1,390)	(1,661)	(271)
Contributions towards Expenditure	(210)	(157)	53
GROSS INCOME	(18,990)	(18,984)	6
EXPENDITURE			
Repairs and Maintenance	5,494	5,851	357
Supervision and Management	3,710	3,717	7
Special Services	1,557	1,509	(47)
Rents, Rates, Taxes and Other Charges	203	203	0
Increase in Impairment of Debtors	157	157	0
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	5,443	5,576	134
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	3	3	0
Debt Management Costs	10	10	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE	16,576	17,027	451
NET COST OF HRA SERVICES	(2,414)	(1,957)	457
HRA share of Corporate and Democratic Core	140	140	0
NET OPERATING COST OF HRA	(2,274)	(1,817)	457
Capital Financing and Interest Charges			
Interest Payable	2,376	2,376	0
Interest Receivable	(143)	(200)	(57)
Revenue Contributions to Capital Expenditure	100	100	0
Total Capital Financing and Interest Charges	2,333	2,276	(57)
Transfer to (from) Reserves	(60)	0	60
HRA (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT	(0)	459	459

Table 2: HRA Quarter 1 Forecast Outturn 2023-24

4. Financial Overview by Directorate

- 4.1. This section of the report provides an update on the forecast variations against the 2023-24 budget focused on individual Directorates. A more detailed tabular presentation of variances by team is available in appendix 1.

Corporate Services

Net Budget - £6,218.0k

Forecast Outturn - £6,475.9k

Forecast Overspend - £257.9k

Variance Percentage – 4.1%

- 4.2. The Corporate Services Directorate delivers services including human resources, financial services, corporate management team, business transformation and legal and democracy support.

- 4.3. The Directorate is reporting a forecast outturn position of £257.9k overspend.
- 4.4. Similar to many other local authorities, financial services is experiencing some difficulty in recruiting for some key vacant posts on permanent basis. The reported position includes a projected outturn overspend of £207k against the financial services in respect of the projected cost of interim staff. The vacancy savings are currently being partially offset against the interim costs. The service is actively progressing with its recruitment plans to appoint for the vacant posts.
- 4.5. There are other smaller variances across teams (all below £50k) that make up the remaining £50.9k of forecast variances at Quarter 1.

Service Delivery

Net Budget - £10,868.6k

Forecast Outturn - £12,329.1k

Forecast Overspend - £1,460.5k

Variance Percentage – 13.4%

- 4.6. The Service Delivery Directorate delivers services including housing and support to the homeless, waste and environmental services and maximisation and welfare and regulatory service teams.
- 4.7. The Directorate is reporting a forecast outturn position of £1,460.5k overspend, which is an adverse movement of £673k from the reported position communicated in Period 1.
- 4.8. The reported position includes a projected overspend of £635.4k to meet the current costs of providing homeless support and housing. The Council had budgeted to support approximately 44 homeless households during the year while the current demand is 51 households in emergency accommodation. While the current demand remains high, and the number of households in emergency accommodation in June has decreased, the service is projecting to reduce placements down to 49 by the end of the financial year. This will continue to be monitored and reviewed over the coming months.
- 4.9. There are forecast overspends £275.6k relating to employee costs in the Neighbourhood First Team, against office cleaning and public conveniences as initial R&S savings for both contract business cases remain unrealised. However, the service are looking to resolve these through transformation which may mitigate the impact this financial year depending on delivery timescales.
- 4.10. There is also a forecast overspend of £269.9k relating to car parking contract as the initial R&S savings on the East Sussex County Council contract business case remains unrealised. The service continues to review this and further updates will be provided in coming months.
- 4.11. The Customer First Team are forecasting an overspend of £110.8k against staffing costs as they continue to hold difficult to recruit/fill vacancies which are currently filled by agency workers at higher rates than permanent budget levels.

- 4.12. There is a forecast overspend of £88.0k relating to the cost of the Wellbeing Service which was introduced in 2022-23. The service was funded in 2022-23 through the use of reserve allocations.
- 4.13. The Directorate are also forecasting a pressure of £45.1k due to a reduction in income within CRFT due to the loss of preceptor contributions due to a change in the Council Tax reduction scheme administration. This is currently being renegotiated with the main preceptors.
- 4.14. There are other smaller variances across teams (all below £50k) that make up the remaining £35.7k overspend at period 3.
- 4.15. Additionally, the Service Delivery Directorate have identified £1,083.1k of mitigations which then offset the pressures identified above, these have yet to be built into the above period 3 position and are in various stages of development and consultation. As they come to fruition and implementation, they will be incorporated into the position with Cabinet being informed of the details through the normal governance routes.

Regeneration and Planning

Net Budget – £1,367.4k

Forecast Outturn – £1,592.2k

Forecast Overspend - £224.8k

Variance Percentage – 16.4%

- 4.16. The Regeneration and Planning Directorate delivers services including estates and property estate management and regeneration and planning activity across the area.
- 4.17. The Directorate is reporting a forecast outturn position of £224.8k overspend, which is an adverse movement of £224.8k from the reported position communicated in Period 1.
- 4.18. The reported position includes a projected overspend of £135.0k within the Planning Team due to the procurement of consultants to manage the volume of planning appeals (currently running at 20) compared to the budgeted level which assumes a likely number of appeals of approximately 1-2 per year.
- 4.19. The service is also reporting a reduced income projection of £58.4k against budget, but in line with last year actuals, associated with South Down National Park planning applications.
- 4.20. There are other smaller variances across teams (all below £50k) that make up the remaining £31.4k overspend at period 3.

Tourism and Culture

Net Budget – £292.4k

Forecast Outturn – £292.4k

Forecast Overspend - £nil

Variance Percentage – 0.0%

- 4.21. The Tourism and Culture Directorate delivers a range of cultural activities across the area including leisure and sporting facilities as well as ongoing and one-off yearly events and productions.
- 4.22. The Directorate is reporting a balanced position for the year at period 3 with more detailed reviews to be undertaken over the coming months and reported to Cabinet.

Recharges to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Net Budget – £4,111.2k
Forecast Outturn – £4,111.2k
Forecast Overspend - £nil
Variance Percentage – 0.0%

- 4.23. The recharge to the HRA is the budgeted charge from the General Fund (GF) account to the HRA to recover costs which have been incurred within the GF but which the HRA has benefitted. This will include, but not limited to, the provision of back office functions as information technology, legal advice, procurement advice and support with regard to financial services.
- 4.24. The reported forecast outturn for the financial year at period 3 is a balanced position with more detailed reviews to be undertaken over the coming months and reported to Cabinet.

Technical and Central Controlled Budgets

Net Budget – £967.0k
Forecast Outturn – £343.0k
Forecast Underspend – (£625.0k)
Variance Percentage – 64.5%

- 4.25. Technical and centrally controlled budgets include the treasury budgets, capital financing and contingency budgets. This area will also include any Council wide corporate cross cutting issues and/or opportunities.
- 4.26. The Council is reporting a projected a forecast outturn position of £343k representing an underspend of £624k for the year at Q1.
- 4.27. The underspend is due to higher than budgeted investment interest payments due to the significant increase in interest rates that has occurred since the original budget was approved by Council in February 2023.
- 4.28. The reported budget of centrally controlled budgets for 2023-24 has been updated from the position reported as part of the budget setting process taken through and agreed by Cabinet and Full Council in February 2023. This flows the allocation/distribution of budgets to services and team budgets which was agreed to be delegated to the Director of Finance and Performance.

- 4.29. The budget reported in February for centrally controlled budgets totalled £1,302.9k with the budget now sitting at £967.8k, a movement of £335.1k. The movement of £335.1k follows the distribution of the following budget proposals to service budgets:

Proposal Code	Proposal Description	Budget £
LDC2324001	2021/22 Base Budget Pay Inflation Adjustment	(93,648)
LDC2324002	2022/23 Base Budget NI Adjustment	(36,274)
LDC2324003	2022/23 Pay Award Adjustment	529,497
LDC2324006	External Audit Fees	55,500
LDC2324050	General review of LDC Fees & Charges	(120,000)
Budget Distribution/Allocation		335,075

- 4.30. Further updates and will be provided to Cabinet as the year progresses and as financial monitoring is reported.

5. Capital Expenditure

5.1. Capital Expenditure - General Fund

- 5.2. The capital programme at Appendix 2 provides a detailed analysis of revised allocations for 2023/24. The Capital Programme including slippages from 2022/23) for 2023/24 totals £69.2m compared to the original Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2023 of £52.6m. The summary of the General Fund Capital Programme is shown in the following table.

General Fund Capital Programme	Original Budget 2023-24	2022/23 Budget B/F	Other Variation	Revised Budget 2023-24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Housing	1,135	351	-	1,486
Loans to Housing Companies	2,000	419	-	2,419
Recovery and Stabilisation	20	858	-	878
Regeneration	35,223	8,665	400	44,288
Asset Management	2,930	1,889	150	4,969
Indoor Leisure Facilities	2,159	1,056	-	3,215
Energy Schemes	500	24	-	524
Community Infrastructure	900	586	-	1,487
Service Delivery	6,331	276	-	6,607
Specialist Projects	136	69	-	205
Coastal Defence Works	100	400	-	500
Parks & Pavilions	200	853	-	1,053
Open Spaces - Biodiversity	610	114	-	724
IT Block Allocation	213	184	-	397
Finance Transformation	150	304	-	454
General Fund	52,607	16,048	550	69,206

Table 4: General Fund Capital Programme Summary Table 2023-24

- 5.3 At the end of Quarter 1 the spend against year 1 of the programme was below expectation for the period and whilst it is too soon to forecast what level of slippage we might anticipate into future years; it is unlikely that all aspects of the programme will be deliverable this year. As a result, a review of the existing capital programme and prior year slippages by the Capital programme Overview Board is due to take place during Q2 and it is anticipated that the current programme will be reduced.
- 5.4 **Capital Expenditure – HRA**
- 5.5 The detailed HRA capital programme at Appendix 2, again provides a detailed analysis of revised allocations for 2023/24. r 2023/24. The HRA Capital Programme (including slippages from 2022/23) for 2023/24 totals £20.5m compared to the original Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2023 of £16.5m.
- 5.6 A summary of the HRA Capital Programme is shown in the following table. Capital budgets from the previous year have been carried forward to 2023/24, relating to the maintenance of the Council’s housing stock, and the New Build programme.

LDC Capital	Original Budget 2023-24	2022/23 Budget B/F	Other Variation	Revised Budget 2023-24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Construction of New Dwellings	11,501	4,246	-	15,747
Improvements to Stock	4,583	- 176	-	4,407
Adaptations for Disabled Tenants	415	- 209	-	206
Housing Estates Recreation and Play Areas	50	99	-	149
Total HRA	16,549	3,960	-	20,508

Table 5: HRA Capital Programme Summary Table 2023-24

- 5.7 Expenditure and commitments at the end of Quarter 1 is £1.0m.
- 5.8 As with the General Fund, the level of expenditure against the HRA Capital Programme was below expectation for the period and whilst it is also too soon to forecast what level of slippage we might anticipate into future years, the review of the existing capital programme and prior year slippages by the Capital programme Overview Board will also consider the HRA programme in line with the 30-year HRA Business Plan.
- 5.9 The existing 30-year HRA business plan is currently under review and as part of that process the HRA Capital Programme will also be assessed to ensure that the programme is both deliverable and affordable. Members will be advised where there are significant revisions. Based on the review reprofiling will be undertaken where necessary to reflect these changes within the HRA Capital Programme.

6. Funding

- 6.1. The Council's net service budget is funded from the following areas: Council Tax income, Business Rates income, Government grants and reserves. A breakdown of the funding budget is detailed below.
- 6.2. Council Tax income is forecast at £8,918k, as additional £67k on the budget of £8,831k. The Retained Business Rates income amount of £4,900k includes NNDR income, Tariff, s31 grant, previous year deficit, levy, pooling redistribution and a £900k transfer from the Equalisation Reserve. As a result, there is an projected to be an additional income of £262k from these sources.
- 6.3. Better Care Fund (BCF) conversion is also forecast to increase by £338k compared to budget due to an increase in the agreed amount due in 2023/24.

Financing Budgets P3 Forecast Outturn at 31/03/24	Net Budget £'000	Forecast Net Expenditure at 31/03/24 £'000	P3 Forecast Outturn Variance at 31/03/24 £'000	Forecast Variance Against Budget %
Council Tax	(8,831)	(8,898)	(67)	0.8%
Retained Business Rates	(4,900)	(5,162)	(262)	5.3%
Government Grants	(742)	(742)	0	0.0%
New Homes Bonus	(393)	(393)	0	0.0%
Better Care Fund (BCF) Conversion	(508)	(846)	(338)	66.5%
Transfer from Reserves	(229)	(229)	0	0.0%
Net Position	(15,603)	(16,270)	(667)	4.3%

Table 3: Financing Quarter 1 Forecast Outturn 2023-24

- 6.4. The Council is reporting an over-recovery of income totalling £667k for the year as at 30 June 2023 with more detailed reviews and updates to be provided over the coming months and reported to Cabinet.

7. Financial appraisal

- 7.1 The report reflects the position at a particular as at 31 June 2023. Period 4 analysis to the end of July is already showing an improved position. Services have an early awareness of their pressures and as a result can take positive steps to mitigate the overspend in this area. As such the Quarter 2 position as at 30 September 2023 should give a much better indication of where we are likely to land at the end of the financial year.
- 7.2 The capital programme will also be reviewed prior to the Q2 position being confirmed, with particular emphasis on the prior year slippage that is routinely added to the Original Budget to ensure that only those amounts required are allocated within the revised Capital Programme going forward.

8. Legal implications

8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

9. Risk management implications

9.1 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

10. Equality analysis

10.1 There are no environmental sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

11. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – LDC Revenue Finance Monitoring – Directorate Tables Q1 2023-24
- Appendix 2 – LDC Capital Programme Monitoring Q1 2023-24

12. Background Papers

12.1 LDC General Fund Revenue Budget 2023/24 and Capital Programme

Lewes District Council

Revenue Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 2023-24

Appendix 1 – Quarter 1 Directorate and Service Tables

Corporate Services

Table 1A: Corporate Services P3 Forecast Outturn at 31/03/24	Net Budget	Forecast Net Expenditure at 31/03/24	P3 Forecast Outturn Variance at 31/03/24	Forecast Variance Against Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Financial Services	854	1,061	207	24.2%
Corporate Management Team	521	521	0	0.0%
Internal Audit and Corporate Fraud	250	235	(15)	-6.0%
Business Planning and Performance	843	859	16	1.9%
Corporate Finance	112	112	0	0.0%
Human Resources	348	378	30	8.6%
Information Technology	1,706	1,706	0	0.0%
Legal Services	413	413	0	0.0%
Local Democracy	1,247	1,187	(60)	-4.8%
Local Land Charges	(76)	4	80	-105.0%
Net Position	6,218	6,476	258	4.1%

Service Delivery

Table 1B: Service Delivery P3 Forecast Outturn at 31/03/24	Net Budget	Forecast Net Expenditure at 31/03/24	P3 Forecast Outturn Variance at 31/03/24	Forecast Variance Against Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Head of Customer First	242	309	67	27.8%
CFRT Income, Max & Welfare	1,091	1,755	664	60.8%
CFRT Regulatory Services	69	181	112	162.4%
CFRT Customer Contact	985	957	(28)	-2.9%
Bereavement Services	(23)	13	36	-155.5%
Neighbourhood First	1,725	2,394	668	38.7%
Waste & Recycling	4,447	4,427	(20)	-0.4%
Homes First - Head	72	132	61	84.4%
Homes First - Housing Property Services	786	786	0	0.0%
Homes First - Neighbourhood Management	888	888	0	0.0%
Homes First - Customer Experience	166	166	0	0.0%
Homes First - Housing Needs & Standards	421	322	(99)	-23.6%
Net Position	10,869	12,329	1,460	13.4%

Regeneration and Planning

Table 1C: Regeneration & Planning P3 Forecast Outturn at 31/03/24	Net Budget	Forecast Net Expenditure at 31/03/24	P3 Forecast Outturn Variance at 31/03/24	Forecast Variance Against Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Estates and Property	(73)	(73)	0	0.0%
Wave Leisure	224	224	0	0.0%
Solar Panel Trading Account	(74)	(74)	0	0.0%
Planning	567	757	190	33.5%
Building Control	64	98	35	54.8%
Regeneration	533	533	0	0.0%
Regeneration Portfolio	128	128	0	0.0%
Net Position	1,367	1,592	225	16.4%

Tourism and Culture

Table 1D: Tourism & Culture P3 Forecast Outturn at 31/03/24	Net Budget	Forecast Net Expenditure at 31/03/24	P3 Forecast Outturn Variance at 31/03/24	Forecast Variance Against Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Arts Development	6	6	0	0.0%
Tourism	287	287	0	0.0%
Net Position	292	292	0	0.0%

Technical and Central Controlled Budgets

Table 1E: Technical/Centrally Controlled Budgets P3 Forecast Outturn at 31/03/24	Net Budget	Forecast Net Expenditure at 31/03/24	P3 Forecast Outturn Variance at 31/03/24	Forecast Variance Against Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Contingencies	350	350	0	0.0%
Capital Financing	100	(525)	(625)	-625.0%
Corporately Managed Budgets	518	518	0	0.0%
Net Position	968	343	(625)	-64.6%

Appendix 2

General Fund Capital Programme	Original Budget 2023-24	2022/23 Budget B/F	Other Variation	Revised Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
HRA HOUSING INVESTMENT CAPITAL PROGRAMME				
Construction of New Dwellings				
- New Acquisitions & New Build	11,501,000	3,425,910		14,926,910
New Acquisitions & New Build - Ukrainian Homes	-			-
New Acquisitions & New Build - Ashington Gardens	-			-
- Saxonbury Redevelopment	-	16,920		16,920
- Newhaven Police Station Redevelopment	-	170,585	-	170,585
- Newhaven Fire Station Redevelopment	-	715,030		715,030
-The Lynchetts, Lewes	-	6,000		6,000
- Oakfield House, Plumton Green	-	6,470		6,470
- Mill Road, Ringmer	-	49,570	-	49,570
-Sustainability Initiative Pilot Scheme	-	296,000		296,000
Total Construction of New Dwellings	11,501,000	4,246,175	-	15,747,175
Improvements to Stock				
Retirement schemes equipment's	47,500			47,500
Retirement schemes - Guest House	35,000			35,000
Conversions & Additional Rooms in Roof				
- Fire Precaution Works	225,000	- 29,455		195,545
- Heating Improvement Programme	460,000	32,865		492,865
- Kitchen & Bathroom Renewals	495,000	- 50,290		444,710
- Roofing & Chimney Works	730,000	14,150		744,150
- Stuctural Works	885,000	- 128,570		756,430
- Window & Door Replacement Programme	795,000	30,110		825,110
- Electrical T & R	785,000	- 51,205		733,795
- Meeching Court, Newhaven (Elevator)	125,000	-		125,000
-Warden Call Systems Upgrade	-	5,850		5,850
-Broadband Installations	-	670		670
Total Improvement to Stock	4,582,500	- 175,875	-	4,406,625
				-
Adaptations for Disabled Tenants	415,000	- 208,975	-	206,025
				-
Housing Estates Recreation and Play Areas	50,000	98,500	-	148,500
				-
TOTAL HRA HOUSING INVESTMENT CAPITAL PROGRAMME	16,548,500	3,959,825	-	20,508,325

GF HOUSING INVESTMENT CAPITAL PROGRAMME				
General Fund Housing Grant Funded				
Private Sector Housing Grants	135,000	135,000		270,000
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	1,000,000	225,885		1,225,885
- Emergency Repair Grants		- 9,485	-	9,485
Total General Fund Housing Grant Funded	1,135,000	351,400	-	1,486,400
				-
Loans to Housing Companies				-
- Aspiration Homes LLP (Loan for Delivery of Mixed Tenure Homes)	2,000,000	419,060		2,419,060
Total Loans to Housing Companies	2,000,000	419,060	-	2,419,060
				-
TOTAL GF HOUSING INVESTMENT CAPITAL PROGRAMME	3,135,000	770,460	-	3,905,460
				-
TOTAL HOUSING	19,683,500	4,730,285	-	24,413,785
GF NON HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME				
Recovery and Stabilisation				
Recovery and Reset Programme		858,055		858,055
HR and Payroll	20,000			20,000
Total Recovery and Stabilisation	20,000	858,055	-	878,055
				-
Regeneration				-
Commercial Property Acquisition & Development	1,000,000	499,000		1,499,000
NSQ - North Street Quarter	300,000	184,730		484,730
NSQ - Springman House		100,000		100,000
Asset Development Newhaven (November 2017) (september 2018)		- 7,280	-	7,280
Newhaven Enterprise Centre	15,000			15,000
Newhaven Square Co-Op - Demolition		- 8,025	-	8,025
Reimagining Newhaven - Wayfinding	6,749,580	1,905,555		8,655,135
Reimagining Newhaven - Co-op	3,000,000			3,000,000
Reimagining Newhaven - Dacre Road Car Park (Urban Living Room)				
Reimagining Newhaven - Peacocks				
Construction of Avis Way Depot, Newhaven (July 2018)	6,300,000	1,332,680		7,632,680
The Sidings, Railway Quay, Newhaven		96,805		96,805
Marine Workshops (Newhaven)		770,760	400,000	1,170,760
Caburn House, Lewes Refurbishment		- 100,560	-	100,560
Re-connecting our Town: Pedestrian Gateway	7,590,310	605		7,590,915
Re-connecting our Town: Wayfinding & Visitor Trails		650		650
Building our Economic Strength: Social Enterprise Incubator		418,575		418,575
Building our Economic Strength: Business Grants Programme		8,575		8,575

Re-imagining our Town Centre: Community & Creative Hub		239,840		239,840
An Active Community: Eastside Recreation Ground		272,640		272,640
An Active Community: Fort Road Recreation Ground		464,560		464,560
An Active Community: Newhaven Football Club		53,620		53,620
An Active Community: Denton Island Slipway		108,085		108,085
Destination Newhaven: Newhaven Port		485,475		485,475
Maintaining Maritime Vitality: Marine Gateway		903,460		903,460
Newhaven Fishing Landing Stages:	9,938,520	342,630		10,281,150
Unit 7 Oak Estate – Newhaven Processing Facility		359,730		359,730
Newhaven West Beach Restaurant		-	61,770	-
Property & Development - AIRS Grants		295,090		295,090
Property & Development - Robinson Road development				
Property & Development - Castle wall				
UKSPF Changing Spaces Landport and beyond		-	560	-
UKSPF Changing Spaces Landport and beyond	50,000			50,000
UKSPF Cliff Gardens Project	45,600			45,600
Regeneration	234,400			234,400
Total Regeneration	35,223,410	8,664,870	400,000	44,288,280
				-
Asset Management				-
Asset Management Block Allocation	100,000	197,870		297,870
Lewes (Stanley Turner Recreation Ground Improvements) (Feb 2018)		2,430		2,430
Car Parks - (Capital Maintenance Programme)	50,000	-	2,435	47,565
Chapel Street Car Park		50,000		50,000
Cliff Tops @ Peacehaven (June 2017)		990		990
Market Tower/Sqaure	50,000	143,810		193,810
Flint Walls Repairs (November 2015)	30,000	-	15,225	150,000
Robinson Road Depot - Priorty Works (July 2018)	2,100,000	842,580		2,942,580
Newhaven Fort Bridge (september 2019)		705		705
Newhaven Fort Refurbishment		46,920		46,920
Stanley Turner Changing Room_Club House	150,000	95,070		245,070
187/2 Fisher Street	150,000	125,915		275,915
School Hill House	50,000	150,000		200,000
Newhaven Square - Unit		80,000		80,000
Newhaven Square - roof works	150,000	100,000		250,000
Public Conveniences	100,000	26,945		126,945
Changing Places Toilets		43,050		43,050
Total Asset Management	2,930,000	1,888,625	150,000	4,968,625

Indoor Leisure Facilities				
Indoor Leisure Facilities - Major Repairs and Improvements (Block allocation)	300,000	1,176,600		1,476,600
Wave Leisure Loan	1,059,000			1,059,000
Downs Leisure Centre - Priority Works	-	64,590	-	64,590
Lewes Leisure Centre - Replacement AHU/Boilers	-	13,560	-	13,560
Seahaven Swim and Fitness, Newhaven Priority Works	800,000	28,225		771,775
Peacehaven Leisure Centre - Replacement Gutters	-	14,325	-	14,325
Total Indoor Leisure Facilities	2,159,000	1,055,900	-	3,214,900
				-
Energy Schemes				-
Local Energy Schemes	250,000	-		250,000
Retrofit Lending Schemes	250,000			250,000
OVESCO- Ouse Valley Solar Farm	-	24,000		24,000
Total Energy Schemes	500,000	24,000	-	524,000
				-
Community Infrastructure	-	586,490		586,490
CIL Block Budget	900,000			900,000
Total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	900,000	586,490	-	1,486,490
				-
Service Delivery				-
Vehicle & Plant Replacement Programme	-	1,036,660		1,036,660
Vehicle & Plant Replacement Programme	227,000			227,000
Vehicle & Plant Replacement Programme	3,500,000			3,500,000
Waste & Recycling Review				
- Vehicle Refurbishment W&R Review	-	655,395	-	655,395
EV Charge Points and Car Clubs	150,000			150,000
Car Park Machines	125,000			125,000
Waste & Recycling - Other Equipment	-	203,130	-	203,130
Waste & Recycling - Other Equipment	963,700			963,700
Waste & Recycling - Other Equipment	35,000			35,000
- MOT Test Equipment (Roller Brake Tester and Headlamp Aligner)		7,485	-	7,485
Cockshut Stream (Stanley Turner Diversion)				-
Cockshut Stream (Stanley Turner Diversion)	600,000			600,000
New Crematorium & Green Burial Facility (Biodiversity)		95,590		95,590
Burial Records Digitalisation	50,000			50,000
Play Areas Full Refurbishment	400,000			400,000
Bell Lane Rain Garden	60,000	10,000		70,000
Rewilding and Nature Restoration	20,000			20,000
Upper Ouse Project	50,000			50,000
Robinson Road Priority Works	150,000			150,000

Total Service Delivery	6,330,700	276,240		6,606,940
Specialist Projects				
Flood Alleviation Project	136,000	69,130		205,130
Total Specialist Projects	136,000	69,130	-	205,130
				-
Coastal Defence Works				-
Coastal Defence Works	100,000	400,155		500,155
Total Coastal Defence Works	100,000	400,155	-	500,155
				-
Parks & Pavilions				-
Southover Grange Gardens Improvements	-	8,260		8,260
Parks and Pavilions Remedial Works	160,000	587,250		747,250
Play Area Upgrade / Replacement equipment	40,000	257,840		297,840
Fort Road, Newhaven (incl Tennis & Muga)				-
Total Parks & Pavilions	200,000	853,350	-	1,053,350
				-
Open Spaces - Biodiversity				-
Cockshut Stream (Stanley Turner Diversion)	220,000	- 42,595		177,405
Denton Parks Improvement Scheme	-	27,200		27,200
Peacehaven Football and Recreation Improvements	-	-		-
Funds for local groups for Biodiversity Projects	7,500	7,500		15,000
Town & Parish Council - joint working /grants	25,000			25,000
Wildlife Planting / Habitat creation in parks	30,000	30,000		60,000
Land for Biodiversity	-	20,000		20,000
Land for Biodiversity	250,000			250,000
Creation of wildflower seed areas	7,500	7,500		15,000
Tree Planting	10,000	5,000		15,000
Newhaven / Peacehaven Coastal Park	60,000	59,835		119,835
Total Open Spaces - Biodiversity	610,000	114,440		724,440
				-
				-
IT Block Allocation	213,000	183,635	-	396,635
				-
Finance Transformation	150,000	304,100	-	454,100
				-
Total General Fund	52,607,110	16,049,450	550,000	69,206,560
				-
Total	69,155,610	20,009,275	550,000	89,714,885

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Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	14 September 2023
Title:	Portfolio progress and performance report 2023/24 – Quarter 1
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance
Cabinet member:	Councillor Chris Collier, Cabinet member for innovation, delivery and people
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To consider the Council’s progress and performance in respect of service areas for the First Quarter of the year (April-June 2023) as shown in Appendix 1.
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	To note progress and performance for Quarter 1 2023/24.
Reasons for recommendations:	To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the Council’s progress and performance.
Contact Officer(s):	Luke Dreeling: Performance Lead Tel: 07525 351757 or email: luke.dreeling@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has an annual cycle for the preparation, implementation and monitoring of its business plans and budgets. This cycle enables us regularly to review the Council’s work, and the targets it sets for performance, to ensure these continue to reflect customer needs and council aspirations.
- 1.2 It is important to monitor and assess progress and performance on a regular basis, to ensure the Council continues to deliver priority outcomes and excellent services to its customers and communities.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 of this report sets out details of the key performance indicators for 2023/34 which were agreed by Cabinet in July.

2 Recovery and Reset Programme

- 2.1 In addition to the key performance indicators, the Council works to continually make improvements to its services, and to drive efficiency, through its Recovery and Reset programme. An update on this programme is included as part of this report on a regular basis:
- Services are systematically being reshaped to meet the changed needs of the Council and its customers, and opportunities to make the best use of technology to deliver efficiencies continue to be implemented:
 - Colleagues are working to implement a number of new systems which will deliver improvements and efficiencies (eg. financial, operational – for customers and staff – and contractual) for a range of service areas (eg. Revenues and Benefits, Environmental Health and Licensing, Planning)
 - The learning from the launch of ELLIS – a next generation chatbot – on the Council’s website and on limited phone lines in 2022 has identified that this technology will be an effective solution to improve further on the Council’s customer service offer. Plans are being finalised to implement ELLIS on more phone lines over the coming months.
 - With a focus on the way in which customers, businesses and residents access council services and information about council services, a project to design a new website for the Council commenced earlier this year. This project will enable an updated and refreshed offer for customers, making the best use of technology. Opportunities for staff, Members and customers to engage in the project will be confirmed shortly.

3 Solution Sprints

- 3.1 Alongside Recovery and Reset the Council has established a programme to drive targeted efficiencies in specific service areas. This is called the Solution Sprints programme.
- 3.2 This quarter solution sprint and improvement activity continues, building on the success of last year where solution sprints were reintroduced last autumn following the pause brought about by Covid response. Many of these have given rise to broader ongoing pieces of continuous improvement activity and Councillors may recall from the previous quarter and annual update examples including: the ‘contact us’ form on the website, helping to streamline and speed up customer emails getting to the appropriate service areas and freeing up Customer First colleagues to prioritise those customers with the greatest need; requirements gathering for the new Planning system; and, arrangements to update and refresh the Scheme of Delegations through member engagement.
- 3.3 Activity during quarter 1 has continued to focus on improvements to the Incident Liaison Officer (ILO) process and associated out of hours (OOH) provision. Several interim recommendations to improve existing arrangements have been identified. These followed a series of exploratory meetings with a cross section of staff involved in ILO and OOH. These interim recommendations have since been approved for progression by the Director of Service Delivery. The next phase of work will conclude delivery of the interim recommendations and work with stakeholders towards an ‘ideal’ ILO and OOH process.

Other notable solution sprint outcomes this quarter are conclusion of associated work on EV charging and some waste processes with Neighbourhood First colleagues - as a result, an EV communications guide has been produced to support Customer First colleagues with inquiries. Process review and design work undertaken with colleagues in the Green Consultancy – resulting in the development of new project management tools to assist management of their many projects, improving visibility, and enhancing capacity for progress tracking. A ‘tackling the crisis’ housing/homelessness workshop was also delivered between housing colleagues from Lewes, Eastbourne and Hastings this quarter. Outcomes included building rapport, trust and confidence between frontline officers across the authorities, sharing good practice with regards to homelessness provision and establishing opportunities to share and collaborate on housing solutions.

- 3.4 Quarter two will see continued progression on ILO and OOH as described above, improvement work with the Green Consultancy to explore scope for Direct Debit payments for garden waste, work to refresh sustainability commitments through the LDC Climate action plan, and a potential review of some Finance processes to coincide with future HR and payroll arrangements, subject to capacity.

4 Financial appraisal

- 4.1 Project and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements are contained within existing estimates. Corporate performance information should also be considered alongside the Council's financial update reports (also reported to Cabinet each Quarter) as there is a clear link between performance and budgets/resources.

5 Legal implications

- 5.1 Comment from the Legal Services Team is not necessary for this routine monitoring report.

6 Risk management implications

- 6.1 It is important that corporate performance is monitored regularly otherwise there is a risk that reductions in service levels, or projects falling behind schedule, are not addressed in a timely way.

7 Equality analysis

- 7.1 The equality implications of individual decisions relating to the projects/services covered in this report are addressed within other relevant council reports or as part of programmed equality analysis.

8 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Portfolio Progress and Performance Report (Quarter 1 2023/24)









9 Background Papers

None









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Appendix 1









Lewes District Council Portfolio Progress and Performance Report Quarter 1 2023-2024 (April to June 2023)

Key			
	Performance that is at or above target Project is on track		Performance that is below target Projects that are not expected to be completed in time or within requirements
	Project has been completed, been discontinued or is on hold		Performance that is slightly below target but is within an acceptable tolerance Projects : where there are issues causing significant delay, changes to planned activities, scale, cost pressures or risks
	Direction of travel on performance indicator : improving performance		Direction of travel on performance indicator : declining performance
	Direction of travel on performance indicator : no change		Data with no performance target



Key Performance Indicators





KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	
1.(Finance) Maximise amount of Council Tax collected during the year	97.8%	97.36%	29.10%	29.50%			<p>What happened: The collection rate is down by 0.4% on target, in the first quarter of the collection cycle as the cost-of-living crisis continues to have an impact.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: The collection rate will be monitored closely over the coming months, whilst the team continue the statutory collection process. Already plans are in place to use data analytics to profile and support those in arrears, and a 100% CTR scheme continues. The collection rate will improve as we move through Q2 and at the end of July was showing as 0.56% above target.</p>
2.(Finance) Maximise amount of Business Rates collected during the year	98%	95.71%	32.82%	28.59%			Collection is 4.23% above target this quarter and remains on track
3.(Community and Customers) Average number of days to process new claims for housing/council tax benefit	17.0	23.7	23.8	17.0			<p>What happened: Although the target was not achieved, there were significant delays in processing Homeless Housing benefit claims in April and May, due to an increase in demand for our Housing options and Wellbeing team.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: There is an improvement plan currently in place, working closely with the Housing options and wellbeing team on Homeless cases and the Housing benefit process, with targets being met in Q2 (presently 15.4 days). The team have begun working on the implementation of a new system, to go live in December, that will produce significant efficiencies. Significantly; the ability to submit documents required, online with integration into the system, reducing processing time.</p>
4.(Community and Customers) Average days to process change of circumstances (Housing/Council Tax Benefit)	6	3.6	7.2	6.0			<p>What happened: Although below target, this is a significant improvement on Q3 2022/2023. Q4 2022/2023 is seen as an anomaly, it is lower due to the amount of work the team have to do on year-end processing.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: We are currently working to an improvement plan, with changes to the ways of working with targets being met in Q2. The team have begun working on the implementation of a new system, to go live in December. This system will produce significant efficiencies, especially the ability to self-serve, with integration into the system to reduce processing times whilst supporting those digitally excluded through officer support</p>

















KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	
5.(Community and Customers) Increase the percentage of calls to the contact centre answered within 60 seconds	80%	53.51%	27.67%	80%			<p>What happened: Customer contact experienced a challenging and demanding start to the new financial year where like previous years the first Quarter saw high levels of contact. The effecting factors were: greater complexity of calls and time taken per call, Annual billing, 5 public holidays in Q1, Local Elections and Garden Waste renewals</p> <p>What was learned/changed: At times of peak calls, we will cascade calls into the wider teams, whilst balancing their work demands. We will continue to plan the timings of outbound communication, which effectively drives call volumes. Within the Business Planning cycle, the Head of service will ensure we have the correct resource in the team, especially given the increased demand we are seeing in the new customer contact centre due to location. We will continue the roll out of digital transformation programs, including ELLIS on the phone, which has been set a target of a deflection of 35% of calls that are not LDC responsibility (potholes, registrars, libraries, blue badge applications). This should free up the team's time to resolve our statutory functions. To reduce the demand on Garden waste renewals, we have a project concentrated on moving residents to Direct Debit rather than annual renewal.</p>
6. Customers: Average time taken to answer calls	Data Only	N/A	6m42s	Data Only			See KPI5 Commentary
7. Customers: Telephone calls graded as high quality under the call monitoring scheme	90%	N/A	83%	90%			<p>What happened: This is a new KPI, introduced to monitor the quality of our response to calls, which is under target, but we have purposely set a stretching target for the team.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: Training plans have been implemented for the team, with a focus on the recent recruitment and we have introduced Communities of practice so our Specialists can ensure the team are providing best advice to our customers. The communities of practice will meet regularly to ensure the Customer advisors are aware of any changes to legislation or process.</p>
8. Customers: Customer complaints logged at stage 1 resolved within 10 working days	100%	N/A	59%	100%			<p>What happened: This is a new KPI, introduced to ensure corporate targets for complaint handling are met, which is under target as not all teams across the organisation were aware.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: Plans have already been initiated to ensure that all service areas have designated officers to respond to complaints. Vacancies have been recruited to, ensuring there is a resource for this, whilst training with the teams to reduce the numbers logged (KPI 11)</p>




KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	
9. Customers: Customer complaints logged at stage 2 resolved within 20 working days	100%	N/A	41%	100%			<p>What happened: This is a new KPI, introduced to ensure corporate targets for complaint handling are met, which is under target as not all teams across the organisation were aware.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: Some teams were not clear of the process so have been briefed on ensuring there is a clear route for the resolution of escalated complaints across all service areas to avoid delays. Further training will be provided to individuals new to complaints handling.</p>
10. Customers: The number of corporate complaints upheld at stage 1 and stage 2	Data Only	N/A	46	Data Only			<p>Stage 1 Upheld complaints: Upheld 22, Partially Upheld 15</p> <p>Stage 2 Upheld Complaints: Upheld 6, Partially Upheld 3</p>
11. Customers: The number of corporate complaints received at stage 1 and stage 2	Data Only	N/A	194	Data Only			<p>What happened: This is a new KPI, introduced to ensure we monitor corporate team performance and drive service improvements.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: Plans are already in place with teams getting training in 'right first time' and effective informal complaint resolution to prevent escalation and we would want to see a reduction in these figures. The teams are using complaint data analysis to develop solution sprints for improvement.</p>
12. (Housing) Decrease total number of households living in emergency (nightly paid) accommodation	Data Only	51	49	Data only			<p>We have continued a positive trend from Q3 and Q4, bringing down the number of households in Emergency accommodation. Demand will continue to be high in this area and we have developed an East Sussex partnership, alongside ESCC, NHS and PHE to provide a holistic approach to homeless cases with a focus on prevention. We have set a target of only 20 EA placements by December.</p>

Other Performance Indicators

KPI Description	Annual Target 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Quarterly Target	Status	Short Trend	
13. Housing: Decrease average number of days to re-let Council homes (excluding temporary lets)	20 (annual)	43.2	44.2	20			<p>What happened: Voids continue to be a challenging area for the team, the main part of the re-let process is impacted by the condition of the property and efficiency of the contractor employed to carry out works.</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Quarterly Target	Status	Short Trend	
							<p>What was learned/changed: We are aware, from completing a full stock condition survey, that we have several older properties that require investment. This is a key part of our asset management plan. We had 167 voids in 22/23 and have completed 50 to date in 2023. Once the surveyors inspect there is significant work (such as re-wiring, new boilers, Kitchens and bathrooms) required, this is deemed a renovation as opposed to general void work. This increases the time it takes, especially with the difficulties of the supply chain and we will be using a variety of contractors to improve this. Once the void work has been completed the property can be offered for re-let and we have formed a void project team to manage this end-to-end process so are expecting improvements through the year</p>
14. Housing: DFGs - Time taken from council receiving a fully complete application to the council approving the grant	14 days	5 days	4 days	14 days			Performance remains above target, continuing a positive trend from 2022/23.
15. Housing: Rent arrears of current tenants (expressed as a percentage of rent debit) (L)	3.5% (quarterly)	4.22%	3.94%	3.5%			<p>What happened: Although collection is 0.44% below target, June was the third successive month that the overall collectable arrears balance has reduced. In May the arrears stood at £728,249 which has now reduced to £717,163 (reduction of £11,086). This is an improvement on the outturn position (4.22%)</p> <p>What was learned/changed: This will remain a challenging area, due to rent increases and the additional pressures on household budgets and this is a stretching target. When working with tenants in arrears, plans are already in place to ensure they are maximising available benefits and we are using data analytics to target tenants who should qualify for pension credits who are not claiming, which will assist with their arrears.</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Quarterly Target	Status	Short Trend	
16. People and performance: Number of new sign-ups to the Councils' social media channels	650	281	204	162.5			PI remains ahead of target.
17. People and performance: Number of people registering for our email service	Data Only	1,360	1,268	Data Only			PI remains consistent
18. People and performance: Average days lost per FTE employee due to sickness (J)	8.0 days	1.55 days	1.52 days	2.0 days			<p>This is the first quarter of reporting average days lost due to sickness for 2023/24. Sickness levels remain stable and below target in Q1 where we recorded an average of 1.52 days absence which is a reduction from Q4 (1.55 days).</p> <p>If we remove LDC Waste Services, the Q1 figure reduces to 1.45 days and Waste Services on its own is 1.95 days which is a reduction from Q3 of 2.69 days.</p> <p>HR Business Partners continue to support managers in managing any attendance issues that arise.</p>
19. Planning: % of appeals allowed against the authority's decision not to grant planning permission (2 year rolling government figures)	<10%	Major – 0.0% Minor – 1.0%	Major – 0.5% Minor – 0%	10%			Both Minor and Major appeal PIs continue to achieve the 10% National target.
20. Planning: Exceed government targets for the % of major applications determined within 13 weeks - LDC	60%	71.43%	100%	60%			Above National PI
21. Planning: Exceed government targets for the % of minor applications determined within 8 weeks- LDC	70%	85.32%	82.14%	70%			Remains above National PI
22. Recycling & Waste: KG waste collected per household	Data Only	109.7	109.7	Data only			Holding figure from Q4 until data from ESCC is available.
23. Recycling & Waste: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	46%	36.85%	36.85%	46%			<p>What happened: Holding figure from Q4 until data from ESCC is available.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: Recycling rates fluctuate across the quarterly reports, there will be</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Quarterly Target	Status	Short Trend	
							increases in Q2 due to an increase in Garden waste and Q3 due to Christmas. We will continue with our comms plan and we are rolling out the new electric food waste vehicles that will collect separately from the refuse, which will drive residents confidence that there food recycling will be composted.
24. Recycling & Waste: Total number of reported fly-tipping incidents	Data Only	87	110	Data Only			Reported incidents breakdown: April 33, May 38 and June 39. Total number of incidents for Q1 (110) sees an increase of 23 compared to the previous quarter (87). June had the highest number of incidents for the year so far (39), with the most common type of fly-tip being a small van's worth of other household waste on the highway within the ward of Newhaven North.
25. Air Quality: Nitrogen Dioxide levels within Local Authority statutory management and monitoring of air pollution	20%	N/A	Information Unavailable	20%	Information Unavailable		Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, we are unable to provide this information. We will give both a Q1 and Q2 update within the Q2 Corporate Performance Report.

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Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	14 September 2023
Title:	Community Wealth Building update.
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for finance, assets and community wealth building
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To provide an update on the progress of the Community Wealth Building Delivery plan.
Decision type:	Non-key decision
Officer recommendation(s):	(1) To note the progress made in delivering Community Wealth Building and to agree the new Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1. (2) To note Lewes District Council's application to join the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network.
Reasons for recommendations:	(1) The Council is committed to developing a Community Wealth Building approach as part of the Corporate Plan adopted in February 2020. This report is the annual update on this work to the Cabinet. (2) Joining the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network would enable sharing of best practice on issues relevant to our community wealth building delivery plan.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Peter Jenion Post title: Project Manager – Community Wealth Development E-mail: peter.jenion@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 07521393561

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In its 2020-2024 Corporate Plan, the Council made a strong commitment to community wealth building (CWB) alongside complementary commitments to sustainability and affordable housing. The aim of CWB is to use the combined power of institutions, businesses and communities to retain and build more

wealth in the local economy, creating new local jobs and new locally owned enterprises. As has been set out in previous reports, the CWB approach comprises five pillars, which are:

- Plural ownership of the economy.
- Making financial power work for local places.
- Fair employment and just labour markets.
- Progressive procurement of goods and services.
- Socially productive use of land and property.

1.2 The Cabinet on 10 December 2020 adopted the 'Reimagining Lewes District Strategy' as a vehicle for embedding CWB principles across the Council and within the district. The six themes of the Strategy, which link to the CWB pillars, are:

- Lewes District Council as a Community Wealth Building Council
- Progressive procurement of goods and services
- Fair employment and just labour markets
- Socially productive use of land and assets
- Making financial power work for local places
- Plural ownership of the economy

1.3 An officer working group was established in 2020 to drive forward this work, reporting regularly to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning. This group has been responsible for ensuring that CWB principles continue to be embedded in all relevant aspects of the Council's work and that this also complements, and works in conjunction with, the Council's sustainability strategy. This report is the annual update of progress made on the CWB Delivery Group's action plan.

2 CWB update

Lewes District Council as a Community Wealth Building Council

2.1 The Council, along with local other publicly funded bodies, makes a significant contribution to the local economy, both as an employer and as a holder of land and property assets. By changing the way that we and other local organisations act, as employers, how we spend our money and use our assets, we can make a real difference to the way our economy operates, and how it benefits local people. This is central to CWB. The Council is embedding CWB approaches within the planning and delivery of its services. Along with this, as the democratically elected body covering the geography of the Lewes District, the Council is well placed to take a community leadership role in relation to CWB. It plans to be proactive in delivering its commitment to CWB principles not just in how it delivers its own functions, but also in how it works with, and influences, other key partners – statutory, voluntary, community and business – across the District.

- 2.2 To help develop our approaches locally, council officers have met regularly with representatives from the Centre for Local Economic Strategy (CLES), the national think tank for CWB, to learn about best practice around the country. The Council has recently collaborated with CLES to deliver a briefing to Members on how CWB is in line with similar approaches to economic development such as 'Doughnut Economics' – a sustainable economic model put forward by the economist Kate Raworth.
- 2.3 Since the inception of the CWB approach, the Council has also engaged with key local and regional partners (such as East Sussex County Council, the universities, colleges, Sussex Community Development Association etc) to discuss opportunities to collaborate on CWB. We will continue to work with partners to share best practice and embed CWB principles wherever possible.
- 2.4 The Council has successfully applied to join the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network. This network is a group of councils committed to applying and sharing best practices around cooperative principles in local government. The work of this Network closely aligned with the principles of CWB.

Progressive procurement of goods and services

- 2.5 Through CWB, the Council is committed to reviewing its commissioning and procurement activities to maximise the positive impact this can have on the local economy. The procurement of works and services are undertaken using the Council's adopted Social Value Charter. The Charter considers and assesses important elements over and above financial cost. This aims to ensure sustainability and additional value to the local community. The Charter encourages the use of local Small and Medium Enterprises (SME), which in turn increases local employment opportunities. The charter also encourages training support, work experience and apprenticeships delivered through projects that the Council procures.
- 2.6 The Council has insourced its public convenience cleansing service and also its office cleaning contract. This has been done in line with CWB principles in order to ensure good employment rights for staff. In addition, we have shifted to more local providers delivering some aspects of our housing repairs, so that more locally based and locally run businesses are benefitting from the delivery of this work for the Council. This ensures more wealth is retained locally.
- 2.7 A modular housing framework has been established for the Council, and other councils, to use. A local contractor, Boutique Modern has, through this framework, been able to establish a substantial program of works, using modern sustainable construction techniques. Eastbourne and Hastings Councils have also already benefitted from this framework, alongside LDC, through the same framework agreement.
- 2.8 Officers have carried out an analysis of the Council's spending on goods and services to measure what proportion of our spending is within the District. The following table shows the breakdown over the last 4 financial years.

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total spend*	£22,085,712	£22,854,766	£25,877,108	£34,978,290
Local spend (within LDC postcodes)	£6,921,251	£5,368,632	£5,320,616	£9,723,823

*N.B. These figures exclude spend on councils, transfers to bank accounts, police & fire precepts, transfers to government departments etc. The aim is to focus on what we are spending on suppliers. We have also removed Covid grants and energy bill support grants as these distorted the data from the last few years.

- 2.9 Between 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 there has been a large increase in total spending, but also an increase in the proportion of that spending that is spent locally from 20.6% to 27.8%. Our analysis suggests that this is largely due to an increase in spending on a range of projects within Newhaven and encouragingly, from a CWB perspective, many of the suppliers are within the district too. Given the number of projects in Newhaven, underway and in the pipeline, there is good reason to expect this trend to continue.

Fair employment and just labour markets

- 2.10 The Council employs around 760 FTE (full time equivalent) staff across LDC and EBC. Twenty one percent of these live in the district of Lewes, and the vast majority of staff (95%) live within East Sussex or Brighton and Hove. Less than 5% live further afield.
- 2.11 The Council is committed to providing staff with fair and just employment and is exploring the possibility of becoming a Living Wage employer. Beyond this, the intention is to enable the Council to be an exemplar to others and to use our community leadership role to encourage other employers across all sectors, to be good employers and to commit to paying a Living Wage where possible.
- 2.12 The real Living Wage is set by the Living Wage Foundation and is currently £10.90 across the UK, outside of London (in London it is £11.95). The real Living Wage is the wage rate necessary to ensure that households earn enough to reach a minimum acceptable living standard as defined by the public. The real Living Wage rate is determined each year in the Autumn.
- 2.13 Officers have met with the Living Wage Foundation to discuss the process of applying for accreditation. Careful consideration will need to be given to the potential budgetary impacts of committing to the living wage. Although currently all staff undertaking work for LDC do meet the Living Wage this will need to be reassessed once the living wage rate is updated in the Autumn. A further report relating to this will follow in due course.

Socially productive use of land and assets

- 2.14 The Council owns a significant number of assets in the District in the form of buildings and land. Over time the use of, or need for, such buildings and land can change. The Council is committed to regularly reviewing these assets and

being open and flexible in consideration of how they could be used in the future. Through the CWB approach we have worked to ensure that the use of assets continues to maximise community benefit and community wealth building opportunities, whilst balancing this against the need to seek best value in relation to public funds and to maintain a sustainable financial position as a council.

- 2.15 The headlease to The Marine Workshops (former UTC) was acquired by the Council in June 2022 in order to support the regeneration of Newhaven town. The building is being developed into a mixed hub supporting marine and education, commercial space and new public space. Work is continuing on developing the tenant occupation of the building and the Council is the process of relocating to this site. With the assistance of the Getting Building fund, we continue to make sustainable alterations to The Marine Workshops. The building will also, from September 2023, provide accommodation for East Sussex College Group where it will be a 'blue space/climate hub' for aquaculture and marine based industry and training.
- 2.16 The Council has maintained a presence in Lewes by repurposing a vacant shop in the town centre to provide a customer contact centre. Meanwhile, Southover House has been leased to Charleston Trust, an arts and heritage organisation who plan to use the building as a gallery and exhibition space, which will contribute to community wealth by further developing the strong visitor and cultural economy of the town.
- 2.17 In Newhaven, several under-utilised buildings in the Town Centre are currently being developed to create a new health and wellbeing hub for the town.
- 2.18 Using the principles of 'meanwhile use', the Council is also allowing spaces for Lewes Community Volunteers and Lewes Climate Hub to deliver their services in Lewes. In Newhaven a longer-term 'meanwhile use' has been provided to The Sidings, a bistro style waterside café close by to the Marine Workshops.
- 2.19 The Council's housing delivery programme has been prioritising building on brownfield sites, which are typically ignored by the private sector due to the additional challenges and costs of such locations. This has helped to promote local regeneration and place making improvements. An example of this is the purchase and development of the former Police Station in Newhaven. This has involved the re-use of public sector land, through the One Public Estate (SPACES) partnership. If the Local Authority did not use its position in the community to intervene and make best use of these sites, then they would be unlikely to come forward, specifically to support local priorities.

The Council continues to work closely with local education partners, including the East Sussex College Group (ESCG), to ensure opportunities for apprenticeships and work placements are integrated and embedded within the capital development projects delivered including those for new homes.

Making financial power work for local places

- 2.20 Making financial power work for local places means using financial resources in a way that encourages wealth to circulate within the district, creating jobs and opportunities for local people. It could include pensions, credit unions, grants and loans.
- 2.21 The Council has been allocated £12.8 million from the Levelling Up Fund for the 'capturing the value of the catch' project in Newhaven. The project aims to: Provide two new fish landing stages to accommodate 16 small vessels from the Newhaven fishing fleet, build a New Centre of Excellence for Seafood Processing in the town including an auction room and marketplace, and create a new restaurant and community destination on the promenade area by West Beach. The purpose of this project is to retain spending in Newhaven for longer and stimulate a local market for fish, creating jobs and wealth locally.
- 2.22 In 2020, the Council designed and implemented a new grants programme which allowed an open bidding process for a wider range of voluntary and community groups to apply for grants for the first time. Additionally, a unique fund was created to support those fleeing the war in Ukraine. In addition, in response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis, the Council, during the past year, has created a specific fund and post to support the local voluntary sector as it works to support people impacted by food and fuel poverty.
- 2.23 Lewes District Council recently also provided a loan to a local community energy group to enable them to develop an innovative project in the District. The loan has now been fully repaid to the Council, with interest.

Plural ownership of the economy

- 2.24 As part of its commitment to Community Wealth Building, the Council has been working to promote local social entrepreneurialism and community ownership models such as cooperatives and community interest companies. The main vehicle for providing this support over the past 3 years has been the Lewes Enterprise and Apprenticeship platform (LEAP) delivered by Edeal.
- 2.25 Edeal has delivered a successful Social Enterprise programme for pre-starts and start-ups consisting of a workshop and 121 mentoring. They also have a mentor experienced in supporting social enterprise which residents and businesses have been able to access via the free general support and the annual LEAP business start-up programme.
- 2.26 Between April 2018 to March 2023, there have been:
- 155 one-to-one business mentoring sessions.
 - 104 one-to-one social media training sessions.
 - 65 one-to-one specialist consultations in the form of a 'Business Review'.
 - 14 additional one day business start-up workshops with a total of 69 attendees. Workshop numbers and attendees were expected to be

higher, but funding was redirected to one-to-one advice where demand was higher in 2020 and 2021.

- 2 start-up workshops with mentoring support for social enterprises. These programmes supported a total of 14 attendees.
- 2 leadership and management workshops with mentoring support for local businesses assisting a total of 9 attendees.

- 2.27 Covered elsewhere on this agenda are details of a new business development programme which it is proposed will replace LEAP and is even more specifically focused on CWB principles. It is hoped that this will enable further encouragement to, and growth of, social entrepreneurship in the district.

3 Consultation

- 3.1 Consultation on CWB occurs through on-going dialogue with officers within the CWB Delivery Group as well as with external partners such as the national think tank for CWB, the Centre for Local Economic Strategy, and with partners in the region.

4 Corporate plan and council policies

- 4.1 CWB is identified as a Council priority in the Corporate Plan 'The Re-imagining Lewes District Corporate Plan 2020- 2024' under 'Building Community Wealth - A sustainable economy that enables a fairer place to live and work'. The Corporate Plan states: "We need a people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of people."

CWB is complimentary to and has crossovers with the other council priorities identified in the corporate plan – sustainability and affordable housing. To reflect these crossovers, officers with sustainability and housing remits are part of the CWB delivery group.

5 Financial appraisal

- 5.1 No new financial implications. Report is an update and not requesting any new funds to be allocated.

6 Legal implications

- 6.1 There will be a need to address the detailed legal issues that arise in taking forward individual elements of the Reimagining Lewes Action Plan as they develop further. However, there are existing legislative general provisions which support the overall Community Wealth Building Approach as follows:

- a) Local Government Act 1999: As a best value authority the Council must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

- b) Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012: This provides that the Council must consider how what it procures might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area; and how in conducting the procurement process, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

6.2 The Government published a Procurement Policy Note in September 2020 launching a new model to deliver social value through its commercial contracts. The PPN requires social value should be explicitly evaluated in all central government procurement, where the requirements are related and proportionate to the subject-matter of the contract, rather than just 'considered' as currently required under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. It notes that unnecessary burdens should not be placed on commercial teams or suppliers. It also published PPN6/20 in relation to social value for central government and PPN 11/20 to encourage the use of additional freedoms following Brexit for procurements below the regulatory threshold, giving the potential to reserve the procurement by supplier location and to SME/VCSE in appropriate circumstances.

[009681-LDC-KS 11 August 2023]

7 Risk management implications

7.1 There are a range of risks associated with delivering the CWB programme: policy risks, coordination risks and financial risks:

- a) Policy risks arise from attempting to deliver a political programme that is different from national government priorities making it more difficult to attract support and finance for delivering CWB objectives at a local level.
- b) Coordination risks refer to the challenges we face implementing CWB at a small geographic and administrative level as a district council rather than a city council or combined authority. Many other authorities focusing on delivering community wealth are able to operate at a larger scale. This is a risk because many of our key partners are responsible across larger parts of Sussex, which means our priorities in CWB might not neatly align with their strategic priorities. We are attempting to mitigate this risk by building networks and partnerships with these organisations to identify opportunities to work together on CWB.
- c) Financial risks due to constrained local government finances mean that there are limited resources to deliver the programme. This could mean that the range of financially viable interventions is narrow and could hinder progress in delivering community wealth.

8 Equality analysis

8.1 Targeting and addressing inequality in the district is central to what the CWB agenda is aiming to achieve. Potentially it will go far in supporting the Council to

meet its Public Sector Equality Duty, particularly around advancing equality of opportunity.

9 Environmental sustainability implications

- 9.1 Within the Corporate Plan the objectives around CWB, carbon reduction and sustainability are intrinsically linked. For example, the Council has committed to use its power as a public sector body to buy and procure locally, and create local supply chains and ecosystems of enterprises, focussing on decarbonising our housing stock, through use of circular economy principles. It is also stated in the Corporate Plan, in relation to CWB, that the Council will develop local skills, supply chains and employment through partnership working with public sector organisations, social enterprises, cooperative businesses, as well as other forms of business, particularly focussing on clean, green technologies.

10 Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Community Wealth Building Action Plan.

11 Background papers

- 11.1 None

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Community Wealth Building Action Plan – August 2023

1. Lewes District as a Community Wealth Building Council

Action	Purpose	Officer	Timeline
Build relationship with anchor institutions and key partners	To identify opportunities to collaborate on community wealth building	Peter Jenion	March 2025
Engage with Cooperative Council Innovation Network	To learn and share best practice around cooperative local government and community wealth building	Peter Jenion	Attend monthly meetings with the network and regularly share best practice with LDC officers and members
Promote Lewes DC's work in community wealth building in our communications activity	To inform and engage residents and stakeholders about our work on delivering community wealth across the district	Bryn Mabey/Peter Jenion	Regular updates as part of LDC news. Ad hoc news articles when opportunities arise
Deliver briefing to new members which demonstrates the alignment between community wealth building and the 'doughnut economics' approach of economist Kate Raworth.	To raise understanding of community wealth among new members and explore crossovers with other approaches and the council's sustainability strategy	Jo Harper/Peter Jenion	Briefing scheduled for 12 September

2. Progressive procurement of goods and services

Action	Purpose	Officer	Timeline
Produce social value strategy	To outline processes for officers to engage with communities and developers in order to identify opportunities to deliver additional social value in our district. Also, to outline social value monitoring and reporting process.	James White/Peter Jenion	By December 2023
Produce sustainable procurement strategy	To encourage procurement contracts to align with sustainability strategy	James White	By December 2023

Carry out analysis of local spending data		James White/Peter Jenion	Annual
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3. Fair employment and just labour markets

Action	Purpose	Officer	Timeline
Explore feasibility of applying for living wage accreditation	To provide a wage sufficient to meet cost of living	Helen Knight/Peter Jenion	Issues paper to Cabinet in September New living wage announced by Living Wage Foundation in Autumn. At this point we should be in a position to decide whether to apply for the accreditation.
If the council successfully applies for the Living Wage accreditation, the council would then encourage partners and other organisations in the district to adopt the living wage	to support the ambition of becoming a 'living wage place'.	Helen Knight/Peter Jenion	As part of our communications activity when the council announces that it has been awarded the living wage accreditation. Also ongoing as part of our engagement with partners.
Explore option of developing a 'Good Employment Charter'	This could include our commitment to the living wage and other working conditions the council encourages in the district	Helen Knight/Peter Jenion	November 2023
Continue to make best use of the apprenticeship levy	To maximise apprenticeship opportunities within the council	Helen Knight	March 2025

4. Socially productive use of land and assets

Action	Purpose	Officer	Timeline
Work with local businesses and community organisations to deliver new facilities and opportunities for our residents. This will include the bid to the Towns	To contribute to revitalisation and regeneration of the district	Lisa Rawlinson	March 2025

Fund for Newhaven set out in the Town Investment Plan.			
Deliver 'Capturing the Value of the Catch' project, which has been awarded levelling up funds	To increase the levels of local fishing activities and to retain more of the financial benefits of this locally in Newhaven	Lisa Rawlinson	March 2025
Enable the re-use of key vacant and underutilised assets within Newhaven town centre following the announcement of the Future High Streets Fund grant award, with an emphasis on local and community benefits.	To provide services and amenities to the local community while making use of vacant sites.	Lisa Rawlinson/ Nathan Haffenden	March 2025
Work with the public sector through the One Public Estate (OPE)	to maximise the combined asset base of the sector, including the continued enabling of other private schemes to increase the overall supply of new homes, promoting CWB objectives through procurement, apprenticeships, training and skills.	Nathan Haffenden	March 2025
Review of all our corporate and commercial assets	To consider how they may support insourcing and social entrepreneurialism.	Mark Langridge-Kemp	September 2023

5. Making financial power work for local places

Action	Purpose	Officer	Timeline
Explore feasibility of providing loans for home energy efficiency improvements	To provide finance for residents to make energy saving investments to their home, helping them with living costs. Also contributes to sustainability strategy	Mark Horan/Peter Jenion	September 2023

Apply learning from the pilot work around community energy projects to consider future investment opportunities.	To explore other opportunities to support community energy projects	Kate Richardson/ Mark Horan/Jo Wunsch	December 2023
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6. Plural ownership of the economy

Action	Purpose	Officer	Timeline
Continue to use the Lewes District start-up programme to support new social enterprises.	To provide mentoring and workshop advice to prospective and new start-ups	Kerry Barret	2024-2027 (proposed contract is three years starting in April 2024)
Engage with Cooperative Councils Innovation Network	to find opportunities to support cooperative ownership models in the local economy	Peter Jenion	October 2023

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	14 September 2023
Title:	Business support for Lewes District
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for finance, assets and community wealth building
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	(1) To provide an update on the achievements of the Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform (LEAP) business start-up and the general business support programmes funded by Lewes District Council. (2) To secure further funding for the Council's continuing contribution to the business support landscape.
Decision type:	Non-key decision
Officer recommendation(s):	(1) To continue to fund a business start-up programme to support local pre-start and early-stage enterprises with specialist provision built-in to a) help entrepreneurs understand what a socially productive business is, and b) support those wanting to pursue a social enterprise model. (2) To approve a new budget of up to £105,000 for a 3-year period from April 2024, and invite suppliers to tender for the contract. The award will be subject to adoption of the final 24/25 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy. (3) To approve the renaming of the 'LEAP business start-up programme' to 'Lewes District start-up programme'.
Reasons for recommendations:	(1) There is continued demand for specialist and intensive start-up support. (2) With the current contract coming to an end, it is an opportunity to revisit the design and frequency of the start-up programme to ensure it aligns with local Community Wealth Building (CWB) plural ownership priorities and to maximise value for money for the Council and outcomes.

(3) Renaming the programme will reduce associated marketing resources and risks with the LEAP brand and confusion on the omission of apprenticeship support.

Contact Officer(s): **Name:** Kerry Barrett
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 Telephone number: 01323 415624

1 Introduction

1.1 The Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform (LEAP) Programme was launched in 2013 funded by Lewes District Council (LDC), originally delivered by [Let's Do Business Group](#) (LDBG), to raise awareness of apprenticeships (element transferred to East Sussex College in 2014) and to deliver a free business start-up programme. Run once a year, applications open for up to 30 local residents with a business idea to attend a one-day start-up workshop. From here, 15 shortlisted candidates attend a series of topical workshops and one-to-one mentoring with a business expert matched to their idea to guide them towards writing a robust business plan. The 5 best business plans are pitched to a judging panel for the chance to win a cash prize of £2,500 to help start their business. The runner-up receives £500.

1.2 Since 2016, [Edeal](#) (Eastbourne and District Enterprise Agency Ltd) has delivered the LEAP business start-up programme for LDC via a services contract. In 2018 and 2021 it was also awarded a 3-years grants to expand its services (at a subsidised rate to LDC) into the Lewes District area to deliver free additional one day business start-up workshops and to provide new and established businesses access to free one-to-one mentoring with a business expert. In 2021, the targets of this grants agreement were adapted to incorporate two new short programmes, a) start-up support for social enterprises, and b) leadership and management training for local businesses.

1.3 Outcomes

Since 2016, the LEAP business start-up programme has supported 151 (171 including 2023 programme) local people by providing training to start a new business and 115 (133 including 2023 programme) proceeded onto the full programme. Not including this year's programme, 52 registered their business, either as a limited company or as a sole trader 6 months after the programme had finished.

1.4 Between April 2018 and March 2023 under the grant agreement mentioned in 1.2, there have been:

- 155 one-to-one business mentoring sessions.
- 104 one-to-one social media training sessions.
- 65 one-to-one specialist consultations in the form of a 'Business Review'.

- 14 additional one day business start-up workshops with a total of 69 attendees. Workshop numbers and attendees were expected to be higher, but funding was redirected to one-to-one advice where demand was higher in 2020 and 2021.
- 2 start-up workshops with mentoring support for social enterprises, 1 delivered by Josh Babarinde OBE and the second by [Louise Graham](#) who has experience in running and mentoring social and commercial enterprises. These programmes supported a total of 14 attendees.
- 2 leadership and management workshops with mentoring support for local businesses assisting a total of 9 attendees.

1.5 It should be noted that clients can take advantage of more than one support strand e.g. an entrepreneur can attend a business start-up workshop and have one-to-one mentoring.

1.6 In 2020, Edeal entered a partnership agreement with the University of Chichester on their Business Hothouse programme funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to deliver additional business support (increased capacity on the LEAP business start-up programme, a new leadership and management programme and specialist business coaching) in the District using LDC's funding as match funding. It withdrew in 2021 due to the impact of Covid-19 on business confidence and the monitoring requirements of the ERDF which undermined Edeal's financial stability as a small not-for-profit agency. This reduced the additional outcomes LDC was expecting as a result of the match funding opportunity, but the local authority made savings on programme costs as the LEAP business start-up programme over a 3-year period was co-funded, and the key targets between Edeal and LDC were still met.

1.7 Good news stories and feedback from the LEAP business start-up programme

With the exception of one, the runners-up and winners of the LEAP business start-up programme are still operating. Some are listed below to demonstrate the diversity of the types of ideas and businesses supported through LDC's investment:

- [Dolly Fixtures](#) (Lewes) - Makes quirky furniture from mannequins. She has exhibited her creations in Amsterdam, at Grand Designs Live and at the Visual Merchandising and Display Show at the Business Design Centre in London.
- [Fitzroy House](#) (Lewes) - Performance space and community arts centre in Lewes.
- [The Patchwork Cat](#) (Newhaven) - Fabric and haberdashery shop with café and classroom for adults and children with learning disabilities. Since opening the business has grown and employed staff.
- [Solseed Landscapes](#) (Lewes) - Ecological, environmental, edible and permaculture-led landscape designer.
- [7000 Trees](#) (Lewes) - Eco-minded production company specialising in sound, video, photography and graphic design.
- [Return Ware](#) (Burgess Hill) - A reusable takeaway container service with a mission to eliminate single use food packaging through reuse. Through

Edeal's signposting, Return Ware has worked with LoCASE to grow her business and access further funding.

- [Chalk Productions](#) (Lewes) – Founded by an award-winning BBC Producer/Director, Chalk Productions makes documentaries and factual entertainment with social purpose for international broadcasters. Projects include a 3-part documentary about the life of Alison Lapper a British artist born with phocomelia.
- [Resus Rangers](#) (Newhaven) – A programme designed for children aged 3 to 11 years old to learn first aid in a fun, interactive and child-centred way. The team has grown to four and the business won the Sussex Business Awards Start-up of the Year category in 2022.
- [The Paint Club](#) (Ringmer) – Not a finalist but their online and in person classes and events have expanded across the South, the Midlands and North Wales. Since their first event, they have hosted and organised hundreds of painting parties for hen parties, birthdays, and team events for some of the world's leading companies.

1.8 Candidates who responded to Edeal's survey in 2021 and 2022 said they would recommend the LEAP business start-up programme. Some written feedback:

- *"I had no idea that this sort of support was available for new business entrepreneurs - I am so glad I saw the advert! I am finding it such an important experience. It's giving me so much more confidence in what I am doing and real hope that I may be able to make it happen. I am grateful to have the guidance from knowledgeable and passionate mentors and I feel really supported in what I am doing. It's also really good to meet other people on the workshops who understand what I am going through and are facing the same challenges as they get their businesses underway."*
- *"LEAP has been fantastic, I genuinely feel that without this assistance I would be in a different situation. LEAP has helped me understand every aspect of the business and I feel confident to move forward with this very exciting venture."*

2 Proposal

2.1 The proposal is to continue to fund a business start-up programme, as identified in the Community Wealth Building Strategy, to support locally owned and socially minded enterprises, but with adaptations to better align with local priorities on plural ownership and to maximise value for money for the Council and outcomes.

2.2 It is recommended that the Council invites business support providers to tender for a 3-year contract starting on 1 April 2024 for the value of up to £105,000 (up to £35,000 per financial year), a continuation of LDC's current financial commitment to deliver the programme.

2.3 The chosen provider may choose to work closely with key community infrastructure organisations who share the same plural ownership values as the Council to enable as many local people as possible to benefit from this opportunity and to better coordinate and grow support for socially minded

businesses. These organisations include 3VA, Sussex Community Development Association, Action in Rural Sussex, East Sussex Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector Alliance and business and employment support providers in the Lewes District The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan.

- 2.4 It is also recommended to rename the programme to 'Lewes District start-up programme' to reduce associated marketing resources and risks with the LEAP brand and confusion on the omission of apprenticeship support.

3 Outcome expected and performance management.

- 3.1 Key outcomes will include a) number of new social enterprises, b) number of new businesses and their adopted business legal structures, and the c) overall delegate numbers, but promoting various models of enterprise ownership that enable wealth created by users, workers and local communities to be held by them, and supporting all entrepreneurs to consider their social and environmental impacts would be of importance too.
- 3.2 Through the procurement process, suppliers will be asked to quantify how their delivery model would achieve the outcomes in 3.1.
- 3.3 A legal agreement between the chosen provider and the Council will outline the targets and how they will be monitored and evaluated. The frequency and duration of each programme and its milestones will dictate the regularity, but the Council would expect prescheduled meetings and updates, monitoring reports and an annual monitoring and evaluation report and meeting to review and discuss the achievements to date. The annual meeting will also be an opportunity to discuss and make any necessary changes to enhance the project based on client qualitative feedback to ensure the project continues to achieve the expected benefits and has the greatest impact possible.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation occurs through continued dialogue and reporting mechanisms with the current provider including case studies and feedback from programme participants. This approach will remain in place.
- 4.2 LDC Officers are members of Business East Sussex, Team East Sussex and the Greater Brighton Economic Board. The Newhaven Enterprise Zone also sits within the Regeneration Team at LDC.
- 4.3 During the term of the new agreement and in parallel to other relatable actions in the Community Wealth Building Strategy Action Plan including plans for a social enterprise incubator in Newhaven, the Council could use this time to a) build on the findings of The South East Local Enterprise Partnership's (SELEP) ['Social Enterprise - A Prospectus'](#) report to gain a better understanding on the local social enterprise community and what the sector needs to grow, b) identify interventions to support existing locally owned businesses to grow and develop with greater social and environmental purpose, and c) research other programmes elsewhere for best practice and ideas to help adapt future support.

5 Corporate plan and council policies.

- 5.1 Supporting business start-ups and through the LEAP programme is identified as a Council priority in the Corporate Plan 'The Re-imagining Lewes District Corporate Plan 2020- 2024' under 'Building Community Wealth - A sustainable economy that enables a fairer place to live and work'.
- 5.2 The LEAP business support programme to support new social enterprises is an action in the Council's Community Wealth Building Strategy under 'plural ownership of the economy'.
- 5.3 This proposal supports LDC's planning policy key strategic objectives under core policy 4 'Encouraging Economic Development and Regeneration', by providing support and advice to stimulate the economy and encourage local start-ups.
- 5.4 'The Lewes District Council Sustainability Policy', December 2018, identifies LEAP as a method for the Council to encourage sustainable economic growth by providing advice and support to small businesses and the self-employed to help them develop and grow their ideas and enterprises.
- 5.5 Supporting start-ups is an ongoing national, regional and sub-regional priority and is identified as a long-term priority for Business East Sussex.

6 Business case and alternative option(s) considered.

6.1 Problems/opportunities

There is demand for start-up support:

- Continued interest in business start-up workshops and programmes, as quantified in 1.3 and 1.4.
- The [Business East Sussex Growth Hub](#) has reported an increase in the number of enquiries from pre-start and start-up companies looking for support, information or funding as more people consider starting a business to boost their income.
- There could be an increase in the demand for start-up support as business support funded from the ERDF is ending.
- There were 405 new business registrations in the Lewes District in 2021 (Source: East Sussex in Figures).
- There is evidence that the District has an entrepreneurial spirit with 12.6% of the working age population (compared to 9.5% for England) indicating their economic status as self-employed (Census, 2021).
- The Enterprise Nation UK [Start-up Appetite Report](#), 2021, highlighted that a fifth of UK adults say they want to start a business but need more support. This rises to more than a third (34%) amongst 18–34-year-olds. It is widely understood that new start businesses are more likely to survive and thrive if they are given support at an early stage to help their business planning and strategy.

6.2 Duplication

- Avoiding duplication is important to ensure value for money for the Council and to minimise confusion for local residents and businesses.
- The Business East Sussex Growth Hub is the main point of contact for any entrepreneur or business in East Sussex seeking advice and support, and LDC has provided £30,000 funding to Business East Sussex (BES) for 23/24 for a minimum of one year to plug a central government funding gap. BES is forging closer links to the Department for Business and Trade and [Business and IP Centre Sussex](#) (BIPC Sussex) and plans to map and make public a guide to business support for local businesses which will help to identify gaps and duplications in provision.
- Locally there is BIPC Sussex, a free hub for entrepreneurs, inventors, and small businesses to network, attend workshops on a wide range of subject matters, book one-to-one expert advice sessions and access a wealth of free information - business databases, market research reports, company data and information on intellectual property. Note that the BIPC Sussex does not have a physical presence in the Lewes District – residents would need to travel to Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings or Crawley or access their services online.
- These services could be seen as a duplication of the support provided through the grant agreement. It is also possible that the redesign of the business start-up programme could see an increase in the number of start-up workshops.

6.3 The South East Local Enterprise Partnership's (SELEP) '[Social Enterprise - A Prospectus](#)' reports that a) there is economic and social growth potential in supporting pre-start and established social enterprises, b) there is a need for a better understanding of the unique aspects of social enterprises amongst mainstream business support providers, and c) social enterprises value specialist support the most, working with organisations that have the knowledge and expertise in working with social enterprises. Momentum and funding to take forward the business support calls to action in the Prospectus have stalled.

6.4 With the exception of the support funded by LDC, there isn't and doesn't appear to be any future plans for any free local specialist support to help entrepreneurs consider or start-up a social enterprise in the District. As a CWB priority, this is an area where intervention is required.

Solutions – cost and benefits

6.5 Option one - do nothing:

- This option would rely on the external business support landscape to support residents and businesses. The Council would need to a) influence and lobby government and providers to ensure services align to local needs and priorities, and b) provide accurate signposting to residents and businesses. There would be no financial commitment for the Council and no outcomes towards corporate priorities, although the Council is providing gap funding to BES.

- The high risks associated with this option concern not fulfilling plural ownership aspirations in the CWB strategy and potential reputational consequences in discontinuing a long-standing successful business start-up programme.

6.6 Option two – renew current programmes:

- The Council is familiar with these programmes and their outputs, but the cost and benefits would need to be revisited to take into account the impact of inflation and rise in cost of living in delivering the current targets.

6.7 Option three – start-up programme for local pre-start and early-stage enterprises with specialist provision built-in to a) help entrepreneurs understand what a socially productive business is, and b) support those wanting to pursue a social enterprise model:

- The cost and benefits of this solution are not yet fully known but through a procurement exercise that invites providers to design a programme that helps the Council achieve its CWB ambitions, the Council can select the best model based on factors including value for money, outcomes and sustainability.
- This option reduces duplication (6.2) and double counting (1.4).

6.8 Recommended solution

Option three is the preferred solution to support local pre-start and early-stage enterprises in the district. It is the lower risk option, and it will maximise the value for money and outcomes for the Council.

7 **Financial appraisal**

7.1 Analysis of scheme costs for 23/24 suggests a shortfall of £3,789 currently exists between budget allocated to fund this scheme (£36,950) and the cost required in this financial year.

However, it has been confirmed that following a review of the scheme and the budgets allocated to it, there is an anticipated reduction in the programme costs (£35,000 per annum) ensuring that the programme is now within the existing budget allocation.

7.2 Further to 7.1, there is a shortfall of £3,789 as a surplus was not carried forward. This amount also needs to be included in a revenue growth bid for 24/25 in the Business Plan for Regeneration and Planning. Going forward, the programme and funding will run in parallel together over a financial year, rather than the current programme over a calendar year splitting payments over two financial years. The award will be subject to adoption of the final 24/25 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

8 Legal implications

- 8.1 A procurement exercise is necessary to establish the market available to meet this proposed new scheme. It is important to distinguish between a service requirement and a grant supporting work already being done in the area, which could amount to a subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Legal services will continue to advise on this matter.

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9 Risk management implications

- 9.1 The recommended solution, option three, is the lowest risk option and scores low for impacts and likelihoods across core risk categories - political, customer, reputation, financial, people, environment and sustainability and regulatory. Options one and two, but for different reasons and varying levels of impacts and likelihoods, impacts CWB strategic objectives and achievement of local policy/ manifesto commitments and have potential negative consequences to meet customers' requirements and expectations and risks that relate to the Council's image, credibility or reputation. For all three options, Council marketing is critical to inspire and help local entrepreneurs and businesses make informed decisions.

10 Equality analysis

- 10.1 Equality Analyses have been undertaken for various aspects of this report and the proposals are not expected to trigger any additional impacts to protected groups. A separate analysis has identified that the protected characteristic of Age is more relevant. This is because business support will increase employment opportunities for people in the Lewes District area and therefore beneficially impact people of working age more than any other age demographic. The proposals will continue to support the council to advance equality of opportunity for socioeconomic groups facing long-term unemployment, low skills and minimal employment prospects. This project will also positively affect relations amongst different socioeconomic groups, bringing them into closer interaction with one another and fostering greater mutual understanding.

11 Environmental sustainability implications

- 11.1 There are no significant environmental sustainability effects as a result of the recommendations in this proposal. We would however encourage the chosen provider to embed environmental sustainability into their practices to reduce their environmental impact and to signpost programme participants to zero carbon business support providers.
- 11.2 As in paragraph 5.4, the Lewes District Council Sustainability Policy, December 2018, explicitly identifies LEAP as a method for LDC to encourage sustainable economic growth.

12 Contribution to Community Wealth Building

- 12.1 As part of the Council's commitment to CWB, the Council is keen to promote local social entrepreneurialism and community ownership models such as cooperatives and community interest companies and will do this by giving business advice that is tailored to these forms of ownership and by raising the profile of such approaches in the area. A business start-up programme is identified as an action in the Council's CWB Strategy to fulfil these aspirations. This is based on one of five key CWB principles, 'plural ownership of the economy', which involves developing and growing small enterprises, community organisations, co-operatives and municipal ownership as locally owned and socially minded enterprises are more likely to employ, buy and invest locally.

13 Appendices

- 13.1 None

14 Background papers

- 14.1 The background papers used in compiling this report were as follows:
None

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	14 September 2023
Title:	Funding Simplification Pathfinder Pilot
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for finance, assets and community wealth building
Ward(s):	Newhaven North and Newhaven South
Purpose of report:	To provide information on the Funding Simplification Pathfinder Pilot that Lewes District Council has been invited to participate in.
Decision type:	Key decision
Officer recommendation(s):	(1) To approve the content of the Council's Investment Plan (copy attached) and authorise submission of the document to DLUHC by 15th September deadline. (2) To delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) and the Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building to take all necessary actions to progress the Pathfinder Pilot and to implement the Investment Plan, including determining the terms of, and authorising the execution of, all necessary documentation.
Reasons for recommendations:	The Pilot will provide the Council with the flexibilities to deliver effectively in line with local priorities and reduce the administrative burdens of agreeing any minor changes.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Lisa Rawlinson Post title: Head of Regeneration E-mail: lisa.rawlinson@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01323 415250

1 Introduction

- 1.1 On 30th June, DLUHC invited Lewes District Council along with only nine other Local Authorities in England, to participate in the Funding Simplification Pathfinder Pilot.

- 1.2 As part of this pilot, DLUHC will delegate decision making responsibility over three current programmes, allowing the department to evaluate the impact of a simplified and consolidated delivery model. The aim of this pilot is to reduce the administration burden for Council Officers and central government of delivering different funding programmes in parallel. The three programmes are:
- Future High Streets Fund
 - Towns Deal
 - Levelling Up Fund Round One
- 1.3 Local authorities currently in receipt of funding from all three of these capital programmes are eligible to participate in the pilot. As Lewes District Council has been allocated funding from all three, the Council was eligible to take part along with nine other Local Authorities in England.
- 1.4 The delivery model that will be tested through this pilot is built around the following principles:
- 1) A single aggregate allocation (replacing three programme allocations).
 - 2) A combined set of outcomes.
 - 3) A streamlined reporting process.
 - 4) A simplified change request process.
 - 5) A single point of contact within DLUHC for any queries about funding or the pilot.
- 1.5 On 17th July, Officers wrote to DLUHC to confirm that the Council intended to participate in the Pilot.
- 1.6 To take part, we are required to submit an Investment Plan to DLUHC. This plan will set out how the Council will use our allocation to deliver an aggregate set of outcomes and outputs that have been selected from an investment framework and will also include high-level information on the projects we will deliver.
- 1.7 Technical Guidance and a final version of the investment framework to support us in developing this plan were published in July and we have until 15th September to submit our Investment Plan to DLUHC.
- 1.8 A link to the Technical Guidance is provided below:
[Simplification Pathfinder Pilot: technical guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/simplification-pathfinder-pilot-technical-guidance)
- 2 Change Process and Reprofile Funding - Freedoms and Flexibilities.**
- 2.1 DLUHC will take a proportionate approach to any changes to pilot investment plans, which means they will not be asking local authorities to submit individual project-level adjustment requests.
- 2.2 The Council will only need to seek approval from DLUHC where we are seeking to make “material changes” to our investment plan. A single amendment to funding plans is a “material change” if it involves moving at least £5 million to a different intervention theme or moving at least £5 million between projects in the same

intervention theme. This change will be benchmarked against the investment plan agreed by DLUHC or against the position agreed as part of a previous change request.

2.3 The aim of piloting this approach is to:

- provide local authorities with the flexibility to deliver effectively in line with local priorities;
- reduce the administrative burdens of agreeing all individual changes; and
- maintain proportionate controls to ensure that funding continues to deliver good value for money.

2.4 For the purposes of the pilot, LDC will be the accountable body through which all funding will flow. Building on the positive local role of Town Deal Boards, we are required to establish a consolidated governance structure which will oversee the total portfolio of projects. We have agreed with DLUHC that this will be the Newhaven Town Deal Board which will have expanded Terms of Reference to exercise strategic oversight over the portfolio.

3. Consultation

3.1 Alongside this plan, DLUHC require Officers and the Section 151 Officer, to confirm that we have consulted local stakeholders on participating in this pilot. The draft Investment Plan has been shared and agreed internally with the Leader, Legal Services and the S151 Officer. We have also shared the Plan with the Newhaven Town Deal Board who have agreed its content and are happy for it to be submitted to Government.

4 Corporate plan and council policies.

4.1 Prioritising investment into local economies across our district is identified as a Council priority in the Corporate Plan 'The Re-imagining Lewes District Corporate Plan 2020- 2024' under 'Building Community Wealth - A sustainable economy that enables a fairer place to live and work'.

4.2 The Pathfinder Pilot will support LDC's planning policy key strategic objectives under core policy 4 'Encouraging Economic Development and Regeneration'.

5 Financial appraisal.

5.1 Lewes District Council along with only nine other Local Authorities in England are to participate in the Funding Simplification Pathfinder Pilot giving LDC delegated decision making responsibility over three current programmes. The relevant programme totals are as follows:

Original Grant Allocation Totals	£m
Town Deal	19.3
Future High Streets Fund	5.0
Levelling Up Fund Round One	12.69
Total Grant Funding	36.99

- 5.2 The participation allows LDC to apply an element of flexibility in how funds are allocated, up to maximum of £5m without seeking additional approval from DLUHC.
- 5.3 The financial implications of becoming a pilot site are an increased ability to redirect funding to specific projects, ensuring continued alignment to the councils' strategic priorities and therefore maximising the outcomes of the total funding envelope across all three funding streams. There is also the additional opportunity to reduce the administrative cost of managing three separate grant schemes ensuring that the maximum grant amount is applied to each specific scheme.

6 Legal implications.

- 6.1 As the Accountable Body, the Council will be expected to enter into a revised funding agreement with DLUHC (a Memorandum of Understanding) that will set out the terms pursuant to which the funding should be delivered. The Council will in turn need to enter agreements with each funding recipient to ensure that any funding conditions are met, and the Council protected from any clawback. The nature of those agreements will depend on the project being funded.
- 6.2 Funding will need to be delivered in compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the 2022 Act). The 2022 Act widens the **definition of a subsidy** to include measures that have a (potential) effect on competition or investment within the UK as well as on trade or investment between the UK and other countries. Where a subsidy is being granted the Council will need to assess compliance with this new regime and subsidies may be permissible under the Minimum Financial Assistance rules.
- 6.3 The Council will comply with public procurement rules where applicable and will act in compliance with its Contract Procedure Rules.

7 Risk management implications

- 7.1 LDC will be required to submit 3-monthly summary updates to DLUHC in the form of a RAG report, focussing on spend and progress.

8 Equality analysis

- 8.1 Local authorities participating in the Pilot have a duty to consider how policies, investment or decisions made within the scope of the pilot affect persons with the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

9 Environmental sustainability implications

- 9.1 There are no significant environmental sustainability effects as a result of the recommendations in this report.

10 Contribution to Community Wealth Building.

- 10.1 The Pathfinder Pilot will see the continued delivery of a multi-million pound investment in the area, with procurement focussed on the circular economy and community wealth building.

11 Appendices.

- 11.1 Exempt Appendix 1 – copy of Investment Plan

12 Background papers.

- 12.1 [Simplification Pathfinder Pilot: technical guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674442/Simplification_Pathfinder_Pilot_technical_guidance.pdf) (also referenced in paragraph 1.8 of the report).

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Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	14 September 2023
Title:	Robinson Road Depot – Capital Development Project Update
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Zoe Nicholson – Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building
Ward(s):	Newhaven North
Purpose of report:	To provide an update on the progress of the plans to redevelop the waste and recycling depot in Robinson Road, Newhaven to meet the future needs of the service.
Decision type:	Key
Officer recommendation(s):	<p>(1) To note the progress of the Robinson Road waste and recycling depot capital development project, including the proposed Preferred Option showing in Appendix 1.</p> <p>(2) To delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer), Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building, and Lead Member for Neighbourhood Wellbeing, to carry out all necessary actions to facilitate the project within the capacity of the existing General Fund capital budget allocation of £5m including finalising the Preferred Option, financing, feasibility, planning, development, award of contract(s), and determining the terms of, and authorising the execution of, all necessary documentation.</p>

(3) To approve the lease of land at Lewes Road, Newhaven as part of the project proposals in line with the key terms outlined in Appendix 2 (Exempt), subject to such variations that may be agreed in the course of negotiations and to delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) and Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building, to carry out all necessary actions to conclude that lease and any ancillary documentation including determining the terms of, and authorising the execution of, all necessary documentation.

Reasons for recommendations:

- (1) To provide Cabinet with an update on the Robinson Road waste and recycling depot capital development project.
- (2) To enable key decisions to be taken in relation to land / assets required to support the scheme proposals and to meet the future needs of the waste and recycling service.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with an update on the proposals to redevelop the existing waste and recycling depot at Robinson Road, Newhaven to meet the future needs of the service.
- 1.2 The report also includes a requirement to lease third-party land to support the proposals when taking into consideration the corporate priorities for the service.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council has been exploring options to re-provide the waste and recycling depot within the district, where the existing Robinson Road site and facilities had been previously identified as no longer capable of meeting the current and future needs of the service.
- 2.2 In addition, several other factors must now also be taken into consideration, including:
- Alternative fuels for the fleet.
 - Increase in number of staff employed at the site.
 - Increase in number of vehicles employed at the site.
 - Enhancement of the Operator's Licence to accommodate the above.
 - Changes in staff / office working arrangements.
 - Sustainability requirements and the future needs of the fleet.
 - Increased market pressures - the impacts of inflation, PWLB borrowing rates, and the need for income generation to support expenditure.
- 2.3 On 10th November 2022, Cabinet agreed to focus its efforts to find a viable solution that would seek to re-utilise the existing site at Robinson Road.
- 2.4 In February 2023, Cabinet approved the General Fund Capital Programme 2023/24 and new Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which included an increased overall capital budget allocation of £5m for the project.

3 Capital development update

- 3.1 Since the Cabinet decision in November 2022, a space needs assessment has been progressed in partnership with the Environment First team to determine the exact requirements for the new depot. This led to a series of potential layout options being considered and the risks / benefits of each considered in specific detail, with reference to the already identified challenges, future service needs, and Corporate Plan priorities.
- 3.2 The options assessment process has led to an internally agreed spatial layout (the Preferred Option) for the existing Robinson Road site as showing within Appendix 1 enclosed.
- 3.3 The Preferred Option includes several changes, summarised at high-level as follows:
- Improved parking on site to meet future fleet demands
 - Additional parking on the former Household Waste & Recycling site
 - New welfare and office accommodation
 - Extended and upgraded workshop
 - Upgraded site infrastructure including provision for alternative fuel(s)
 - Improved pedestrian access on site

- 3.4 In considering those already identified service and market challenges, the Preferred Option seeks to address each as listed in Table 1:

TABLE 1 – Service Challenge Design Solutions

Challenges	Proposed Design Solution(s)	Outcome(s)
Asset condition - Inefficient and underperforming Welfare/ office/ Workshop provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Welfare/Office to north of site. • Extended and upgraded workshop with vehicle lifts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access, welfare, and accommodation. • Energy efficient / reduced running costs.
Parking provision – double parked vehicles on site with no provision for expansion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of office/welfare out of the yard to free up additional parking/turning. • Use of former Household Waste and Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single bay parking for all vehicles. • Provision for expanded future fleet. • New food waste fleet parking and storage. • Improved health and safety for pedestrians • Less vehicle movements
Staff needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded and modern welfare provisions – including male and female changing facilities. • Additional secure cycle parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed welfare facilities to meet current and future needs of all staff, complying with equalities policy. • Improved bike storage.
Fuel infrastructure (futureproofing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded substation to meet future needs of an electric fleet. • Provision for fuel tanks that could be upgraded to hydrogen storage if required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both sites will be upgraded to ensure the infrastructure meets an all-electric and or hydrogen fleet. • To include “fast charging” point infrastructure for overnight refuelling.
Sustainability priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition and upgrading of underperforming buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New thermally efficient welfare provision. • Consideration to renewable technologies.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced Co2 emissions and running costs.
Economic / market pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to expand fleet to meet local increased demand (incl. new build and increased trade). • Upgraded workshop to include MOT bay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design to meet future needs. • MOT bay that can provide potential additional income to Council.

3.5 Unfortunately, to facilitate the full extent of the future service requirements (including the extended fleet), it has not been possible to accommodate all vehicles within the capacity of the Robinson Road site. However, the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) owned neighbouring land - Lewes Road, Newhaven (former household waste site) - has been identified as surplus to requirements. Given the site capacity and proximity to Robinson Road, there is an opportunity to utilise that land to support with the additional (and growing) fleet requirements.

3.6 The Preferred Option is subject to further feasibility and due diligence, including more intrusive on-site surveys and investigations to validate the initial concept design proposal. The option is therefore subject to change depending on the outcomes of those investigations and, unless the scheme is rendered unviable by those findings, it is proposed that authority is delegated to further the proposals toward delivering a viable scheme. Should the scheme become unviable then alternative options will need to be considered by Cabinet.

4 Lewes Road, Newhaven

4.1 The former household waste site has been used in recent years only as storage by ESCC, specifically during unforeseen / emergency situations. LDC officers investigated the possibility of purchasing the freehold interest in the site. Although ESCC have confirmed that the site is surplus to operational requirements, it is only available for use by LDC by way of a commercial lease at a market rent.

4.2 Appendix 1 demonstrates the capacity of the site as part of the Robinson Road project to support the increased fleet requirement, specifically the smaller food waste vehicles. The site also gives the Council the added opportunity of being able to tip and store food waste for bulk collection, reducing vehicle mileage and time with needing to tip off site. The food waste is stored within a sealed container that is collected once full. The site will also provide additional flexibility in the physical delivery of the development works, providing more land to support the phasing strategy to ensure operations remain live throughout the project.

- 4.3 The use of the site for the purposes set out will be subject to planning and early pre-application discussions are already in progress with the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 4.4 LDC entered into a short-term Tenancy at Will (TAW) with ESCC on 17th May 2023 to allow the Council access to the site to undertake minor works (including site further investigations) and use the land for vehicle parking and storage of equipment in connection with the Robinson Road depot, while terms for a longer-term lease were finalised.
- 4.5 Under the Scheme of Delegations, officers cannot currently enter into a lease for more than 10 years or at an annual rent of more than £25,000 (except for a rent review). To provide maximum flexibility, officers would like the Director of Regeneration and Planning to have authority to enter into a lease of longer than 10 years and/or for more than an annual rent of £25,000, subject to consultation on any final terms with the Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) and Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building.

5 Outcome expected and performance management.

- 5.1 The recommendations seek to further the land / asset proposals for the future of the waste and recycling service, including:
- Moving forward with the Preferred Option for the capital development of the Robinson Road depot site.
 - Leasing third-party land to support those proposals.
 - Securing delegations to give the autonomy to progress the proposals.
- 5.2 If approved, the capital development project will continue to be progressed and monitored in accordance with the delegation to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, including requirements to consult with the Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) and Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building.
- 5.3 As above, the lease arrangement(s) proposed shall also be managed via the individual contractual terms.

6 Consultation

- 6.1 The proposals for the redevelopment of the Robinson Road waste and recycling depot have been developed in close consultation with Environment First as the service provider. The Preferred Option has also been subject to consultation with the Lead Member for Neighbourhood Wellbeing, incorporating the responsibility for the waste and recycling service.

Further consultation will be undertaken as the proposals continue to be developed, and in the lead up to planning.

7 Corporate plan and council policies

7.1 The proposals outlined within this paper will support the Re-imagining Lewes District Corporate Plan 2020-2024 in the following ways:

- **Your Services: Getting it right first time.** Providing excellent recycling and refuse services through a new purpose-built depot at Robinson Road.
- **Building Community Wealth.** Making best use of public sector land to support core services for the benefit of local communities.
- **Sustainability & Climate Change.** Reducing waste and emissions that arise from dealing with waste.

7.2 The capital development will also be delivered in accordance with the Council's Employers Requirements (ERs), which will continue to drive the objectives of the Corporate Plan commitment for climate change and in accordance with the Sustainability Strategy. In addition to resolving the service challenges identified, the completed development will make best use of sustainable development methodologies, including futureproofing the provision of changes in the fuel infrastructure, and significantly improve upon the efficiencies (financial and operational) compared with the existing facilities.

8 Business case and financial appraisal

8.1 The General Fund Capital Programme 2023/24 includes an allocation for the capital development across the MTFP as follows:

23/24 - £800,000
24/25 - £4,000,000
25/26 - £200,000

8.2 The capital proposals continue to be developed within the capacity of this budget allocation, subject to ongoing review. The scheme costs will become more certain as the project design is progressed, planning permission granted, and construction works tendered.

8.3 Any investment requiring a capital outlay presents an element of risk. The risk here is however considered as acceptable based on the existing approved budget allocation and on balance with the core statutory service requirement. Although there is no direct income associated with the service, the proposals may present new future opportunities for income generation (for example, the new workshop to support other vehicular services). Any other risks can be mitigated and managed through careful construction management and continued technical due diligence.

8.4 The taking of a lease from ESCC will have an added revenue implication to the Council and this will need to be taken consideration within the 2024/25 Business and Financial Planning process and factored into the ongoing General Fund revenue requirements.

- 8.5 The recommendations within this report will continue to be subject to financial due diligence, monitoring, and review as part of the Council's usual budget management and monitoring processes.

9 Legal implications

- 9.1 In relation to the development proposals, the proposed works will have to be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
- 9.2 In relation to the proposed lease from ESCC, the Council has power to acquire land for the purposes of any of their functions or for the benefit, improvement, or development of their area pursuant to section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 9.3 The Council will continue to undertake full legal due diligence on the proposals including in respect of title investigation and negotiation of all required documentation.

[12305-LDC-KS 12 August 2023]

10 Risk management implications

- 10.1 The key risks and mitigations at this stage are set out in Table 2:

TABLE 2 – Risk Management Implications

	Risk	Mitigations
1	Increasing construction costs due to inflation and instability of interest rates impacting on development viability	The market continues to be monitored closely and the viability of the scheme assessed with regard to the budget allocation. Specialist/external advice will also be taken from independent agencies and the Council will look to enter into fixed price contracts wherever possible.
2	Planning may be refused	Extensive pre-application discussions and due diligence will take place prior to a formal submission. Splitting the sites into two applications will also limit delays.
3	Abortive costs as a result of a scheme not taken forward.	Spend within the early stages will be minimised. A scheme without sufficient viability and strategic benefit will be aborted to reduce the risk of unnecessary cost exposure. However, given the statutory nature of the waste and recycling service, "do nothing" is not an option.

4	Impact to waste service during the proposed works	Works will look to be phased to ensure operations can continue on-site to minimise disruption. This will be subject to agreement with the main contractor. The lease for the former HWRC will also provide additional parking for part of the fleet.
5	Infrastructure not in place to support new EV fleet from 2025	<p>Early survey works have been undertaken to identify existing capacity and requirements for sub-station upgrades.</p> <p>Works to the HWRC will also be accelerated to ensure the food waste can move to the new site earlier in the process.</p> <p>Alternate temporary accommodation to store the new vehicles may be required if the programme is delayed.</p>

11 Equality analysis

- 11.1 An Equality and Fairness analysis is not required at this stage as this is an update. The proposals outlined in this report have no direct impact relating to equality and fairness, but ultimately aim to improve and diversify the facilities for both staff and business visitors using the Robinson Road waste and recycling depot. Consultation with staff throughout the design process will be undertaken to ensure the design meets all needs.

12 Environmental sustainability implications

- 12.1 The proposals within this report support the Council's target for net zero carbon. The proposed welfare and office buildings target high thermal performance, will include no gas appliances, and will look to maximise PV installations.
- 12.2 The proposed plans allow for the infrastructure upgrades to support an all-electric fleet, with provision for hydrogen (if required). This supports the Corporate Plan to reduce emissions that arise from waste.
- 12.3 Provision for improved biodiversity across the sites will be developed as the scheme progresses.

13 Contribution to Community Wealth Building

- 13.1 The procurement of works and services are undertaken using the Council's adopted Social Value Charter. The Charter considers and assesses important elements over and above financial cost. The Charter aims to ensure sustainability and value in the community. Appointments of main contractors will continue to focus on local partnerships and supply chains as appropriate. The

Charter encourages the use of local Small & Medium Enterprises (SME), which in turn increases local employment and training opportunities.

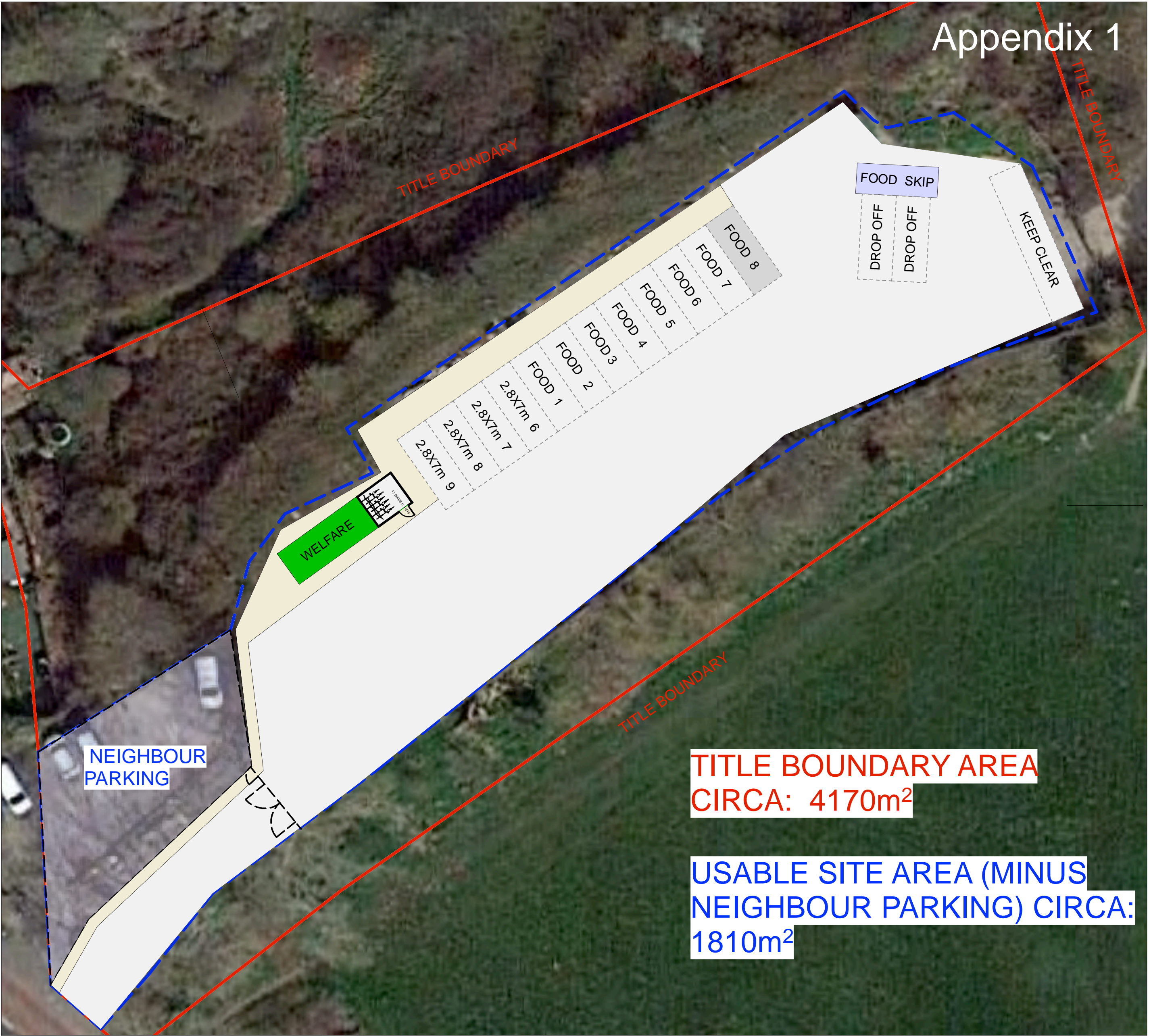
- 13.2 The Council continues to work closely with local education partners, including the East Sussex College Group (ESCG), to ensure opportunities for apprenticeships and work placements are integrated and embedded within the capital development projects delivered.
- 13.3 As above, the capital development will utilise the latest Employers Requirements (ERs), ensuring the proposed welfare facilities are designed to a high thermal performance, reduce Co2 and running costs, and meet all current regulations.
- 13.4 The proposals also seek to utilise an existing Council-owned (brownfield) site to improve upon the facilities underpinning a priority statutory service. In addition, the leasing of land from ESCC also utilises sites within the wider public sector ownership to provide the required parking provision to meet the future needs of the fleet.

14 Appendices

- 14.1
 - Appendix 1 – Robinson Road: Preferred Option
 - Exempt Appendix 2 – Lewes Road, Newhaven proposed terms.

15 Background papers

- 15.1
 - LDC Cabinet – Property and Asset Management Update – 10th November 2022



OVERFLOW PARKING - ESCC LAND - PROPOSED SITE PLAN 1:250@ A1

amendments:		
12/12/22	1	additional MOT bay added to workshop & layout to ESCC land updated
01/08/23	2.1	HWRC updated
project: WASTE DEPOT UPGRADE		
location: ROBINSON ROAD NEWHAVEN		
client: WASTE DEPARTMENT		
drawing: PROPOSED SITE PLANS		
scale: 1:250	sheet: A1	
date: 07/12/2022	drawn by: MS	
drawing number: OPTION 7	revision: 2.1	
0 5m 10m 15m SCALE 1:250		

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