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30 November 2023

Dear Members

Scrutiny Committee - 4 December 2023

I am now able to enclose, for consideration, the following reports/appendices at the above meeting that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

- | Item No | Item |
|----------------|--|
| 8 | <u>Corporate performance - quarter 2 - 2023/24 - to follow (Pages 3 - 14)</u> |
| 9 | <u>Revenue and Capital Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2023-24 - to follow (Pages 15 - 34)</u> |
| 10 | <u>Interim medium term financial strategy - to follow (Pages 35 - 56)</u> |
| 11 | <u>Council tax and business rate base 2024/25 - to follow (Pages 57 - 64)</u> |
| 12 | <u>Housing Services - Current Operating Pressures - to follow (Pages 65 - 80)</u> |
| 14 | <u>Changes to Discretionary Council Tax Discounts and Empty Homes Premiums from 01 April 2024 - to follow (Pages 81 - 92)</u> |
| 15 | <u>Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030: Annual Progress Report - to follow (Pages 93 - 124)</u> |
| 16 | <u>Eastbourne Borough Council Asset Strategy - to follow (Pages 125 - 144)</u> |

Yours sincerely

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Agenda Item 8

Body:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	04 December 2023
Subject:	Corporate Performance Quarter 2 2023-24
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance
Cabinet member:	Councillor Stephen Holt, Leader of the Council (Community Strategy, Local Strategic Partnership, the Corporate Plan, Performance and Staff)
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of the report:	To consider the council's progress and performance in respect of service areas for the Second Quarter of the year (July-September 2023) as shown in Appendix 1
Decision type:	Non Key
Recommendation:	To note progress and performance for Quarter 2 2023/24
Reasons for recommendations:	To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the Council's progress and performance.
Contact:	Luke Dreeling: Performance Lead Tel: 07525 351757 or email: luke.dreeling@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

1.0 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 the second quarter of 2023/24 (July to September) .
- 1.4 Performance for the second quarter has been mixed. Improvements have been made in a number of areas where the level of under-performance has reduced (e.g. benefits, customer service quality, housing re-let times). However, there has been a decline in some other areas (e.g. time to respond to stage 1 complaints, incidents of fly tipping).

- 1.5 However, the overall position is encouraging, with 16 of the 23 indicators for which a target is set, being green (over target) or amber (only just off target), despite the challenging financial position being experienced by the authority.

2.0 Solution Sprints

- 2.1 Solution Sprint (SS) activity during quarter 2 has largely focused on bringing to conclusion review work on potential improvements to Out of Hours (OOH) provision and the Incident Liaison Officer (ILO) activity. Following business process mapping of existing provision, several interim recommendations were made to make immediate improvements to existing processes. Follow up sessions have taken place with a cross section of staff involved in ILO and OOH to pool further improvement ideas. A key element of this work has been to improve data quality and insight with regards to OOH demand. A 'Smartsheet' has been set up whereby ILO and OOH colleagues can log incidents online and direct from their mobiles. This is immediately helping to paint a better picture of demand so that associated responses and resources can be more data driven. A report on further options, recommendations and next steps has been drafted. Subject to Director views, these will be taken forward into the next quarter.

Other notable Solution Sprint improvement activity this quarter includes ongoing work with Green Consultancy colleagues making use of new project management tools to assist management of their many projects, improving visibility and enhancing capacity for better progress tracking. Associated work with Green Consultancy colleagues continues in terms of progressing aspirations for Direct Debit payments for garden waste. Options and recommendations have been drafted to assist with the commitment to refresh the Council's sustainability aspirations, in line with the intentions set out in the annual Sustainability report to the November Cabinet meeting. New Solution Sprints ideas currently being scoped include assisting Housing First colleagues improve processes and reporting with regards to domestic violence, and preliminary exploration with Customer First colleagues into enhancing how corporate complaints are addressed.

3.0 Financial appraisal

- 3.1 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 as there is a clear link between performance and budgets/resources.
- 3.2 All the financial implications are contained within the body of the report.

4.0 Legal implications

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

5.0 Equality analysis

5.1 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.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 This report provides an overview of performance against the authority's priority actions and indicators for 2023-24.

Appendices

- Appendix 1- Portfolio Progress and Performance Report (Quarter 2 2023/24)

Background Papers:









The Background Paper used in compiling this report were as follows:

- Corporate Plan 2020/24 <https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/about-the-councils/corporate-plans/>

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


Appendix 1













Eastbourne Borough Council Corporate Performance Report Q2 2023-24























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











KPIs

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KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2023/24			Latest Note	
		Value	Value	Target	Status		Short Trend
1. Finance: Percentage of Council Tax collected during the year - Eastbourne	96.80%	28.55%	54.82%	55.00%			<p>Q2 2022/23 for comparison: 54.97%</p> <p>What happened: The new Revenue & Benefits system migration has begun and we have started to see the an impact collection rates for the first time this year. The legacy systems were originally due to shut down in July but this was deferred until October in order to complete the work required to complete the live migration</p> <p>What was learned/changed: Recovery was re-instated in early August and Reminder and Final Notices were issued. A new Liability Order Hearing date was scheduled for the end of August and Liability Orders were subsequently granted. A further Court Hearing has been scheduled for September before the legacy systems are closed. As the legacy systems will be closed between October and December it won't be possible to undertake any further recovery action as it is not possible to make any updates on the system until the migration has been completed. The expected downturn in collection could continue through this period which was an accepted risk in the original business case to change systems. The benefits of migrating to a new system will provide more automation and self-service options to enhance the services we offer residents which outweigh the potential temporary losses in collection this year.</p>
2. Finance: Percentage of Business Rates collected during the year - Eastbourne	97%	30.61%	54.86%	54.78%			<p>Q2 2022/23 for comparison: 57.99%</p> <p>Collection is 0.08% above target this quarter and remains on track</p>
3. Benefits: Average days to process new claims for housing/council tax benefit	22	22	19	22			Over the past two quarters we have seen significant improvement, Q4 2022/23: 29 days.
4. Benefits: Average days to process change of circs (housing/council tax benefit)	6	9	7	6			<p>What happened: We have seen significant improvement (2 days) from Q1 and our greatest performing quarter since Q4 2021/22. During the Quarter efforts have been focused on system migration, which did reduce the team's ability to work on cases and will effect Q3 performance, when this is reported.</p> <p>What was learned/changed: We are investigating common trends in cases that are taking longer to process, as well as using other forms of communication (instead of postal when chasing residents for further documentation).</p>
5. Customers: Average time taken to answer calls (minutes)	Data Only	06:46	04:39	Data Only			<p>What happened: Customer contact saw an improvement of 2mins 7sec from Q1. Although every month within Q2 saw improved performance when compared to Quarter one, we still experienced high contact volumes and calls continuing to remain of a complex nature with Customer Advisors spending long periods of time assisting with enquires, endeavouring to resolve at first contact. August and September also saw the Council entering its yearly Annual Canvass period when 100,000 emails, letters and text messages are sent to residents requesting a response over a few weeks, with reminders and chasing contact following.</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	
							What was learned/changed: , We had 9 knowledgeable and trained customer advisors leave the team. 4 new staff joined but needed to be trained. We continue to recruit - 4 new starters join us next Quarter. We have 7 more vacancies to fill. In Q3, ELLIS will operate across more of our phone lines. Straight forward questions and contact to the council will be handled this way, allowing staff to handle more complex enquiries
6. Customers: Telephone calls graded as high quality under the call monitoring scheme	90%	83%	84%	90%			What happened: Q2 saw the team reaching an overall score of 84% classed as 'Great' – which was a 1% positive increase when compared to Q1 (83%). What was learned/changed: Through meetings (both individual and team) training has been given to improve both system and background knowledge to further improve service. In addition to this we have had our more experienced members of the team sit with our recent new starters to give on-the-spot feedback and guidance. We continue to use the monitoring as a mechanism to review common call trends and areas that require further training.
7. Customers: Customer complaints logged at stage 1 resolved within 10 working days	100%	54%	48%	100%			What happened: A comparison and analysis of complaints, which has not previously been conducted or monitored, over the last two years has been completed. The evidence suggests we have seen a 64% increase in complaints since Q2 2021/22. This work will now provide us with much needed baseline numbers, as well as analysis of key areas of improvement. Our two areas of high-volume complaints are: Environment First (including waste/recycling) and Housing Repairs. What was learned/changed: Training has been given to staff on our complaints software, as well as training around the stages and outcomes of complaints. We are in the process of drafting a new complaints policy, to ensure a consistent approach to complaints across our organisation. Communications and distribution have been enhanced, with our complaints system now notifying departments that a complaint has been raised in their service area. Work with our two high volume complaint areas (mentioned above) is continuing take place; EF have seen an increased number of complaints in Q2 and improved the percentage of complaints closed on time.
8. Customers: Customer complaints logged at stage 2 resolved within 20 working days	100%	48%	58%	100%			Please see above commentary
9. Customers: The number of corporate complaints upheld at stage 1 and stage 2	Data only	50	36	Data only			Stage 1 Upheld complaints: Total Complaints 166 Upheld 23, Partially Upheld 22 Stage 2 Upheld Complaints: Total Complaints 19 Upheld 3, Partially Upheld 3
10. Customers: The number of corporate complaints received at stage 1 and stage 2	Data only	209	185	Data only			Please see above commentary
11. Housing: Number of households living in emergency (nightly paid) accommodation	Data only	321	310	Data only			We have again seen improvement quarter on quarter (11 fewer last quarter and again 11 fewer this quarter. The team has met the quota for move-on, however the number of households going into Temporary Accommodation are the equivalent to those coming into Emergency Accommodation.

KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	
12. Customers: Number of people registering for our email service (GovDelivery)	1,800	1,147	1,075	450			PI remains significantly ahead of target
13. Customers: Percentage of local searches that are returned within 10 working days of receipt	80%	100%	100%	80%			Q2 performance above target. All of the 177 local searches were returned within 10 working days.
14. Growth: Town centre vacant retail business space	11.02%	6.92%	6.92%	11.02%			2023/24 remains static and above the national vacancy rate of 13.8%.
15. Housing: Average void relet time key to key (month & YTD)	20.0	39.1	29.6	20.0			<p>What happened: Despite not meeting target, we have seen significant improvement quarter on quarter this year (Q4 2022/23 performance was 52.1)</p> <p>What was learned/changed: We have implemented a new internal process which gives Management clear oversight of each stage of the void process to identify gaps/delays/challenges. This has led to the revision of our approach to pre-void inspections and a marketing campaign to promote hard to let retirement housing.</p> <p>In addition, to reduce the pressures on emergency nightly paid accommodation we are prioritising direct lets which impacts positively on the efficiency of allocations. We are also commencing a project with the Board of EHL to investigate alternative methods of service delivery in parallel with the re-procurement of maintenance contracts.</p>
16. Housing: DFGs - Time taken from council receiving a fully complete application to the council approving the grant	14 days	5 days	3 days	14 days			Performance remains above target.
17. Housing: Number of Licensed HMO's Inspected per Quarter	48 (12 Quarterly)	29	27	12			Performance remains above target
18. Housing: Rent arrears of current tenants (expressed as a percentage of rent debit)	3%	3.3%	3.4%	4%			Arrears have achieved target by 0.6%, maintaining the positive performance from Q1.
19. Planning: Increase the percentage of Major Planning Applications processed within 13 weeks	60%	50%	100%	60%			Performance within National Target
20. Increase the percentage of minor planning applications processed within 8 weeks	70%	71%	70%	70%			Performance within National Target
21. Increase the percentage of other planning applications processed within 8 weeks	70%	91%	90%	70%			Performance within National Target
22. Recycling & Waste: % Container Deliveries on Time (SLA)	99%	96.08%	100%	99%			Q2 sees our greatest performance of this PI to date.

KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	
23. Recycling & Waste: Missed Assisted Collections	1%	0.26%	0.25%	1%			Q2 is within target and remains consistent with the previous quarter.
24. Recycling & Waste: Number of missed bins (per 100,000)	100	44	39	100			<p>This quarter sees a decrease in the number of missed bins (39) compared to the previous quarter (44) and remains within target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> July = 53 Aug = 24 Sept = 40 Qrt average = 39
25. Recycling & Waste: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	45.00%	41.65%	41.65%	45.00%			<p>Holding figure until data from ESCC is available</p> <p>Q1 (41.7%) sees a significant improvement against the previous Q4 (32.7%) with both May and June reaching over 40%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April = 39% May = 43.5% June = 42% Q1 Av. = 41.7% <p>Q1 2022/23 for comparison: 40.13%</p>
26. Recycling & Waste: Total number of reported fly-tipping incidents	480	170	248	120			<p>Reported incidents breakdown: July 68, August 74 and Sep 106.</p> <p>Hotspot ward: Devonshire Ward</p> <p>Primary waste types: Other household waste</p> <p>Volume type: Car boot load or less</p> <p>Neighbourhood First teams work with residents, landlords and property owners through our Educate, Remind, Enforce (ERE) methods, to reduce anti-social behaviours regarding waste.</p> <p>Where appropriate and practical, fly-tips are investigated for evidence so that enforcement procedures can be followed through. 2023/24 to date; has seen 5 Fixed Penalty Notices issued for fly-tipping.</p>
27. Staff: Average days lost per FTE employee due to sickness (J)	8.0 days	1.52 days	1.99 days	2.0 days			<p>This is the second quarter of reporting average days lost due to sickness for 2023/24. Sickness levels have increased for this quarter but remain below target in Q2 where we recorded an average of 1.99 days absence which is an increase from Q1 (1.52 days).</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2023/24	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2023/24				Latest Note
		Value	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	
							HR Business Partners continue to support managers in managing any attendance issues that arise.

Devolved ward budget scheme 2023/2024 – Summary by ward to end of Quarter 2 (1 April – 30 September 2022)

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
Devonshire	Basketball court improvements	Relining of basketball courts at Fisherman's Green.	£750.00
	Leaf hall community kitchen soup maker	Purchase of a soup blender for leaf hall community kitchen	£250.00
	Seaside community hub	Funds for community Fridge project	£400.00
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£1,400.00
Hampden Park	Exhibition at St Mary's church	Art exhibition about Loss at St Mary's church with St Peter's church	£200.00
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£200.00
Langney			
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£0
Meads	Holding Space education programme	To support Holding Space provide a parent / carer education programme. Holding Space help parents and carers of children with mental health issues.	£500.00
	Defibrillator at Collington Close	To provide a new defibrillator at Collington Close site managed by Eastbourne Area Community First Responders.	£400.00
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£900.00
Old Town	Friends of Ocklynge Cemetery	To support work of the Friends of Ocklynge cemetery with funds for 3 rd party insurance and website update.	£100.00
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£100.00
Ratton			
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£0
St Anthony's			
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£0
Sovereign			
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£0
Upperton	Holding Space	Funds for Holding Space charity, which helps families with children with mental health issues.	£250.00

Devolved ward budget scheme 2023/2024 – Summary by ward to end of Quarter 2 (1 April – 30 September 2022)

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
	JPK Project's garden	To create a communal garden for people with learning difficulties through charity, the JPK Project.	£500.00
	Friends of Ocklynge Cemetery	To support the work of the Friends of Ocklynge Cemetery.	£200.00
	Rooted Community Food children's allotment with Blackberry Buzzard CIC	To develop a children's allotment with Blackberry Buzzard CIC/ Rooted Community Food initiative.	£510.00
Total spend to end of Quarter 2			£1460.00

Number of schemes to end of Quarter 2	11
All wards total spend to end of Quarter 2	£4,060.00

Agenda Item 9

Report to:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	04 December 2023
Title:	Revenue and Capital Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2023-24
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance
Cabinet member:	Councillor Robin Maxted, Cabinet member for Finance and Resources
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 recommendations to the Cabinet:	It is recommended that the Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Note the forecast outturn position for 2023-24 and associated risks.ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Performance and the portfolio holder for finance to apply the required budget virements to support effective management of the overall budget.iii) Note Appendix 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.
Recommendation to the Scrutiny Committee	The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.
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. Eastbourne Borough 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 because of external factors beyond its control. The recent exercise to construct the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2024-25 through to 2027-28 has further highlighted pressures facing the council's finances. The main drivers of these cost pressures are highlighted below:
 - The higher interest rates affecting our ability to fund Capital Expenditure.
 - Inflationary and cost of living pressures impacting on the now agreed pay award for 2023-24, the net cost of borrowing, contract inflation and energy costs.
 - Demand led and inflationary pressures within housing and temporary accommodation for homelessness.
 - 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, Corporate 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 is not a corresponding reduction in service provision.

2. General Fund

- 2.1. The forecast outturn position for 2023-24 as at the 30 September 2023 is an overspend of £3.96m as shown in Table 1. This shows a worsened position of £1.6m from that reported at Q1.
- 2.2. The position at Q2 follows a more in-depth review of budgets and likely expenditure than the initial high level key exercise undertaken in Q1. The position will continue to be analysed and monitored over the coming months to achieve a plan of expenditure and funding aligning by the year end.
- 2.3. 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, running costs and the cost of borrowing to fund the capital programme. **£1.0m above budget**

- Increase in homelessness provision. **£2.7m above budget. This is a £4.9m spend above the existing provision of £2.2m.**
- Significant pressure on the Neighbourhood First Service. **£0.4m above budget.**

2.4. These three unmitigated items alone add up to £4.5m which is in excess of the total overspend projected at this stage. Work continues in discussions with Government, as well as scrutiny of our current and aspirational capital Programme and in reviewing service spend across the organisation to try and mitigate the budget gap which is currently forecast to continue into 2024/25.

2.5. The detailed forecast variations against budget are set out from Section 3.

Table 1: Quarter 2 Forecast Outturn 2023-24 by Directorate

Directorate	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
	£'000					
Corporate Services	4,820	5,099	280	309	(29)	6%
Service Delivery	8,139	11,979	3,840	2,321	1,519	47%
Regeneration & Planning	(56)	(349)	(293)	722	(1,015)	
Tourism & Enterprise	2,037	2,206	169	(14)	183	8%
Cost of Services	14,940	18,936	3,996	3,338	658	27%
Technical/Centrally Controlled Budgets	3,033	3,751	718	0	718	24%
Total Budgeted Expenditure	17,973	22,687	4,714	3,338	1,376	26%
Less Funding	(17,973)	(18,723)	(750)	(989)	239	4%
Net Position 2023-24	(0)	3,964	3,964	2,349	1,615	22%

2.6 The report reflects the position on 30 September 2023.

2.7 Services have an early awareness of their pressures and as a result are taking positive steps to mitigate the overspend in their areas.

3.0 Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation

3.1 The largest and most unmanageable pressure the Council currently faces is the numbers and costs of those seeking emergency or temporary accommodation. Within Eastbourne Council, there is a current projected overspend against budget of £2.7m to meet the current costs of providing homeless support and housing.

3.2 In addition, there are pressures on Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Limited (EHICL) who are also supporting cases leading to costs for them plus a loss of interest receipts on balances they had budgeted to receive.

3.3 The costs arising for the Council in both responding to the increased numbers and in putting in processes and resources to attempt to successfully manage the

numbers down are also considerable. We will work to quantify these figures during Q3.

- 3.4 The Council had supported approximately 120 households during the previous year and had budgeted to support 150 households in 2023/24.

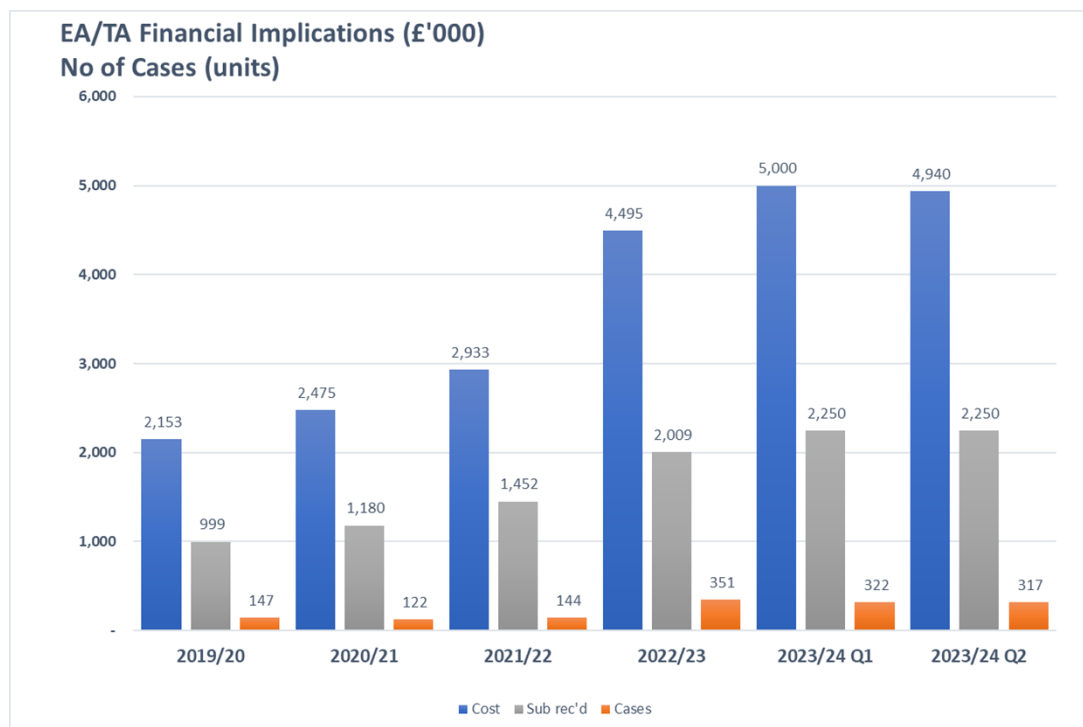
The current demand is 317 households (excluding 39 EHICL placements) in emergency accommodation which is an improvement from the Q1 position of 325 and reflects the considerable resources being used to attempt to manage the situation. Realistically though, the service is working hard to reduce the numbers but is likely to achieve a move on rate of only 2 households per 4-week period if current circumstances remain the same. The pressure will certainly continue for several years.

- 3.5 The costs of this unprecedented pressure are spread over many council service areas. The table below shows what has been quantified.

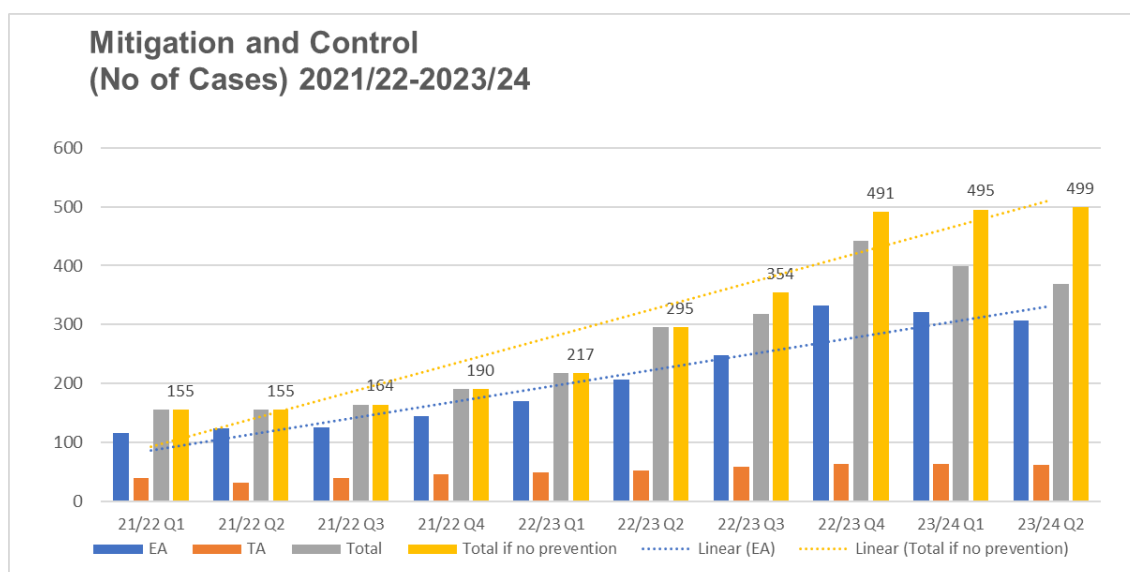
EBC Costs	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Costs of placements	£3.3m	£5.8m	£6.7m
Housing Benefit Receipts	(£2.7m)	(£4.3m)	(£5.5m)
Subsidy	£1.5m	£2.6m	£3.7m
Total	£2.1m	£4.1m	£4.9m

EHICL Costs			2023/24
Net costs of 39 placements			£0.6m
Total			£0.6k

The graph below shows the EBC costs, cases and projected subsidies based on current figures.



The graph below demonstrates the rise in numbers and the effects of the considerable efforts and resources used to control the situation to current levels.



Senior Managers are urgently raising the issue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) as Eastbourne finds itself along with other local authorities struggling to cope with the cost pressures. The recent summit hosted and organised by Eastbourne saw 150 councils in attendance.

Financial Overview by Directorate

This section of the report provides an update on the forecast variations against the 2023-24 budget focused on individual Directorates.

4.0 Corporate Services

Table 2: Corporate services 2023-24

Corporate Services Q2 Forecast Outturn	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
Finance	1,404	1,789	385	334	51	27%
Corporate Management Team	(143)	(77)	67	0	67	
Business Transformation	1,488	1,420	(68)	(68)	0	-5%
Business Planning and Performance	445	405	(39)	26	(65)	-9%
Human Resources	377	352	(25)	15	(40)	-7%
Legal and Local Democracy	1,351	1,327	(24)	(18)	(6)	-2%
Local Land Charges	(102)	(118)	(15)	20	(35)	15%
Net Position	4,820	5,099	280	309	(29)	6%

4.1 The Directorate is reporting a forecast outturn position of £280k overspend.

4.2 **This is an improved position of £29k** since the Q1 exercise.

4.3 **Finance** - In common with many other local authorities, Finance has struggled to recruit to key posts on a permanent basis. Savings from permanent vacant posts are currently partially offsetting interim costs. The service has posts being advertised as part of a recruitment campaign with interviews having taken place during November. Seven posts have been permanently recruited to and the onboarding process begun. The candidates will begin employment before the end of the financial year alleviating the issue for 2024/25.

4.4 The forecast includes £100k overspend on insurance costs due to higher premiums.

4.5 **Corporate Management Team** – The forecast overspend relates to Health & Safety cost which has previously been absorbed by services underspends. This will be reviewed during the 2024/25 budget setting process.

4.6 **Business Transformation (IT)** forecast of £68k underspent remains unchanged.

4.7 Other Corporate Services areas are forecasting various reductions to their Q1 positions.

5.0 Service Delivery

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.

Table 3 Service Delivery

Service Delivery Q2 Forecast Outturn	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
Customer First	829	4,190	3,361	1,491	1,870	406%
Director of Service Delivery	15	28	14	16	(2)	93%
Neighbourhood First	1,895	2,317	421	862	(441)	22%
Environment First	4,916	4,818	(99)	0	(99)	-2%
Homes First	484	627	142	(48)	190	29%
Net Position	8,139	11,979	3,840	2,321	1,519	47%

5.1 The Directorate is reporting a overspend of £3.84m **This is an increased variance position of £1.519m** since the Q1 monitoring.

5.2 **Customer First** - There is a total current projected overspend of £2.7m (net accommodation and subsidy loss projection £4.9m against a budgeted provision of £2.2m) to meet the current costs of providing homeless support and housing. The Council had previously supported approximately 120 households during the recent years and had budgeted to support only 150 households. (See section 3.0)

Income Maximisation and Welfare - are reporting a £100k overspend relating to the migration costs of the new system which is currently being implemented.

Bereavement Services - are forecasting £200k under recovery of income.

The Customer First Team are forecasting an overspend of £330k on staffing costs as they continue to incur difficulty in recruiting some vacancies. The required capacity is currently filled by agency workers at higher rates.

5.3 **Neighbourhood First** – Base overspend of £421k. This has been mitigated by other service savings which have been redirected to offset the historic issue. Subsequently there has been a favourable movement of £441k in the forecast overspend since Q1.

The overspends related to cleaning costs, Devonshire Park grounds maintenance costs, repairs, maintenance, and security.

5.4 **Environment First** is forecasting an underspend of £99k.

5.5 **Homes First** is forecasting an underspend of £142k which relates to the increased cost of and numbers in Bed & Breakfast Accommodation.

6.0 Regeneration and Planning

The Regeneration and Planning Directorate delivers services including estates and property, estate management and regeneration and planning activity across the geographical borough area.

Table 4 Regeneration and Planning

Regeneration & Planning Q2 Forecast Outturn	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
	£'000					
Director of Regeneration and Planning	42	60	18	0	18	42%
Estates and Property	(829)	(788)	40	436	(396)	-5%
Rechargeable Salaries	(0)	(137)	(137)	0	(137)	
Head of Commercial Business and Property	25	71	46	0	46	181%
Housing Delivery Team	78	123	45	(6)	51	59%
Planning	407	765	358	256	102	88%
Regeneration	221	(443)	(664)	36	(700)	
Net Position	(56)	(349)	(293)	722	(1,015)	

6.1 The Directorate is reporting a forecast outturn position of £293k underspend. **This is an improved position of £1,015m since the Q1 exercise.**

- 6.2 Director of Regeneration and Planning – this relates to the 22/23 pay award and increased spend over budget of £18k as a result.
- 6.3 Estates and Property – The service has scrutinised its Q1 projections and managed to bring them back to just below budget. Forecasts have reduced on fuel and utilities reflecting the overall national drop in energy prices and forecast rental income has been reviewed.
- 6.4 Recharged salaries to Eastbourne Homes are expected to recover above budget by £136k relating to additional management and secretariat services provided.
- 6.5 Head of Commercial Business and Properties. Difficulty in retaining staff in this area has led to market supplements and additional duty payments to staff (£46k overspend)
- 6.6 Housing Delivery Team - Difficulty in retaining staff in this area has led to market supplements and additional duty payments to staff (£45k overspend). The service has been unsuccessful in recruitment campaigns leading to additional payments required to attract staff.
- 6.7 Planning - £358k forecast overspend due to high levels of Agency Staff used to support the Local Plan plus the procurement of Specialist Consultancy advice to support Planning Applications. This expenditure is expected to be funded by reserves at year end.
- 6.8 Regeneration – Swing in variation relating to grant funding for Regeneration projects identified since Q1.

7.0 Tourism and Culture

The Tourism and Culture Directorate delivers a range of cultural activities across the area including the Devonshire Quarter, leisure, and sporting facilities as well as ongoing and one-off yearly events and productions.

Table 5 Tourism and Culture

Tourism & Culture Q2 Forecast Outturn	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
	£'000					
Towner	420	424	4	0	4	1%
Events	225	266	41	0	41	18%
Seafront	56	126	70	75	(5)	124%
Sports Delivery	606	568	(38)	(175)	137	-6%
Theatres	32	42	10	133	(123)	32%
Tourism and Culture	697	780	83	(47)	130	12%
Net Position	2,037	2,206	169	(14)	183	8.3%

- 7.1 The Directorate is reporting a forecast outturn position of £169k overspent. **This is an improved position of £183k** since the Q1 exercise.

- 7.2 Events – A savings target of £100k is not now considered achievable but the service has identified other area of savings resulting in a £41k overspend.
- 7.3 Seafront – The service has pulled back slightly from their forecast at Q1 by reviewing leaseholder costs.
- 7.4 Sports Delivery – An unbudgeted increase in staff costs of 8% for temporary staff and 18% for lifeguards have increased the forecast by £137k but the service is still forecast to underspend by £38k in total.
- 7.5 Theatres – have reduced their Q1 forecast by £123k due to various efficiencies and realignment of staff duties and have been able to absorb a facilities and cleaning pressure. Theatres are still forecasting a small overspend of £10k.
- 7.6 Tourism and Culture is projecting an overspend of £83k which is a movement of £47k from their Q1 forecast. This relates to unbudgeted staffing at the Golf Club and Heritage Storage costs of £20k.

8.0 Technical and Central Controlled Budgets

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.

Table 6 Technical/Centrally controlled.

Technical/Centrally Controlled Budgets Q2 Forecast Outturn	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
	£'000					
Contingencies	794	581	(213)	0	(213)	-27%
Levies	237	237	0	0	0	0%
Capital Financing	1,352	2,330	978	0	978	72%
Minimum Revenue Provision	649	603	(46)	0	(46)	-7%
Net Position	3,033	3,751	718	0	718	24%

- 8.1 Contingencies - The Council will be releasing its provision for contingency to offset the expected higher utility costs and to support service pressures being experienced during this year.
- 8.2 The pay award for 2023/24 will be higher than that assumed in the budget, therefore an additional £99k has been added into contingencies to cover the expected gap.
- 8.3 Levies are expected to be as budget.
- 8.4 With higher interest rates, capital financing costs are showing an increase of £0.98m. The council has put in place immediate measures to address this pressure.

8.5 The Minimum Revenue Provision is forecast to be reduced due to tighter controls on capital programme.

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

9.0 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Table 7: HRA 2023-24

EHB Housing Revenue Account	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
	£'000					
Dwelling Rents	(15,830)	(15,790)	40	181	(141)	0%
Non-Dwelling Rents	(355)	(341)	14	17	(3)	-4%
Charges for services	(1,378)	(1,376)	2	(202)	204	0%
GROSS INCOME	(17,563)	(17,507)	56	(4)	60	0%
Management Fee	8,436	8,436	0	0	0	0%
Supervision and Management	1,748	1,661	(87)	(45)	(42)	-5%
Doubtful Debt provision	145	145	0	0	0	0%
Depreciation	5,518	5,346	(172)	(172)	0	-3%
Debt management cost	16	32	16	0	16	100%
GROSS EXPENDITURE	15,863	15,620	(243)	(217)	(26)	-2%
NET COST OF HRA SERVICES	(1,700)	(1,887)	(187)	(221)	34	11%
Loan Charges- Interest	1,781	1,823	42	0	42	2%
Interest receivable	(57)	(152)	(95)	0	(95)	
NET OPERATING COST	24	(216)	(240)	(221)	(19)	
Contribution to Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	
HRA (SURPLUS) DEFICIT	24	(216)	(240)	(221)	(19)	

9.1 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.

9.2 The Housing Revenue Account is reporting a forecast outturn position of £241k underspend, which is the second reported outturn projection reported for financial year 2023-24 and a favourable change of £20k compared to period Quarter 1.

9.3 The favourable change in outturn forecast represents a more refined outturn position of operational spend than the light touch forecast of Quarter 1. The movement in forecasts are mainly; Charges for Services where underlying inflationary costs incurred require a more detailed review over the coming months (£202k) and an improved outturn forecast for Dwelling Rents. The favourable change of £141k compared to Quarter 1 is largely due to rental income assumptions for New Builds and fewer Right-to-Buys.

- 9.4 Supervision and Management is reporting a forecast underspend of £87k mainly on fewer Under-Occupation incentive payments for Tenants downsizing (£45k) and improved recovery of Tenant repair costs (£37k)
- 9.5 There is a forecast reduction in the charge for Depreciation (£172k) due to a change in adopted methodology agreed by the Council's S151. An increase in the Land element of the Housing Stock valuation from 15% to 25% has decreased the amount chargeable to the revenue account.
- 9.6 The favourable change of £20k for Loan charges and Interest receivable represents an improved market interest rate on borrowing and interest earned on reserve balances.

10.0 Capital Expenditure

10.1 Capital Expenditure - General Fund

- 10.2 The capital programme at Appendix 2 provides a detailed summary of spend for quarter 2 compared to the revised allocation for 2023/24. The Capital Programme including slippages from 2022/23) for 2023/24 totals £16.4m compared to the original Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2023 of £28.0m. The summary of the General Fund Capital Programme is shown in the following table.

Table 8: General Fund Capital Programme Summary Table 2023-24

General Fund Capital Programme 2023/24	Original Budget 2023/24	Revised Budget 2023/24	Forecast for Year 23/24	Year to Date Spend Q2 2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Housing	1,200	2,233	2,233	362
Other Housing	751	1,804	1,819	- 65
Community Services	3,136	3,106	3,105	867
Tourism & Leisure	150	100	120	36
Corporate Services	570	658	462	107
Regeneration	17,947	5,840	5,840	291
Asset Management	4,256	2,648	2,684	974
General Fund	28,010	16,389	16,263	2,572

- 10.3 The forecast for the year (at quarter two) is £16.3m, a reduction of £126k on the latest revised budget which includes projects that will not be completed in 2023/24 and have been re-profiled to 2024/25 and later years. Actual expenditure at the end of quarter was £2.572m, so significant expenditure is expected in the second half of the year. Details of the capital programme are in Appendix 1.

10.4 Capital Expenditure – HRA

- 10.5 The detailed HRA capital programme at Appendix 2, provides a summary of spend for quarter two compared to the allocation for 2023/24. The HRA Capital Programme (including slippages from 2022/23) for 2023/24 totals £15.7m compared to the original Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2023 of £13.6m. A summary of the HRA Capital Programme is shown in the following table.

Table 9: HRA Capital Programme Summary Table 2023-24

HRA Capital Programme 2023/24	Original Budget 2023/24	Revised Budget 2023/24	Forecast for Year 23/24	Year to Date Spend Q2 2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Major Works	5,000	5,880	5,880	3,717
Disabled Adaptations	450	450	450	303
New Build	6,688	4,989	5,008	2,701
Acquisitions	1,453	4,425	4,421	951
Total HRA	13,591	15,744	15,759	7,672

- 10.6 The revised budget for the Housing Capital Programme for the year is £15.7m, with expenditure and commitments at the end of quarter two of £7.7m. 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.
- 10.7 At the end of quarter two, both the HRA and General Fund spend against the 2023/24 revised budget is low. The construction sector continues to be under pressure from rising prices for materials and labour shortages. The year-end forecasts are provided against a backdrop of economic uncertainty, regarding supply chain challenges, building cost inflation and other factors outside of the control of those delivering the projects.
- 10.8 Consequently, whilst based on best known information at quarter two, there could be further changes to forecasts in future monitoring reports. Project budget holders and managers are required to review scheme progress on an ongoing basis throughout the year and advise where there are significant revisions. The programme is under continuous review by the Capital Programme Overview Board.
- 10.9 Schemes that have been deferred and are funded from additional borrowing (rather than from capital grants, capital receipts or revenue) will impact on the projected cost of borrowing and minimum revenue provision (MRP).

11.0 Funding

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.

Table 10 Funding

Financing Budgets Q2 Forecast Outturn	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Q2 Forecast variance	Q1 variance	Q2/Q1 change in forecast	variance %
Council Tax Income	(9,639)	(9,639)	(0)	0	(0)	0%
Grants and Contributions	(3,190)	(3,593)	(403)	(403)	(0)	13%
Business Rates Income	(3,805)	(4,152)	(347)	(586)	239	9%
Reserves Movement	(1,339)	(1,339)	0	0	0	0%
Net Position	(17,973)	(18,723)	(750)	(989)	239	4%

11.1 The Council is forecasting an over-recovery of income totalling £750k position for the year in at Quarter 2, however this is a reduction of £239k from Q1, reflecting reduced Business Rates surpluses.

12.0 Financial appraisal

12.1 The forecast outturn position for 2023-24 is an overspend of £3.96m reflecting the position as of 30 September 2023.

12.2 During the quarter line by line reviews have been undertaken and have helped report an improved position than the first quarter's forecast. Work will continue to mitigate and address the projected outturn position.

12.3 The capital programme and new scheme proposals will also continue to be reviewed prior to the Q3 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.

13.0 Legal implications

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

14.0 Risk management implications

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

15.0 Equality analysis

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

16.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - EBC Capital Programme Monitoring Q2 2023-24

Appendix 2 - Glossary

Appendix 1 – EBC Capital Programme Monitoring Q2 2023-24

General Fund Capital Programme	Original Budget 2023-24	Revised Budget 2023/24	Forecast for Year 23/24	Year to Date Spend Q2 2023/24
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT				
Major Works	5,000,000	5,879,881	5,879,881	3,716,847
Disabled Adaptations	450,000	450,000	450,000	302,712
New Build	-			
Brede Close	40,500	68,976	85,549	- 16,573
Cavalry Crescent	3,965,200	3,174,574	3,174,574	1,268,962
Fort Lane	962,800	561,762	563,738	513,125
Southfields Road	1,719,400	1,184,000	1,184,000	935,985
Acquisitions General	-	2,049,324	2,049,324	809,894
Shared Ownership Acquisitions	913,000	913,000	913,000	-
Leasehold Acquisitions	539,900	539,900	539,900	-
Acquisitions NSAP Funded	-	-	4,140	- 4,140
Acquisitions RSAP Funded	-	273,005	273,005	145,390
SHAP (Single Homelessness Persons Accommod)	-	650,000	650,000	-
Total HRA	13,590,800	15,744,420	15,758,830	7,672,202
General Fund Housing				
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,200,000	2,232,470	2,232,470	361,291
BEST Grant (housing initiatives)	-	826	826	826
Total General Fund Housing	1,200,000	2,233,296	2,233,296	362,117
Other Housing				
EHIC - 24 Acacia Road	-	26,400	26,400	-
EHIC - Loan Facility (Private Properties)	-	-		-
EHIC - Elm Park Mansions	416,000	416,000	416,000	-
EHIC - Gowland Court	50,000	50,000	50,000	-
AH - Credit facility	35,000	35,000	50,000	- 65,000
AH - Loan 183 Langney Rd	-	160,000	160,000	-
AH - Loan Victoria Mansion	-	500,000	500,000	-
AH - RTB Grant Victoria Mansion	-	366,667	366,667	-
AH - Street Acquisitions (Affordable)	250,000	250,000	250,000	-
Total Other Housing	751,000	1,804,067	1,819,067	- 65,000

COMMUNITY SERVICES				
Coast Defences Beach Management	300,000	601,051	600,000	19,521
Refurbishment of Public Facilities	50,000	-	-	-
Play Equipment - Palesgate	35,000	35,000	35,000	-
Play Equipment - Vancouver Rd	35,000	35,000	35,000	-
Shinewater Toilets & Kiosk	190,000	15,000	15,000	-
Motcombe Pool	200,000	-	-	-
Changing Places	154,000	103,781	103,800	65,847
SEESL Loan	-	254,100	254,100	-
5 Fleet Vans	-	45,150	45,150	17,050
Waste & Recycling Equipment	150,000	150,000	150,000	44,794
Procurement of Fleet (SEESL Loan)	1,770,000	1,770,000	1,770,000	720,000
EBC Mixed/dual waste bin stock	15,000	14,000	14,000	-
Dog Bin Replacement	32,000	28,000	28,000	-
Digitalisation of Burial Records	50,000	25,000	25,000	-
Crematorium - new lighting	15,000	15,000	15,000	-
Crematorium - new lighting o-s family chapel	15,000	15,000	15,000	-
Car Park Machines - upgrade to card readers	125,000	-	-	-
Total Community Services	3,136,000	3,106,082	3,105,050	867,212
TOURISM & LEISURE				
Sovereign Centre - Existing building	150,000	100,147	120,000	35,550
	-	-	-	-
Total Tourism & Leisure	150,000	100,147	120,000	35,550
	-	-	-	-
CORPORATE SERVICES				
IT - Block Allocation	150,000	127,494	162,000	81,922
Contingency	250,000	250,000	-	-
Recovery & Stabilisation	-	255,008	255,008	25,572
JTP Finance Transformation	150,000	25,000	25,000	-
CCTV Enhancements (Dev Park)	20,000	-	20,000	-
Total Corporate Services	570,000	657,502	462,008	107,493
REGENERATION				
Black Robin Farm	10,056,757	1,324,430	1,324,430	148,837
Towner Centenary Project	219,000	552,045	552,045	89,809
Victoria Place Pedestrianisation	5,508,630	2,117,633	2,117,633	- 243,969
Shinewater	-	80,000	80,000	-
Retail Refurbishment	1,830,000	1,701,000	1,701,000	294,432
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	333,000	-	-	-
E4 Edeal Enterprise Agency	-	20,000	20,000	2,343
E8 SDNPA	-	45,000	45,000	-
Total Regeneration	17,947,387	5,840,108	5,840,108	291,453

Asset Management				
Winter Garden	850,000	130,435	130,435	80,439
Dev Park Theatre (H&S)	-	28,665	59,264	-
Congress Theatre Roof	125,000	279,055	279,750	151,751
Bandstand & Promenade Renovations	125,000	55,000	55,000	39,904
EDGC Improvements (Workshop)	-	50,233	50,233	50,233
Seafront Lighting	140,000	185,000	185,000	118,553
Leisure Estate	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
Asset Value Improvement Fund	-	-	-	-
Redoubt - new mains supply for café and Fort	-	50,000	50,000	35,133
Town Hall - annual allocation to keep operational	50,000	45,000	45,000	-
The Point Improvements - annual allocation	30,000	21,426	21,426	-
Redoubt incl Colonnade demolition	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	-
ILTC - Fire alarms & Lighting	70,000	15,000	15,000	-
Winter Garden Health & Safety	875,000	60,000	60,000	-
Town Hall Health & Safety	360,000	300,000	300,000	105,509
Cornish New Barn		-		-
Pavilion Café - metered electrical supply	20,000	20,000	20,000	
Chalk Farm - entrance & car park	50,000	-	-	-
Bridges at Princes Park	91,000	91,000	91,000	-
Seafront Railing	30,000	-	-	-
Hampden Park Community Centre	40,000	-	-	-
ILTC - Improvements	-	15,000	15,000	-
Towner Improvements	-	-	0	91,109
Fort Fun	-	-	0	-
1 Grove Road	50,000	10,000	15,000	10,000
Asset Management - Block Allocation	100,000	41,763	41,762	41,762
Total Asset Management	4,256,000	2,647,576	2,683,871	974,393
Total General Fund	28,010,387	16,388,777	16,263,400	2,573,217
Total	41,601,187	32,133,197	32,022,230	10,245,419

Appendix 2 - Glossary

Capital Expenditure	Capital Expenditure is the funds invested in long term assets like buildings, infrastructure, equipment, or technology. The expenditure is significant and provides lasting benefits and are depreciated over time. It contrasts to operating expenditure which are day to day expenditure.
Capital Financing	Capital Financing is how we raise money for to invest in capital projects. It can involve selling assets, borrowing money, using existing balances, and obtaining grants. Borrowing money means interest payments during the life of the loan plus the repayment of loan.
Capital Programme	A strategic plan outlining long term investments in assets like building and technology. It identifies projects and budgets, sets timelines, assesses risks and has approval processes. The plan aligns Capital Expenditure with Corporate Objectives.
Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DHUHC)	The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government, is a department of His Majesty's Government responsible for housing, communities, and local government in England and the levelling up policy
Depreciation	An accounting method that allocates the cost of a tangible asset over its useful life. The process matches the cost of the asset with the benefit it provides reflecting its diminishing value over time.
Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Ltd (EHICL)	EHICL is a Council owned owned housing investment company (HIC) used to develop new homes on Council owned sites and acquire and regenerate existing mixed retail and residential sites.
Financial Regulations	Financial regulations are a set of financial procedures and rules that ensure good financial governance is observed. They include policies, procedures, financial delegation, and approvals and protect both staff and the council from financial misconduct.
General Fund (GF)	The main operating fund used for expenditure such as salaries and the running costs of day-to-day operations.
Grants and Contributions	Financial support received from external sources such as Central Government or developers. They can be for specific projects or more general.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	A separate accounting system for local authorities to manage their housing services. It includes rental income, housing related costs and is distinct from the General Fund. The HRA is used for improvements, maintenance and operational expenses related to local-authority owned housing.
Pevensey Levels IDD	Internal drainage boards (IDB) are the public body that manage water levels in an area. These are also internal

	<p>drainage districts (IDD), where there is a special need for drainage. IDBs undertake works to reduce flood risk to people and property and manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs within their district. The Council contributes to the costs of the IDD through a special levy payment.</p>
<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy</p>	<p>This Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and provide a framework within which decisions can be made regarding future service provision and council tax levels. It is based on a five-year rolling forecast and is reviewed annually. The MTFS provides the financial context for the Council's financial resource allocation and budget setting processes.</p>
<p>Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)</p>	<p>An annual provision made to set aside funds for repaying debt associated with Capital Projects. It ensures the gradual allocation of resources to cover debt repayment obligations and is set out in the Prudential Code.</p>
<p>Section 151 Officer</p>	<p>Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a S151 Officer, also known as a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), to have responsibility for those arrangements.</p>

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Agenda Item 10

Report to:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	04 December 2023
Title:	Interim Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance
Cabinet member:	Councillor Robin Maxted, Cabinet member for finance and resources
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To agree the interim Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 to 2027/28, together with the updated Capital Programme position.
Decision type:	Budget and policy framework
Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:	Cabinet is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. note the updated MTFs forecasts and the requirement to identify additional savings of £2.1m for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28.b. note that this forecast could change significantly based upon government funding settlement announcements and demand for services and pressures upon the council.c. note that at this stage a forecast £1.6m of savings are required to balance the 2024/25 budget; andd. note the planned annual review of earmarked reserves which aims to reallocate them in line with the emerging risks.
Reasons for recommendations:	To provide Cabinet with and update and early sighting of key MTFs and budgetary implications in preparation for the setting of a revenue budget and associated Council tax for the forthcoming financial year by law.
Recommendation to the Scrutiny Committee	The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Homira Javadi Post title: Director of Finance & Performance E-mail: Homira.Javadi@Lewes-Eastbourne.gov.uk

1 Background

- 1.1 When the 2023/24 budget was approved in February 2023, the council was concerned about the uncertainty of future local government finance settlements, the cost-of-living crisis and increasing interest rates. The council continues to plan and operate within an uncertain financial and economic environment.
- 1.2 Driven by cost-of-living pressures, the council is experiencing unprecedented increase in demand for some critical services such as homelessness support and the costs of emergency and temporary accommodation. Based on the latest information the net forecast in unfunded cost of temporary accommodation alone is £4.9m (£2.7m more than the budgeted provision).
- 1.3 There continues to be dialogue between the council, other local authorities and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) to highlight the urgency of this area. In Oct, leader of the council chaired a Housing Summit jointly hosted by Eastbourne Borough Council and District Councils Network (DCN). With over 150 councils represented and over 275 participants, the Summit highlighted the urgency and significance of human and financial cost of temporary housing. It also provided a forum for cross party discussions and agreement on a range of solutions, asks and actions from the government to help address this significant social and economic issue impacting people and their lives across the country and in informing the Chancellor's Autumn Statement.
- 1.4 Interest rate increases have also had a significant impact on the cost of financing with a further £1m built into service expenditure in 2024/25. The council is putting in place immediate measures to control this rising cost.
- 1.5 Significant uncertainty continues to exist in terms of future financial settlements for local government and how available funding will be allocated between local authorities. In the recent years, local authorities have been provided with one-year financial settlements, which allows for little financial certainty and security and given the timing of these announcements in late December or even January, allows little time to react. This level of uncertainty makes financial planning challenging and requires the council to be more reactive than strategic.
- 1.6 Energy prices have begun to fall, and our current forecast indicate a reduction of around 4% to electricity prices and 10% to gas prices. Our procurement model for utilities purchases units in advance and whilst we expect to see a lag in prices coming down, the new rates to be paid from October 2023 indicate that the contingencies, we have made for further increases can now be released.
- 1.7 Building on its success in mitigating and managing the financial impacts of the COVID pandemic and in response to the ongoing and deepening cost of living crisis, the council continues to adopt a planned approach and has developed its

newly revised Stability & Growth Programme to ensure it remains financially sustainable.

2 Budget Planning

- 2.1 To ensure the 2024/25 budget and MTFS can be developed effectively, and savings targets delivered in time to produce a balanced budget, it is important that a robust plan and timetable is agreed. A high-level assumed timetable is shown below.

What	When
Autumn Statement	22/11/23
Draft MTFS to Cabinet	11/12/23
Provisional Finance Settlement Announced	Late Dec 23
Correspondence begins with preceptors	15/12/23
Final Finance Settlement Announced	Jan 24
24/25 Budget, final MTFS and Council Tax to Cabinet	12/02/24
Council Tax Consultation	Feb/March 24
Council Tax Bills issued	March 24

- 2.2 As part of the council's Stability and Growth Programme, savings will continue to be developed for consideration for 2024/25 and in future years. Unless there is a significant uplift in the level of local government financial settlements, additional savings are certain.
- 2.3 The council may utilise some earmarked reserves to help balance the budgets in the short-term as a last resort whilst further saving proposals are developed and or implemented. The use of reserves to balance the budget is not a viable solution and is only recommended where there is a need for a temporary injection of resources to allow for more sustainable budget solutions to be developed.
- 2.4 At this stage of the planning cycle for MTFS the following areas are presented for consideration by Cabinet:
- (a) an update on the development of the 2024/25 budget since the Feb 2023 MTFS was presented to Cabinet including revised assumptions for both expenditure and financing.
 - (b) an update on the MTFS savings forecast for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28; and
 - (c) a planned review of reserves to align to MTFS risks.
- 2.5 The financial outlook for the council continues to be challenging. Prior to dealing with the unprecedented impacts of the cost-of-living pressures, the council's available balances were in a reasonably healthy state and available to provide short term financial support to some of its immediate budgetary shortfalls. The wider impact of the cost-of-living crisis is forecast to have long term impacts across the public sector and like most authorities, the council will require

additional savings and/or additional sources of funding to bring its MTFS into a fully funded position.

- 2.6 The draft MTFS indicates that without intervention a funding gap / savings requirement of £2.1m will be required to balance the budget during the period, with £1.6m being required by 2024/25 followed by a smaller requirement in later years of the MTFS. These are after delivering £2.5m of expected savings through S&G programme.

3 Draft Medium Term Financial Plan

- 3.1 The current draft Medium Term Financial Plan for Eastbourne Borough Council is summarised below.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Revised Base for 23/24	Net Budget	Net Budget	Net Budget	Net Budget
£					
TOTAL FINANCING Revised	(18,723)	(19,077)	(19,599)	(20,146)	(20,711)
NET EXPENDITURE	16,944	13,862	14,080	14,352	14,737
Qtr 2 Draft Monitoring Homeless Support	4,871	4,471	4,471	4,471	4,471
Qtr 2 Monitoring Service Overspend - Other	872	472	472	472	472
Residual Service Planning Proposals		456	210	(106)	(417)
Additional costs of Capital Programme		947	131	113	21
Financing of new Capital Expenditure		500	750	1,000	1,250
REVISED EXPENDITURE	22,687	20,708	20,114	20,302	20,534
BUDGET SHORTFALL/ (SURPLUS)	3,964	1,631	515	157	(177)
Current projection use of Reserves for one off		1,631	515	157	

4 Expenditure Assumptions

In calculating budgets and forecast, the following assumptions have been applied.

4.1 Pay Inflation

The current 2023/24 budget includes 4.0% in the base for pay inflation in line with the projections made by East Sussex County. The pay award for LG w.e.f. 1st April 2023 has just been agreed at a flat rate of £1,925 for employees earning up to £49,950 and 3.88% for those above. This represents an increase from budget in 2023/24 which will increase the following years base in turn. The current assumptions made for pay inflation are set out below.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	481,932	408,708	348,499	357,142	
£1,925/ 3.88%		3.0%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Revised Figures	581,289	597,815	374,910	384,218	393,758
Increase to Feb'23 MTFS	99,357	189,107	26,411	27,076	

4.2 Non-Pay Inflation

The Contracts Register has been used to calculate likely inflation based on the inherent calculations agreed in contracts and the results are included below. Assumptions have been made that CPI will fall in line with the Government's expectations for future years.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Revised Figures	£311,099	£177,771	£133,328	£88,885

4.3 Utility Prices

The 2023/24 base budget included the creation of a fund for £562k to offset the impact of large energy increase. However, energy prices have begun to fall, and our current forecast indicate a fall of around 4% to electricity prices and 10% to gas prices. Our purchasing model for utilities buys energy units in advance so whilst we do expect to see a lag in prices coming down, the new rates to be paid from October 2023 indicate that the contingency we have made for further increases need not be retained.

4.4 Homelessness and the cost of Temporary Accommodation

Published by BBC an article on this subject, highlights that English councils spent more than £1.7bn on temporary accommodation, hostels, refuges, and B&Bs between April 2022 and March 2023

With the current projected spend of £4.9m against a net budget of £2.2m, provision of emergency and temporary housing is by far is the largest and most critical growing pressure faced by the council in the recent years.

In addition, the council has allocated a number of housing units from its housing investment portfolio (EHICL) to provide 39 placements for this purpose in order to reduce cost. The cost of homeless provision reflected in the MTFS does not include this additional provision which is approximately an additional £600k.

The costs arising for the Council in both responding to the increased numbers and putting in processes and resources to manage the demand are also considerable.

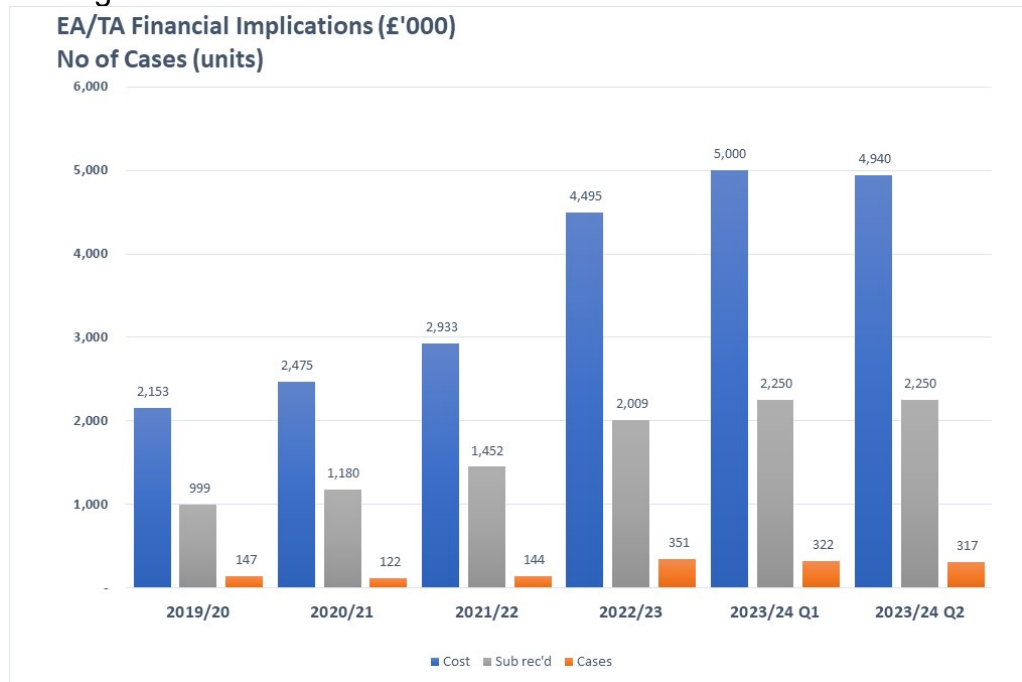
The Council had initially expected to support approximately 150 households during the year and is currently working to reduce the number of presentations down from a potential 500 to 300 by end of this financial year.

The current demand is 300 households in emergency accommodation which is an improvement from the Q1 position of 325 and reflects the considerable resources being used to attempt to manage the situation. Realistically though, the service is working hard to reduce the numbers but is likely to achieve a move on rate of only 2 households per 4-week period if current circumstances remain the same. The pressure will certainly continue for several years.

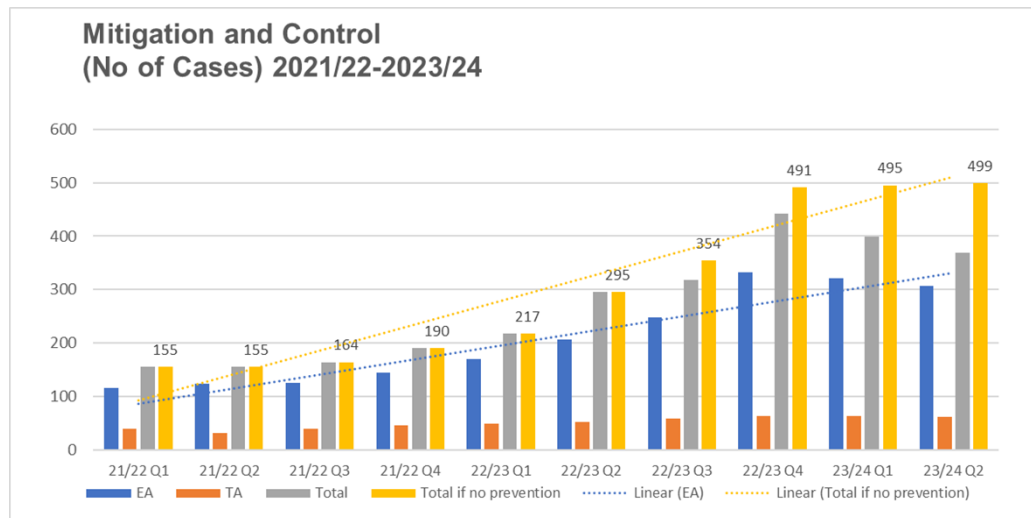
In the recent years the council has been utilising its reserves to meet the additional cost and loss of subsidy. With other pressures intensifying and the cost of temporary accommodation continuing to grow, the funding of the provision cannot

and should not continue to be met by the council's scarce and diminishing resources.

The graph below shows the costs, cases and projected subsidies based on current figures.



The graph below demonstrates the rise in numbers and the effects of the considerable efforts and resources used to control the situation to current levels.



Senior Managers are urgently raising the issue with Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as Eastbourne finds itself along with other local authorities struggling to cope with the cost pressures. The recent summit hosted and organised by Eastbourne saw 150 councils in attendance.

In the MTFS the total costs relating to Homeless Accommodation are shown separately in the summary at £4.87m with an anticipated forecast reduction of £400k from 2024/25 due to the slight reductions in places being achieved.

4.5 Fees & Charges

This year Planning Fees income (a statutory charge) will rise by 25% and it is proposed that all other fees and charges will increase by 10% with a reducing increase over the course of the plan in line with lowering inflation assumptions.

The council aims to recover its cost through fees and charges relating to all discretionary services. Where there have not been any inflationary increases in the fees for more than one year, the increase may be set at a higher rate.

Some fees are decided by Government (mainly planning and licensing fees) – any changes to license fee assumptions because of government announcements will be presented within the detailed budget setting exercise in February 2024.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	10%	5%	4%	2%
Revised Figures	£1,077,397	£489,726	£391,781	£195,890
Var.from Feb'23 MTFS (reduction)/increase	£1,010,397	£363,726	£265,781	£69,890

4.6 Borrowing Costs

Based on current interest rates and forward forecasts for the cost of borrowing, £1 million capital financing expenditure will cost around £98k to service each year (based on the existing assumptions for interest rate and minimum Revenue provision over 20 years). This includes Minimum Revenue Provision (the amounts we need to set aside under the Prudential Code to repay the loan) of £40k and interest payments of £58k.

Capital bids received this year have been scrutinised and priority ranked. Those that can be funded from Grants, Section 106, and other forms of Capital Financing (excluding loans) have been assumed agreed. Those which require Loan Finance will be considered by the Capital Programme Overview Board. To aid with the financial planning process an indicative target of £5m new investment for 2024/25 and a further £2.5m each year thereafter has been assumed. However, considering the high interest rates, a much higher scrutiny is expected to be applied to scale back the programme as much as possible. Table below provides an exemplification of financing costs relating to these amounts.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28)
New Programme	£5m	£2.5m	£2.5m	£2.5m
MRP	£200k	£300k	£400k	£500k
Interest Payments	£300k	£450k	£600k	£750k
Total New	£500k	£750k	£1m	£1.25m

There will undoubtedly need to be some difficult choices to be made around reprioritising existing commitments, scaling back, or increasing the funding gap in the MTFS by increasing the provision for prudential borrowing, which would in turn increase the savings required.

The council's longer-term strategy to reducing its exposure to cost of borrowing is to:

- Ensure affordability of its capital programme,
- Rephase and reprofile its expenditure where practical,
- To accelerate its planned disposal and asset optimisation plans
- To restructure its debt profile and financing requirements in order to achieve certainty and optimise value for money.

5 Core Funding Assumptions

5.1 The Council is funded from a variety of sources including local taxation and government grants. In developing the draft MTFS the following assumptions have been made:

5.2 Council Tax

Council Tax increases are subject to referendum limits set by the Government each year. For 2023/24 the increases for Shire Districts were set at a maximum of 3% or £5 and there was an indication made that the same rate of increase would apply for 2024/25. A stronger indication of maximum increases will be announced to Local Authorities with the provisional LG Finance Settlement in December. The final settlement is expected in January 2024.

The figures below have modelled Council tax Income figures for the next 4 years based on.

- actual Band D calculations for our Government Return
- assumed increase in Band D equivalent properties of 0.78% per annum for the rest of the years in the plan.
- Collection Rates of 97.5%

Council Tax Income is assumed a 3% increase per assumed and shows associated changes to the previous MTFS agreed in February 2023.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£				
Band D at 0.78% increase pa	35,295	35,687	35,966	36,246	36,529
At 3% increase	9,518,253	9,912,797	10,289,820	10,681,183	11,087,432
At £5.00 increase	9,518,253	9,696,689	10,092,625	10,471,051	10,863,828
Increase from Feb 23 MTFS		£56,280	£182,124	£315,906	

5.3 National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)

Local councils levy a business rate on every non-domestic premises in their area. Councils have no control over either of these.

The rateable value is set by the Valuation Office Agency based on the estimated rental value of the premises and is revalued regularly to take account of movement of rents.

The most recent revaluation came into effect in April 2023 and the next one will come into effect in April 2026. The multiplier rises by the consumer price index every year or less if the Secretary of State decides. If it is under the consumer price index the government pays compensation to councils.

5.4 Business Rates Retention

Business Rates Retention was introduced in 2013, initially at 50 per cent. Billing authorities collect the income from ratepayers, but do not retain all the money themselves.

The figures below have modelled Baseline Business rates for the next 4 years based on a CPI increase of 6.7% decreasing to 2% at the end of the MTFS period in line with Government targets and shows some additional income expectations over the previous MTFS agreed in February 2023.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Base Rate	603,661	6.7%	4%	2%	2%
At CPI Rate (Aug 6.7%)		1,683,377	1,750,712	1,785,726	1,821,441
IN MTFS in Feb 23		1,683,377	1,683,377	1,683,377	0
Increase from Feb 23 MTFS		0	67,336	102,350	

5.5 Business Rates Retention Pooling

To share the risks of shrinkage across several authorities. We are in a pool with all East Sussex LA's which is run by Wealden. In a pool, any amounts above of growth ceilings are offset against below floor amounts in the area.

The figures below have modelled our Pooling receipt for the next 4 years based on current figures and a CPI increase of 6.7% decreasing to 2% at the end of the MTFS period in line with Government targets and shows minor additional income expectations over the previous MTFS agreed in February 2023.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Base Rate	212,000	6.7%	4%	2%	2%
At CPI Rate (Aug 6.7%)		226,204	235,252	239,957	244,756
Increase from Feb 23 MTFS		14,204	23,252	27,957	

5.6 Business Rates Retained Growth

Currently, any Business Rate Growth or Shrinkage since 2013 is retained on the portions outlined above (but also up to a ceiling or floor) and not subject to Top-Up or Tariff. As outlined above, when BR retention was set in 2013/14, the expectation was that there would be a reset of the base by 2020. At which point, all retained growth would go into the base and *will* be subject to Tariff or Top Up.

The reset continues to be delayed and it is uncertain when this will happen.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Base Rate	603,661	6.7%	4%	2%	2%
At CPI Rate (Aug 6.7%)		1,683,377	1,750,712	1,785,726	1,821,441
IN MTFS in Feb 23		1,683,377	1,683,377	1,683,377	0
Increase from Feb 23 MTFS		0	67,336	102,350	

5.7 Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

This is included in baseline which if subject to a freeze will not be compensated in other ways.

5.8 New Homes Bonus (NHB)

The scheme (top sliced from Revenue Support Grant (RSG)) is expected to continue in some form for the next few years but at a decreasing rate. We have assumed that the rates announced for 2023/24 (£350 per additional property) will continue, however, we would expect an announcement by the time of the provisional settlement in December and possibly earlier in the Chancellors Autumn statement. The NHB amount is currently at £15k.

5.9 Services Grant

This was one-off for 2022/23 as additional funding for increased NI rates. DLUHC retained ½ of the original £2bn fund. It was not added to Base but is allocated each year. It is reasonable to assume that this will carry on over the coming years and increase by CPI.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		6.7%	4%	2%	2%
At CPI Rate (Aug 6.7%)	141,870	151,375	157,430	160,579	163,790
Increase		9,505	6,055	3,149	3,212

5.10 Funding Guarantee

This funding ensures that authorities receive at least a 3% increase in Core Spending Power before increase in Council Tax. So, a balancing figure. As CPI is currently higher than 3% an assumption of no further funding has been made.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		6.70%	4.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Current	246,268	0	0	0	0
Decrease from Feb 23 MTFS		(246,268)	(246,268)	(246,268)	

6 Savings and Service Growth Forecasts

6.1 Savings are forecast to be required for 2024/25 which if achieved will alleviate the funding gap for the following years. Budget pressures and the impact of funding reductions outstrip the council's ability to generate additional income from business rates and council tax. The forecast assumes the council will apply the maximum increases in its Council Tax it is allowed to across each of the next four years, in line with government guidance.

6.2 Work is progressing on 3 separate strands of efficiencies and savings to feed into the MTFs for 2024/25 and the following years.

6.3 The Stability and Growth Programme

In July 2023, Cabinet agreed the continuation and further development of its previous transformation programme, with a new title of Stability and Growth. This Stability and Growth Programme has developed at pace since early 2023, with the aim of delivering over £3m of savings by 2024/45 financial year, and beyond. Alongside this, the programme is working to ensure the council continues to respond to, and act on, external inspections and reviews. All this is being achieved while continuing with an ambitious programme of digital transformation, service improvement and asset review to deliver further efficiencies.

6.4 The following targets are included in the MTFs for 2024/25 and a contingency of 20% has been included as a risk based central budget to counter the effect on any non-achievement. It is critical that these significant savings targets are achieved and on time as their inclusion represents a significant portion of the MTFs ability to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25. Due to its significance, the programme is subject to ongoing monitoring and reporting within its dedicated governance arrangements.

	24/25	25/26	26/27
	£000		
Service Delivery	1,925	2,100	2,100
Regeneration and Planning	1,000	1,000	1,000
Tourism and Enterprise	52	52	52
Corporate	200	200	200
Central Contingency	-670	-670	-670
	2,507	2,682	2,682

6.5 Service Planning – 2023/24 Exercise

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000			
Efficiencies	(1,166)	(1,258)	(1,273)	(1,273)
Agree	647	494	442	71
Still under review	154	54	54	54
Neighbourhood First	672	672	672	672
Local plan	150	250	0	60
Sub Total	456	210	(106)	(417)
Housing Emergency Accommodation	2,124			
TOTAL	2,580	210	(106)	(417)

Efficiencies - Officers have undertaken the Service Planning exercise in preparation for Budget Setting and Financial Planning. This year's exercise has built on the exercises of previous years and has been useful in identifying budget gaps, funding pressures, growth requests and efficiencies to be offered up. Efficiencies offered up by services (a combination of new efficiencies and those offered in last year's exercise) were significant, totalling £1.2m. These efficiencies are built into service budgets from 2024/25.

6.6 **Growth** – As outlined above, the Service Planning exercise also identified significant growth requirements arising from service requests. Growth requests for 2024/25 have been assessed by CMT in line with our Corporate Objectives.

- Growth of £647k for 24/25 has been agreed by CMT mainly as one-off items for that year.
- A further £975k relating mainly to Neighbourhood First, Local Plan and other smaller bids are still under review.
- A £2.2m bid (Q1 figures) for Emergency and Temporary Accommodation (see section 4.4) is being looked at separately as part of a dialogue with DLUHC.

6.7 **Line by line review** – A high level exercise has been undertaken on behalf of CMT which has identified those budgets (largely below £1,000) which have not been used in 2022/23 or 2023/24. Utilising these budgets differently will enable the Council to reallocate fund to other areas of budget where there are budgetary misalignments. During 2023/24 the historic budget issue for Neighbourhood First has been largely offset by this exercise and it is planned to permanently address this during the 2024/25 budget building exercise.

7.0 Use of Reserves

7.1 To ensure budgets can be balanced whilst clarity is provided and to provide time to work up further proposals to increase income and reduce expenditure to address the underlying budget position, a thorough review of all earmarked reserves will be undertaken in advance of the 2024/25 Budget Setting and Final MTFS work to assess whether the use of reserves to balance the 2024/25 budget is reasonable and justifiable. The review will be presented in February 2023.

7.2 It is important to recognise that the application of reserves to balance the budget is not a sustainable solution to the financial challenges we face. Whilst the review is undertaken and until there is greater clarity, some programmes and projects funded from a range of earmarked reserves will be considered carefully during this time.

8.0 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The 30-year plan for the HRA is currently in the process of being finalised and approved. This plan will consider the funding of maintenance, repair, and improvement of our housing stock over the period. The plan is crucial for ensuring that the housing remains in good condition and meets the needs of residents over the long term. The HRA has put forward growth proposals for the current period and these items are being fed into their plan.

9.0 Capital Investment Strategy

9.1 The latest Capital Investment Strategy was reported to Cabinet in February 2023, it sets out a framework for funding and investment decisions in respect of capital assets, in the context of our vision and priorities and available financial resources. The Capital Investment Strategy demonstrates that we take capital expenditure and investment decisions in line with service objectives and properly take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability, and affordability.

9.2 It sets out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made and considers the risk, reward, and impact on the achievement of the Council's priority outcomes.

9.3 When setting its capital programme, the Council takes into consideration the following:

- Service objectives – the capital spending plans should be consistent with our Corporate Objectives.
- Stewardship of assets demonstrated by our asset management planning approach.
- The value for money offered by investment plans demonstrated by the appraisal of the options.
- The prudence and sustainability of investment plans – their implications for external borrowing.
- The affordability of capital investment plans – the implications for the council tax; and
- The practicality of capital expenditure plans – whether the forward plan is achievable.

9.4 Decisions on the Capital Programme have an impact on the Revenue Budget, in relation to:

- The revenue costs of financing capital, and

- The ongoing running costs and/or income generated by new capital assets such as buildings.

9.5 Revenue costs over the lifetime of each proposed capital project are considered when the project is being developed to ensure that the impact can be incorporated within our financial plans and to demonstrate that the capital investment is affordable. Our revenue and capital budgets are integrated with the financial impact of the proposed Capital Programme, being reflected in the Revenue Budget estimates.

9.6 The Council will only invest where capital spending plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable. The key constraint on capital investment is the scope to afford the financial implications in terms of acceptable council tax levels. As supported by the Capital Investment Strategy, the Council's capital investment plans over the next 4 years are set out in the Capital Programme.

9.7 The efficient and effective use of capital resources, including sound asset management, is fundamental to achieving our long- and medium-term aims and objectives. It is also critical to achieving the delivery of the required savings and income across the Council to secure a balanced budget.

9.8 The Council's Capital and Investment Strategy is reviewed and reported to Full Council on an annual basis to reflect the changing needs and priorities of the Council including residents, businesses, and places.

9.9 Medium Term Capital Programme

9.10 Our Capital Programme is concerned with investment in the assets required to deliver services or new income streams. The Medium-Term Capital Programme sets out how capital resources will be used to achieve the Council's vision and corporate priorities.

9.11 The Council must have an affordable Capital Programme; affordability is assessed against business cases considering the level of future resources required to support project delivery and ongoing asset maintenance.

9.12 The strategic objectives of our Capital Programme can be summarised as follows:

- To maintain a four-year rolling Capital Programme which remains within the approved affordable, sustainable, and prudential limits.
- To ensure capital resources are aligned with our strategic vision and corporate priorities by ensuring all schemes are prioritised according to the Council's prioritisation methodology.
- To identify opportunities for investment in new schemes that result in capital growth and/or new revenue income streams.
- To maximise available resources by actively seeking external funding to support Council priorities and disposing of surplus assets; and
- To use internal resources alongside external resources where appropriate to support the Capital Programme and minimise any borrowing costs.

9.13 Decisions on the financing of the capital programme are taken with consideration to the impact on the revenue budget, the treasury management strategy, and the investment strategy.

9.14 Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2027/28

9.15 The Council forecasts its Capital Programme over a 4-year period and the latest position is set out in Appendix B

9.16 Excepting earmarked s106 funds, the Council does not have significant capital reserves, therefore, while a small number of schemes will be continued to be funded from capital grants and other contributions, the majority of the approved Capital Programme will be funded through prudential borrowing.

9.17 The costs of repaying this borrowing fall to the General Fund. Treasury management budgets have been updated to reflect the costs of borrowing for the approved Capital Programme for 2024/25 onwards net of interest on forecast balances and other loan repayments.

9.18 Capital Programme Oversight Board

9.19 A Capital Programme Oversight Board (CPOB) has been established to provide strategic direction, oversight and corporate assurance for the General Fund capital programme and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan across Council. The CPOB will be responsible for addressing programme issues, reviewing risk and financial implications, driving through the Assurance Review recommendations in respect of the capital programme and moving towards a fully sustainable capital programme and asset release.

10.0 Conclusion

10.1 The council continues to face significant financial uncertainty for the MTFs planning period, covering the financial years 2024/25 to 2027/28. The uncertainty relating to future government financial settlements is exacerbated by the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and inflation on the cost of services.

The council's Stability and Growth Programme is designed to delivery significant saving to manage and mitigate the inflationary cost pressures.

However, the council's biggest concern by far is its unprecedented and disproportionate exposure to the cost of temporary and emergency accommodation. With a net budget of £16m, it can not be expected to fund this growing and continuing increase in demand.

10.2 The interim MTFFS forecasts is reliant on delivery of £2.5m Stability and Growth savings and additional income. Including these savings, a budget shortfall of £1.6m for 2024/25 is projected followed by further savings to be identified for 2025/26 and beyond. Work will continue between now and February 2024 to,

- Refine and testing the assumptions made so far considering Government Announcements expected.
- Continue the dialogue with DLUHC regarding Housing and Temporary Accommodation costs which is adding further uncertainty to our financial planning.
- Implement further significant controls over both revenue and capital expenditure.
- Continue to work to meet the Budget Gap identified and refine the Service Planning proposals and budget pressures identified.
- Bring back to Cabinet in February the proposed 2024/25 budget, final MTFFS, Review and proposals around the use of Reserves and Council Tax Resolution.

11.0 Financial appraisal

11.1 The S151 Officer will submit her Section 25 report on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves to Full Council in February 2024. This report will be based on a detailed financial resilience and stress test of the Council's proposed income and expenditure plans.

12.0 Legal implications

12.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that every local authority decide for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

12.2 Sections 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating their budget requirement.

12.3 The Chief Finance Officer, appointed under section 151 mentioned above, has a duty to report on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003.

13.0 Risk management implications

13.1 An analysis of risks associated with the MTFFS, and mitigating actions will be provided in the next MTFFS update.

14.0 Equality analysis

14.1 The equality implications of any individual decisions relating to the projects/services covered in this report are addressed within other relevant Council reports.

15.0 Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Budget Summary and Key Assumptions

Appendix B - Capital Programme

Appendix C - Glossary

16.0 Background Papers

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

- Local Government Finance Act 1992
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations (as amended)
- The Impacts of Localised Council Tax Support Schemes – Institute for Fiscal Studies Report January 2019
- Settlement funding assessment calculation model: provisional local government finance settlement 2023 to 2024

Eastbourne Borough Council

Budget Summary By CIPFA Classification

Directorate	2023/24 (changes since Feb 23)			2024/25	2025/26		2026/27		2027/28	
	Net Budget approved by Cabinet (Feb 23)	Further Changes	Revised Base for 23/24	Revised Base for 24/25	Total Changes	Net Budget	Changes	Net Budget	Changes	Net Budget
	£			£	£		£		£	
Employees	29,531,312	99,357	29,630,669	30,201,228	333,916	30,535,144	384,218	30,919,363	393,758	31,313,120
Premises	6,042,837	0	6,042,837	6,042,837	0	6,042,837		6,042,837		6,042,837
Supplies & Services	13,341,924	0	11,194,924	10,926,541	373,487	11,300,027	280,115	11,580,142	186,743	11,766,886
Support Services	(1,197,972)	0	(1,197,972)	(1,197,972)	0	(1,197,972)		(1,197,972)		(1,197,972)
Third Party Payments	7,539,053	0	7,539,053	7,539,053	0	7,539,053		7,539,053		7,539,053
Transfer Payments	34,471,200	0	34,471,200	34,471,200	0	34,471,200		34,471,200		34,471,200
Transport	287,500	0	287,500	487,500	0	487,500		487,500		487,500
Income	(74,044,386)	0	(74,044,386)	(77,628,383)	(489,726)	(78,118,109)	(391,781)	(78,509,890)	(195,890)	(78,705,781)
Capital Financing Costs	2,001,400	1,018,643	3,020,043	3,967,043	(816,000)	3,151,043	(18,000)	3,133,043	(92,000)	3,041,043
NET BUDGET	17,972,868	1,118,000	16,943,868	14,809,047	(598,324)	14,210,723	254,552	14,465,276	292,611	14,757,886
Qtr 2 Draft Monitoring Homeless Support			4,871,000	4,471,000		4,471,000		4,471,000		4,471,000
Qtr 2 Monitoring Service Overspend - Other			872,000	472,000		472,000		472,000		472,000
Net Service Planning Proposals				455,878		210,402		(105,848)		(416,990)
Financing of new capital expenditure				500,000	+£2.5m spend	750,000	+£2.5m spend	1,000,000	+£2.5m spend	1,250,000
REVISED BUDGET	17,972,868		22,686,868	20,707,925		20,114,125		20,302,428		20,533,896

4,714,000

Previous MTFS (Feb 23)

Subject	2023/24			2024/25	2025/26		2026/27		2027/28	
	Net Budget before adjustments (Feb 23)	Original Changes	23/24 Base Agreed at Cabinet Feb 22	Revised Base for 24/25	2025/26	Net Budget	Changes	Net Budget	Changes	Net Budget
NET EXPENDITURE	16,105,551	1,867,317	17,972,868	17,965,748	288,346	18,254,094	(518,771)	17,735,322	0	0
FINANCED BY:						£		£		£
Council Tax	(9,518,253)	0	(9,518,253)	(9,912,797)		(10,289,820)		(10,681,183)		(11,087,432)
Council Tax (Surplus)/Deficit	(121,000)	0	(121,000)	(124,630)		(128,369)		(132,220)		(136,187)
100% on Empty Homes		0	0	0		(210,000)		(214,200)		(218,484)
Council Tax Total	(9,639,253)	0	(9,639,253)	(10,037,427)	0	(10,628,189)	0	(11,027,603)	0	(11,442,102)
Business Rates										
National Non-Domestic Rates Baseline	(3,788,858)	0	(3,788,858)	(4,042,711)		(4,204,420)		(4,288,508)		(4,374,279)
Business Rates Retained Growth	(603,661)	0	(603,661)	(1,683,377)		(1,750,712)		(1,785,726)		(1,821,441)
Business Rates Equalisation	(539,524)	0	(539,524)	100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000
Business Rates Retention Pooling Levy	(212,000)	0	(212,000)	(226,204)		(235,252)		(239,957)		(244,756)
SFA Multiplier Compensation	(645,397)	0	(645,397)	(688,639)		(716,184)		(730,508)		(745,118)
Business Rates Total	(5,789,440)	0	(5,789,440)	(6,540,931)	0	(6,806,568)	0	(6,944,700)	0	(7,085,594)
Government Grants										
New Homes Bonus	(14,840)	0	(14,840)	(11,130)		(7,420)		(3,710)		0
Homelessness Prevention		0	0	(707,495)		(717,471)		(727,587)		(737,846)
Services Grant	(141,870)	0	(141,870)	(151,375)		(157,430)		(160,579)		(163,790)
Funding Guarantee / Local Tier Services Grant	(246,268)	0	(246,268)	0		0		0		0
Better Care Fund (BCF) - Conversion	(878,658)	0	(878,658)	(1,281,658)		(1,281,658)		(1,281,658)		(1,281,658)
Government Grants Total	(1,281,636)	0	(1,281,636)	(2,151,658)	0	(2,163,978)	0	(2,173,533)	0	(2,183,294)
Transfers (From)/Into Reserves*	(1,262,539)	0	(1,262,539)	(347,000)		0		0		0
TOTAL FINANCING	(17,972,868)	0	(17,972,868)	(19,077,016)	0	(19,598,736)	0	(20,145,837)	0	(20,710,990)
Qtr 2 Monitoring 23/24			(750,000)			0		0		0
REVISED TOTAL FINANCING			(18,722,868)	(19,077,016)		(19,598,736)		(20,145,837)		(20,710,990)
FORECAST BUDGET GAP			3,964,000	1,630,909		515,389		156,591		(177,093)
FORECAST BUDGET GAP %			21%	9%		3%		1%		-1%

APPENDIX B DRAFT EBC CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 to 2027/28	Proposed Revised Programme 2023/24 £	Proposed Programme 2024/25 £	Proposed Programme 2025/26 £	Proposed Programme 2026/27 £	Proposed Programme 2027/28 £
Housing Revenue Account					
Major Works & Improvements	6,330,000	6,355,000	6,355,000	7,009,000	7,175,000
Development Schemes	10,811,000	8,584,000	5,416,000	18,688,000	19,248,000
Total Housing Revenue Account	17,141,000	14,939,000	11,771,000	25,697,000	26,423,000
Total General Fund Housing	2,248,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
Total Loans to Housing Companies	890,000	466,000	-	-	-
General Fund Housing	3,138,000	1,666,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
Regeneration	12,403,000	9,315,000	350,000	100,000	-
Asset Management	2,710,000	915,000	375,000	100,000	350,000
Service Delivery	1,514,000	902,000	579,000	569,000	-
Information Technology	163,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	-
Corporate Services	735,000	400,000	250,000	250,000	-
Existing Capital Programme	17,525,000	11,682,000	1,704,000	1,169,000	350,000
New Bids for Capital Funding					
Regeneration	73,000	375,000	2,510,000	295,000	280,000
Asset Management	1,248,000	1,470,000	1,900,000	965,000	440,000
Service Delivery	1,831,000	1,039,000	1,650,000	-	1,210,000
Tourism and Culture	-	157,500	50,000		
Information Technology	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total New Bids for Capital Funding	3,252,000	3,141,500	6,210,000	1,360,000	2,030,000
Total General Fund	23,915,000	16,489,500	9,114,000	3,729,000	3,580,000
Total HRA & GF Programme	41,056,000	31,428,500	20,885,000	29,426,000	30,003,000
*** Note - the programme is in draft and therefore subject to change					

Glossary

Capital Expenditure	Capital Expenditure is the funds invested in long term assets like buildings, infrastructure, equipment, or technology. The expenditure is significant and provides lasting benefits and are depreciated over time. It contrasts to operating expenditure which are day to day expenditure.
Capital Financing	Capital Financing is how we raise money for to invest in capital projects. It can involve selling assets, borrowing money, using existing balances, and obtaining grants. Borrowing money means interest payments during the life of the loan plus the repayment of loan.
Capital Programme	A strategic plan outlining long term investments in assets like building and technology. It identifies projects and budgets, sets timelines, assesses risks and has approval processes. The plan aligns Capital Expenditure with Corporate Objectives.
Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DHUHC)	The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government, is a department of His Majesty's Government responsible for housing, communities, and local government in England and the levelling up policy
Depreciation	An accounting method that allocates the cost of a tangible asset over its useful life. The process matches the cost of the asset with the benefit it provides reflecting its diminishing value over time.
Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Ltd (EHICL)	EHICL is a Council owned owned housing investment company (HIC) used to develop new homes on Council owned sites, and acquire and regenerate existing mixed retail and residential sites.
Financial Regulations	Financial regulations are a set of financial procedures and rules that ensure good financial governance is observed. They include policies, procedures, financial delegation, and approvals and protect both staff and the council from financial misconduct.
General Fund (GF)	The main operating fund used for expenditure such as salaries and the running costs of day-to-day operations.

Grants and Contributions	Financial support received from external sources such as Central Government or developers. They can be for specific projects or more general.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	A separate accounting system for local authorities to manage their housing services. It includes rental income, housing related costs and is distinct from the General Fund. The HRA is used for improvements, maintenance and operational expenses related to local-authority owned housing.
Pevensey Levels IDD	Internal drainage boards (IDB) are the public body that manage water levels in an area. These are also internal drainage districts (IDD), where there is a special need for drainage. IDBs undertake works to reduce flood risk to people and property and manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs within their district. The Council contributes to the costs of the IDD through a special levy payment.
Medium Term Financial Strategy	This Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and provide a framework within which decisions can be made regarding future service provision and council tax levels. It is based on a five-year rolling forecast and is reviewed annually. The MTFS provides the financial context for the Council's financial resource allocation and budget setting processes.
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	An annual provision made to set aside funds for repaying debt associated with Capital Projects. It ensures the gradual allocation of resources to cover debt repayment obligations and is set out in the Prudential Code.
Section 151 Officer	Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a S151 Officer, also known as a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), to have responsibility for those arrangements.

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Report to:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	04 December 2023
Title:	Council Tax Base and Non-Domestic Rates Income for 2024/25
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance
Cabinet member:	Councillor Robin Maxted, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To approve the Council Tax Base and net yield from Business Rate Income for 2024/25 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
Decision type:	Key Decision
Officer recommendations to the Cabinet	(1) Agree the provisional Council Tax Base of 35,687.2 for 2024/25 (2) Agree that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Financial Services, determine the final amounts for the Council Tax Base for 2024/25. (3) Agreed that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, determine net yield from Business Rate income for 2024/25.
Reasons for recommendations:	Cabinet is required to approve the Tax Base which will be used for the purposes of calculating the 2024/25 Council Tax.
Officer recommendation to the Scrutiny Committee	The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Homira Javadi Post title: Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) E-mail: Homira.Javadi@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01323 415512

1 Introduction

1.1 The Council is required to set its Council Tax Base for the forthcoming year. This

calculation is used as the basis for income the Council will precept from the Collection Fund.

- 1.2 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 prescribe that the billing authority (this council) must supply the precepting authorities (the County, Police and Fire authorities) with the calculation of the Council Tax Base. This information must be supplied between 1 December and 31 January in the financial year proceeding the financial year for which the calculation is being made.
- 1.3 Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 also sets out a timetable for informing the Government and precepting authorities of the business rate income calculation. This information is completed via a government return (NNDR1) which must be submitted by 31 January in the financial year preceding the financial year for which the calculation is being made.
- 1.4 To assist the precepting authorities with their financial planning it is helpful to provide the information during December rather than wait for the January deadline.

2 Council Tax Base 2024/25

- 2.1 The Council Tax Base is the estimated full year equivalent number of chargeable dwellings. This is expressed as the equivalent number of Band D dwelling with two or more liable adults.
- 2.2 In making this estimate, account must be taken of discounts, disabled relief, and property exemptions. Movements on and off the valuation list during the year must also be considered – e.g., where new properties have been built or old ones converted or demolished.
- 2.3 The basic calculation as determined by primary legislation is that the Council arrives at its Council Tax Base by multiplying its Relevant Amount by its estimated Collection Rate.

3 Relevant amount

- 3.1 The Relevant Amount for each Band is the estimated full year equivalent number of chargeable dwellings in the Band expressed as the equivalent number of Band D dwellings. The Government's Valuation Office assesses the relative value of each property with the borough and places it in one of the eight bands. A conversion factor is then applied to each band in order to obtain the equivalent number of Band D property as set out below:

Band	Valuation (at 1 April 1991)	Conversion Factor as proportion of Band D
A	Less than £40,000	6/9
B	£40,001 - £52,000	7/9
C	£52,001 - £68,000	8/9
D	£68,001 - £88,000	9/9
E	£88,001 - £120,000	11/9
F	£120,001 - £160,000	12/9
G	£160,001 - £320,000	15/9
H	Over £320,001	16/9

3.2 Deductions are made to the aggregate number of properties in each band in respect of various discounts such as empty properties and single persons. An adjustment is also made to reflect the impact of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

3.3 The results for each Band are then added together to arrive at the overall Band D or Relevant Amount. For 2024/25 this totals 36,602.3 equivalent properties.

3.4 The Relevant Amount has increased by 140.7 (0.39%) Band D equivalent dwellings from 2023/24. This is the net impact of increases in the total number of properties, less increased discounts and increases in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

4 Collection Rate

4.1 The Collection Rate is the Council's estimate of the proportion of the overall Council Tax collectable for 2024/25 that will ultimately be collected.

4.2 The key elements in making this calculation are losses on collection, appeals against valuation, changes in circumstances (e.g., application for discounts in respect of single person's occupancy or disability) and other adjustments. These other adjustments to bills can arise for a variety of reasons including bankruptcy, death, and exemptions, plus an allowance for uncollectable debts.

4.3 The current level of Council Tax collection is forecast to show an in-year deficit balance of £537k at the end of 2023/24. With the cost-of-living crisis and the country facing a longer recession, bad debt provisions are currently under review and may need to be increased. The 2024/25 collection rate is 97.5% an increase on the current rate of 96.8%.

4.4 It should be noted that, under accounting regulations brought in by Government in response to Covid-19, deficits can be spread over three financial years from 2021-2024 in respect of 2020/21 deficits.

5 Council Tax Base

- 3.1 Taking the Relevant Amount of 36,602.3 and applying the Collection Rate of 97.5% produces a Council Tax Base for 2024/25 of 35,687.2.
- 3.2 The Council Tax Base has increased by 1.11% compared with 2023/24. This is equivalent to an increase of 392 Band D dwellings. The detailed number of properties is shown at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is updated annually to take account of movement in the Council Tax Base. The assumed tax base for the current MTFs was 35,294.8, therefore this would represent an increase in assumed Council Tax income of £106k based on the current Band D Council Tax rate of £269.68.

6 Business Rate Income

- 4.1 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 introduced a new system for the local retention of business rates. This means that the Council is required to formally approve the expected business rate income for the forthcoming year. The estimate for the 2024/25 financial year must be approved by 31 January 2024.
- 4.2 The Business Rate income is collated on the Government's NNDR1 form which shows the net rate income yield for the central and local shares of the business shares of the business rates. The actual NNDR1 form and guidance notes have not yet been received.
- 4.3 The net business rate yield is calculated using the total expected gross income by multiplying the Rateable value by the nationally set multipliers (for 2023/24 these are 51.2p standard and 49.9p for small businesses). These multipliers are uplifted annually by the September CPI rate which was 6.7% (Sept 2023), but this increase is still to be confirmed by Government and rates may remain frozen. This gross yield is then adjusted for mandatory and discretionary reliefs, an allowance for cost of collection, adjustment for changes in Rateable Value due to growth or reduction in property numbers, estimated losses on collection and an allowance for appeals.
- 4.4 The resulting calculation is the net business rate yield which is shared as follows:
 - 50% to Central Government
 - 40% to Local Billing Authority (this council)
 - 9% to the County
 - 1% to the Fire Authority
- 4.5 The local share is then payable to the Council's General Fund. All other adjustments to the overall level of Business rate income are then accounted for within the General Fund.
- 4.6 The final amount of business rates income retained by the Council is adjusted by deduction tariff and levy payments.
- 4.7 The system of tariff or top up is to redress the balance of Business Rate income nationally to ensure that no local authority is worse off as a result of business

rate income at the outset of the rates retention scheme in 2013. This authority currently makes a tariff payment, and information on the level of tariff payment will be announced as part of the Government grant settlement figures.

- 4.8 Levy payments allow authorities to retain a proportion their growth. The levy has been set at 50% of the growth over the baseline allowance set by Government.

7 Setting the Business Rate Income

- 7.1 As the final figures required to set the Business Rates Income are not yet available, Cabinet is asked that delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Finance.

8 Business Rate Pooling

- 8.1 The Council is working within a Business Rate Pool with the other East Sussex Borough and District Councils, East Sussex County Council and East Sussex Fire Authority. Under this arrangement, 50% of any growth in business rate income which would otherwise be paid as level to the Government can be retained by the Pool to be redistributed to its participating authorities in accordance with an agreed memorandum of understanding.

9 Collection Fund Performance

- 9.1 As at 31 March 2023 the Collection Fund showed a net deficit of £5,197,420 (£1,247,147 Council Tax surplus and £6,444,567 Business Rates deficit). A £3,900,695 deficit is currently being recovered across Council Tax and Business Rates preceptors during 2023/24, leaving a balance of £1,296,725 to be recovered in 2024/25.
- 9.2 The Council has to estimate the overall surplus/deficit at 31 March 2024 and inform precepting authorities in January 2024 of this estimate in order that the amount is included in the 2024/25 precept figures.
- 9.3 Current monitoring figures indicate a deficit by 31 March 2024 of £537,215 for Council Tax; this will be revisited in January 2024 and the results reported to members as part of the budget report to the February Cabinet. Any surplus or deficit is allocated to preceptors in 2024/25 in proportion to the 2023/24 Band D Council Tax. For this council this represents a 11.7% share of the total.
- 9.4 The calculation on the Business Rate income element of the Collection Fund currently indicates a deficit balance of £5,187,923 (excluding any reliefs funded by s31 grant). Any surplus or deficit is allocated in 2024/25 in accordance with the proportions given at paragraph 6.4 above.

10 Outcome expected and Performance Management

- 10.1 Once the Council Tax Base and the estimate balance on the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund has been determined, East Sussex Council,

Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner and East Sussex Fire Authority will be notified.

10.2 Once the NNDR1 2023/24 has been completed and the estimated balance on the Business Rate element of the Collection Fund has been determined, this will be submitted to Central Government and both East Sussex County Council and East Sussex Fire Authority will be notified.

10.3 Council Tax and Business Rates income and payments to precepts are accounted for in the Collection Fund which is regularly monitored and reported to members as part of the quarterly performance monitoring report.

11 Financial appraisal

11.1 The Council Tax Base will be used to calculate the level of Council Tax requirement that will be recommended to the Council on 21 February 2024.

11.2 The net yield from Business Rates income will be used to calculate the amount of retained Business Rates to be credited to the General Fund.

12 Legal Implications

12.1 The Council Tax Base must be calculated in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012.

12.2 Under these Regulations, the billing authority (this council) is required to calculate its Council Tax base by 31 January for the next financial year and inform all its preceptors of this calculation.

12.3 The legislation further provides that, where a billing authority fails to notify each of the major precepting authorities of this calculation, it can be determined by those precepting authorities on the basis of all the information available and with reference to the preceding year's amount.

12.4 It is a requirement of the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 for the billing authority (this council) to notify DLUHC and precepting authorities of its calculation of expected rate income by 31 January preceding the commencement of the next financial year.

12.5 If the billing authority fails to comply with this requirement, then the Secretary of State may make the calculation instead and inform precepting authorities of the calculation.

13 Risk Management Implications

13.1 If the Council did not set a Council Tax Base, this can be imposed by the precepting authorities with the potential that an incorrect Band D Council Tax could be set. This would have implications for the Council Tax income for the Preceptors, this Council and the performance of the Collection Fund.

14 Equality analysis

14.1 There are no equality implications in this report.

15 Conclusion

15.1 The provisional Council Tax Base for 2024/25 has been calculated in accordance with the relevant legislation. Summary calculations are set out within the attached appendix.

15.2 The figures required to set the Business Rate Income are not yet available as the NNDR1 form and guidance notes have not yet been received from the DLUHC.

15.3 It is recommended that delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Finance, to agree the final figures for both calculations.

16 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Summary of property numbers and Council Base Calculation

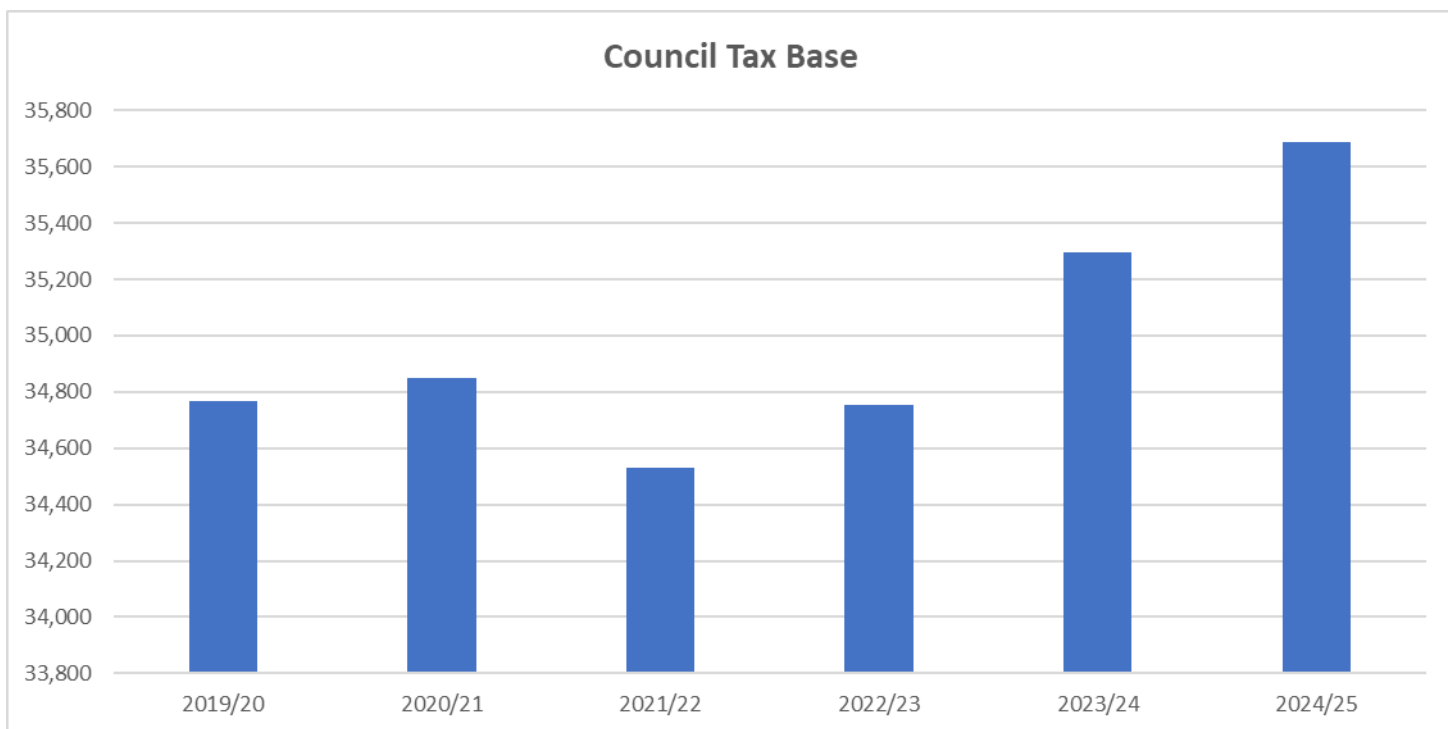
17 Background papers

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

- Local Government Finance Act 1992
- The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992
- The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulation 2013
- Calculation of Council Tax Base – CTB (October 2023) form.

Appendix 1 Summary of property numbers and Council Base Calculation

Council Tax Base Year on Year Comparison	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
NUMBER OF DWELLINGS						
Valuation List at November	47,841	48,077	48,080	48,368	48,539	48,611
Less: Discounts equated to properties	(4,989)	(4,891)	(4,956)	(4,986)	(5,073)	(5,085)
Total Equivalent Property Number	42,852	43,186	43,124	43,382	43,466	43,527
Estimated Changes in the year	165	20	183	109	184	230
Less: Less Council Tax Reduction Scheme	(5,330)	(5,067)	(5,115)	(4,953)	(4,730)	(4,657)
Total Number of Properties	37,687	38,139	38,192	38,538	38,920	39,100
% increase/(decrease)	N/A	1.2%	0.1%	0.9%	1.0%	0.5%
TAXBASE CALCULATION						
Relevant Amount (Band D Equivalent)	35,384.5	35,742.2	35,777.3	36,179.5	36,461.6	36,602.3
% Collection Rate	98.25%	97.50%	96.52%	96.06%	96.80%	97.50%
Council Tax Base	34,765.3	34,848.6	34,532.2	34,754.0	35,294.8	35,687.2
% growth/(reduction)	N/A	0.24%	-0.91%	0.64%	1.56%	1.11%



Report to:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	04 December 2023
Title:	Housing Services – Current Operating Pressures
Report of:	Tim Whelan, Director of Service Delivery
Cabinet member:	Councillor Peter Diplock, Cabinet member for housing and planning
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To provide Cabinet with a summary of the current operating context and the challenges this is presenting to the delivery of housing services in the Borough.
Decision type:	Non-key decision
Officer recommendation(s):	To note the contents of the report and the activities that Council teams are taking to address these.
Reasons for recommendations:	To provide information about the current operating context.
Contact Officer(s):	Oliver Jones Lead, Housing, Homelessness & Community Safety Oliver.Jones@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk. 07939 578 415.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides information about the strategic operating context within which the Council is delivering housing services. It summarises the current cost, regulatory and demand pressures, and outlines how these are impacting the key services that are; delivering repairs & maintenance; collecting income; managing tenancies; and supporting residents facing homelessness. It also considers how these pressures are affecting the delivery of new homes. The report goes on to set out the steps each service is putting in place to address the variety of challenges they face.

2. National & local operating context

- 2.1. The operating context is complex and characterised by a series of financial pressures, economic uncertainties, and regulatory changes that are challenging the viability of business plans and placing new demands on service delivery. These are set out below.
 - **Impact of higher inflation and interest rates** - costs relating to housing provider's employees (council and contractors), materials, energy, and borrowing have all increased significantly. This has impacted on all services, but the consequences for maintenance spend and the viability of new housing developments have been of particular concern. Although inflation has begun to fall, providers will need to continue to carefully assess the impact of higher

costs on (Housing Revenue Account) business plans and keep their resilience under close review.

- **Government rent cap** - in autumn 2022 the Government departed from the long-established policy of increasing rents by CPI +1%, to lessen the impact of the rent uplift on tenant incomes. In its place a 7% cap on increases was introduced, putting further strain on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plans by limiting income, and requiring additional savings measures to be put in place.
- **Cost of living crisis** - reduced living standards have a dis-proportionate impact on those with the lowest incomes, and this is having a negative impact on levels of rent arrears across the sector. A survey¹ of 28 local authorities, undertaken by the National Federation of ALMOs², found that 85% of the authorities surveyed reported an increase in arrears, with the average owed by affected tenants rising to £527, an increase of 23% in twelve months. Data for the latest available quarter shows that there has been an accompanying rise in the levels of possession warrants issued in England & Wales, up 52%³ in a year, whilst mortgage repossessions are also on the rise. This will further increase pressure on homelessness services.
- **Private rented sector (PRS)** – the sector is under pressure as large numbers of landlords look to exit the market, in large part due to higher mortgage costs. Nervousness about legislation ending ‘no fault’ evictions has also been a significant concern for landlords, although the Government have recently announced that this will be delayed indefinitely, pending reforms to the court system. As a result of this reduced supply many areas have been seeing record increases to rents. In Eastbourne, households on low incomes face a particularly difficult challenge as Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates have failed to keep pace with the 30th percentile rents to which they are supposed to be matched. Figure 1 (below) compares LHA rates against the very cheapest advertised rents across East Sussex.

Figure 1 – LHA as a percentage of lowest advertised rent on Rightmove (Sept 2023)

	Eastbourne			Hastings			Lewes			Rother			Wealden		
	LHA	Rent	%	LHA	Rent	%	LHA	Rent	%	LHA*	Rent	%	LHA	Rent	%
Shared	£75	£110	68%	£75	£115	65%	£99	£133	74%	£87	N/A	N/A	£102	£127	80%
1 bed	£138	£173	80%	£115	£167	69%	£184	£202	91%	£138	£156	88%	£173	£173	100%
2 bed	£176	£202	87%	£150	£196	76%	£230	£254	91%	£178	£219	81%	£219	£219	100%
3 bed	£207	£248	84%	£196	£265	74%	£276	£312	89%	£228	£288	79%	£276	£277	100%

¹ On the edge, Cost-of-living findings from the council housing sector, August 2023 – Nat. Fed. of ALMOs / Association of Retained Council Housing - [On the Edge: Cost-of-living findings from the council housing sector - NFA National Federation of ALMOs](#)

² On the edge, Cost-of-living findings from the council housing sector, August 2023 – Nat. Fed. of ALMOs - [On the Edge: Cost-of-living findings from the council housing sector - NFA National Federation of ALMOs](#)

³ Ministry for Justice for the period April to June 2023, August 2023 - [Mortgage and Landlord Possession statistics: April to June 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Unsurprisingly, it is those authorities (Eastbourne & Hastings) where LHA covers the least percentage of rents, that have the greatest homelessness pressures. The PRS in Eastbourne is relatively large, housing 27%⁴ of all households, so this impact of this is of real concern.

- **House prices** - although these have fallen from their recent peak, for many households the prospect of buying a home remains bleak. In high value areas like Eastbourne, the gap between household income and the income needed to buy a home is staggering, with the latest Local Housing Needs Assessment⁵ concluding that those living on the median household income for the town (£35k), would struggle to buy even the cheapest properties available on the market (with a standard 10% deposit).
- **Social rented sector** – housing only 13%⁶ of households, the sector in Eastbourne is relatively small when compared to England, where 17.1% of households rent from a social landlord. Rates of new build are improving, but historically low stock additions and *Right to Buy* sales have restricted supply, at a time when demands have risen.
- **Homelessness pressures** – levels of statutory homelessness are rising, with the number of households across England found to be homeless (rather than threatened with homelessness) when they sought assistance, up by 10.7% (n=41,950)⁷. The ending of a private rented sector tenancy because the landlord wishes to sell or relet the property, or because of rent arrears, were the leading causes of homelessness. There were 1,175 homelessness presentations across East Sussex in the first quarter of 2023/24, a rise of 24% compared to the same period a year earlier. Meanwhile, the national rough sleeper count showed an increase for the first time in five years, registering a 29%⁸ rise across the South-East.
- **Temporary accommodation** – The rise in homelessness numbers is reflected by a 10%⁹ increase of households residing in temporary accommodation. Local authorities in England spent an estimated £1.6B¹⁰ on housing them in 2021/22 and increases over the past year will have seen costs spiral further. Across East Sussex there are now over a thousand households living in emergency accommodation, being housed at a cost of £11.2M per year.

⁴ Census data analysis – Office for National Statistics, January 2023 - [Housing, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

⁵ Lewes Local Housing Needs Assessment (Draft), September 2022 – AECOM.

⁶ As per footnote 4.

⁷ All figures reported by Dept. of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities for the period Jan to March 2023, July 2023 - [Statutory homelessness in England: January to March 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁸ Annual rough sleeper count – Dept. Levelling Up, Housing & Communities - [Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁹ As per footnote 7.

¹⁰ Research briefing for UK House of Commons, January 2023 - [Households in temporary accommodation \(England\) - House of Commons Library \(parliament.uk\)](#).

- **More pro-active regulation & new legislation** – Government and the Regulator of Social Housing are introducing stronger regulation (Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023), in response to concerns about fire safety, high levels of dis-repair impacting tenant welfare, and housing provider’s failures to respond to reports of damp and mould, following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak. The key elements of the new approach are, a suite of performance measures (introduced in April 2023) designed to give tenants a more transparent view of landlords’ service delivery, tougher consumer standards to take effect from March 2024, and the Building Safety Act 2022, introduced to improve the construction and repair of high-risk buildings. This new regulatory focus will affect all housing services, but repairs and housing quality standards are those areas likely to fall under the most scrutiny, adding cost at a time when budgets are already under intense pressure.
- **Pilot review.** In April the Regulator of Social Housing provided feedback on a visit they undertook as part of the Council’s participation in their voluntary Consumer Regulation Testing Pilot. After taking time to understand how the Governance arrangements are set up between the leadership team, Eastbourne Homes Limited (EHL) board, and the Council’s Cabinet. Their feedback challenged whether the arrangements in place provided for fully effective accountability to Cabinet and indicated that this could be a focus of any future reviews under the new regulatory regime. As an immediate measure was the provision of a new quarterly report from Homes First to Cabinet, whilst the proposals for the future of EHL were considered by Cabinet in November.
- **Retro fitting / sustainability** – To meet the Government’s target of achieving net-zero by 2050, providers have been asked to ensure that all their stock is rated at Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C or above by 2030 (it remains unclear how the September 2023 Government policy announcements affect this). With so many competing stock investment priorities the money needed to deliver this is highly likely to require funding from outside provider’s current business plans.

The current operating context has created pressures on the business plans and budgets of housing providers up and down the country, and Eastbourne is no exception. The remaining sections of this report review the impacts these are having on service provision and summarise some of the work being undertaken to address them.

3. Housing Options & Wellbeing

3.1. Operating context – key pressures on the service

- Interest rates ⇒ Landlords exiting the market, resulting in more no of fault evictions.
- Private rented sector ⇒ Rising rents impacting affordability and increasing arrears.
- Private rented sector ⇒ Reduced supply impacting ability to place at risk households.
- Cost of living ⇒ Making it harder for tenants to afford increasing rents.
- Inflation ⇒ Tenants may prioritise spend on rising food / utility costs over rent.

- Social rented sector ⇒ Low availability of vacancies building up demand.

3.2. **Impact on the service**

Inflation has increased the costs of delivering all Council services, but it is emerging pressures around homelessness that are causing the most concern. Higher rents, a reduced supply of homes as landlords choose to exit the sector because of less favourable market conditions, and reduced tenant incomes due to rises in the cost-of-living, have all played a part in increasing demand. The dedicated housing options triage team responded to over 1,300 calls in the first three months of 2023/24, of which 372 resulted in formal homelessness applications. This is a 27% increase compared to the same period a year earlier.

Investigations completed by the casework team so far this year confirmed that tenancy failure in the private rented sector is now the leading cause of homelessness in the town, most commonly because the landlord was seeking to sell or relet their property (so called 'no fault' evictions), or because of rent arrears. Friends or family no longer willing to accommodate, and domestic abuse were the other leading causes, which mirrors the nationwide picture.

This extra pressure places more demand on the statutory responses that the Council must make in terms of advice, investigation, and an interim duty to place priority need households in temporary housing. At the end of August there were 311 households living in nightly paid emergency accommodation, an increase of around 60% on the number a year ago. This provision is extremely costly and the unfavourable housing benefit rules mean that not all of the housing benefit paid out to cover rent by the Council, can be reclaimed from Government. In 2022/23 the net financial cost to the Council was £2.6M and this is expected to rise to £3.6M for the current financial year, placing a strain on the general fund that will reduce the Council's ability to fund other services and, ultimately, could risk its ability to produce a balanced budget.

Meanwhile, local levels of rough sleeping are rising also, and in July the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) team worked with 62 cases across the course of the month. This is a 38% increase on the 45 cases reported in July 2022, with the cost-of-living crisis and the ending of 'everyone in' Covid provision likely to be the leading contributory factors behind this increase.

3.3. **Addressing the issues**

The team have deployed a series of positive initiatives to help reduce demand pressures and lower the numbers of households living in emergency accommodation, by:

- Focussing on 'pre-prevention' work, through the activities of the triage team that actively negotiates with landlords and family members, signposts to advice agencies, and helps with home searches.
- Forming a 'virtual hub', bringing together partners to deliver early actions to address issues for customers to help reduce high-cost interventions at crisis point.
- Converting voids in HRA stock for use as temporary accommodation, to reduce the financial cost to the general fund. Around 60 households are now housed in this way.

- Delivering a Wellbeing Service to help referred individuals access specialist support focussed on sustaining tenancies and securing employment. The service supported 103 individuals in the past year and is currently providing active support to 41 more.
- Increasing efforts to collaborate with local landlords, through a branded Direct Lets scheme, helping to reserve a pool of homes that can be used for placements.
- Launching the *Engage before Eviction* service in August, promoting the team's role in negotiating and mediating between landlords and tenants to stave off eviction.
- Appointing a new specialist advisor role to help manage any additional homelessness demands arising from former asylum seekers who are granted leave to remain in the United Kingdom. There are around 350 asylum seekers housed in Home Office accommodation across the town.
- Tackling the increase in rough sleeping head on, working with other districts and boroughs to secure funding for the purchase of new homes, including a new short stay assessment unit in Ceylon Place, with space for eleven rough sleepers, who will be given intensive support and assistance with move-on to settled accommodation.

Through deploying these actions, the triage team has reduced the numbers of new presentations, whilst the case work team have directly helped 113 households retain or secure homes in the private rented sector. The numbers of households living in temporary accommodation has also been stabilised and is down from the peak of 326 placements in March.

Even with these measures in place, the Council is still on schedule to receive almost 1,500 homelessness applications across the year. So, to reduce pressures further a recent decision has been taken to prioritise the letting of social housing vacancies to those households living in temporary accommodation, above others on the waiting list. This decision will be kept under close review, and plans are afoot to rebalance allocations between homeless and other housing register applicants, alongside a full review of the allocations policy. This review has been commissioned and will report to Cabinet in early 2024.

3.4. **The view ahead**

The team is rolling out further plans to help tackle demand, including:

- Introducing a new 'dynamic procurement system', creating competition between accommodation providers to help reduce nightly charge rates.
- Enhancing the monitoring of registered provider's vacancies to ensure their commitments under nomination agreements are being fully met.
- Recruiting new officer roles to undertake early intervention visits in residents' homes, enhance capacity in the Wellbeing Service, and embed a dependency support worker in the team. All three roles have been secured with external funding.
- Working with domestic abuse support providers to look at how 'sanctuary schemes' can, for appropriate cases, safeguard residents in their existing homes.
- Holding further engagement events with partners. The September event attracted 200 colleagues from twenty partner agencies, many of whom are focussed on deploying key preventative measures on behalf of the service.

Finally, the move from a 'virtual hub' to office premises is imminent, providing a cohesive space for the team and partners, and increasing the capacity for joint working and up-front prevention.

All these steps will help stabilise demand, but securing lasting reductions in homelessness pressures and the associated budgetary threats will undoubtedly require the development of new models of temporary accommodation and a step change in the scale of delivery of new affordable homes.

4. Repairs & Maintenance

4.1. Operating context – key pressures on the service

- Inflation ⇒ Significant contract price rises, with the Mears contract price up by 28%.
- Supply chain ⇒ Prices of some materials rose by more than 50% post-Covid.
- Rent cap ⇒ Reduced income to fund repairs and capital investment in homes.
- Regulation ⇒ Increased capital works requirements on safety works & Decent Homes.
- Regulation ⇒ Higher monitoring and inspections costs to deliver new regime.
- Regulation ⇒ Increased liabilities and higher risk of regulatory breaches.
- Sustainability ⇒ Significant costs of upgrading the energy efficiency of Council homes.

4.2. Impact on repairs & asset management service

For repairs these pressures have meant that contract price costs have increased significantly, placing the available budgets within the HRA under greater financial pressure than in previous years. The resultant constraints on the service mean that careful choices about which repairs can be undertaken have to be made and that additional monitoring of spend on the budget is necessary.

On the capital works side budgets are also subject to substantial pressure, with funding only able to cover those works necessary to meet statutory health & safety regulations and Decent Homes standards, rather than the wider set of improvements that stock condition surveys indicate will be needed over the coming years.

These pressures are set against a backdrop of the tougher new regulatory Consumer Standards and sustainability targets, and as the most 'in demand' service, these will place maintenance delivery performance under even more intense scrutiny. Although consultation is ongoing, the new regulatory regime is expected to introduce more stringent data collection requirements, more regular inspections, and revised (possibly higher) Decent Homes standards. Maintaining compliance with these will introduce extra costs to business plans, whilst not maintaining compliance will introduce a much higher risk of regulatory breaches. The requirement for providers to have all their stock rated at Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C or above by 2030, will require additional funding through HRA business plans.

4.3. Addressing the issues

A number of key actions have been put in place to help manage these constraints. For responsive repairs these have included taking call handling back in house to

improve the customer experience and efficiencies, and negotiating reduced levels of increases to the schedule of rates in the main responsive contract held with Mears.

For capital works a strict prioritisation of work types is the main tool being used to manage budgets, with the works focussed on safeguarding health and safety and upgrading electrical safety in tenants' homes taking priority.

4.4. **The view ahead**

The actions above can only be deployed as short-term measures, and it is clear that further steps are needed to bridge the gap between required works and the funding available. Some positive plans that will help are already on the horizon, including:

- Delivering IT and process updates that will allow CX to be used as the lead system for managing repairs, enabling the integration of commitment accounting with finance systems, and making more accurate data available to inform stock investment plans. These measures will improve transparency and allow costs to be better controlled.
- Re-tendering repairs contracts to facilitate the appointment of multiple and specialised contractors, reducing costs by introducing competitiveness into the local market, and lowering the charges associated with the sub-contracting of works. The plan is to implement the new contracts from April 2025.
- Giving careful consideration as to how targeted disposals can play a more effective role in supporting the funding of capital works, and whether Council housing companies can be used as a vehicle to fund the renovation of high-cost voids (which could then be used as temporary accommodation for homeless households).

5. **Income Collection**

5.1. **Operating context – key pressures on the service**

- Cost of living ⇒ Tenants are impacted more as they have lower incomes.
- Inflation ⇒ Tenants may prioritise spend on rising food / utility costs over rent.
- Rent cap ⇒ Despite the cap, rent increases are higher than in past years so are having a major impact on tenant incomes.

5.2. **Impact on the service**

The service is performing well, with arrears at the end of August standing at 3.35%. This figure is below the 4% target and lower than the level a year ago, bucking the wider trend of increasing arrears across the sector. These outcomes are even more encouraging, given the risk to rent collection associated with the predicted impact of the 7% rent increase on tenant's budgets.

Below the headline figures there are some limited causes for concern, with the average amount of arrears rising by 4% (from £582 to £607) since April, and the number of households in debt increasing by 6% (from 892 to 946 households) across the same period. These trends need to be closely monitored.

5.3. **Addressing the issues**

This performance has been achieved by applying a balanced approach to support and enforcement, using a dedicated team of officers focussed on delivering early interventions when arrears arise, supporting tenants to manage their budgets, and producing advice and awareness campaigns targeted at tenants, as well as wider groups of residents across the town. Over the past year this work has included:

- Promoting the take up of Government and Council funded cost-of-living support, via targeted online campaigns, at cost-of-living and Homes First roadshows, in tenant newsletters and in leaflets accompanying rent increase letters.
- Deploying a rigorous process to secure direct payments for any Universal Credit recipients with a history of arrears, or those requiring support with budgeting skills.
- Promoting the availability of Discretionary Housing Payments to eligible private and social housing tenants.
- Signposting residents to commissioned services, including local partners at Citizens Advice, Brighton Housing Trust, and local foodbanks.
- Working closely with Homes First's Tenancy Resolution & Wellbeing teams to provide additional support to those tenants living with complex needs, who can often experience concurrent issues of debt, exploitation, and anti-social behaviour.

5.4. **The view ahead**

The overriding focus will be on maintaining the current approach to rent collection (it is working), whilst keeping track of a number of emerging risks that could increase pressures on the service over the coming year. These risks include:

- Concerns about the impact of the April 2024 rent increase. There is no indication as to whether the Government intends to follow a CPI+1%, or a capped increase next year, but either will result in a high rent uplift for a second successive year.
- Similar concerns about the impact of service charge increases, which are uncapped and can have a dis-proportionate impact on tenants living in blocks and on estates.
- Further cuts to the amounts awarded to support discretionary housing payments, which have already seen 29% reductions applied over the past two years.
- An acceleration of the rollout of Universal Credit, which will reduce the amount of direct payments to Homes First, amend the levels of rent support that some claimants receive, and increase the risk of delays and disruption to payment cycles.

To help address these the team will continue to work with advice agencies to offer targeted support to those tenants transitioning to Universal Credit, alongside the additional support offered to tenants living with complex needs. New work will focus on delivering data driven interventions to help better determine which tenants are likely to fall into arrears and delivering plans to automate some aspects of rent collection, utilising autodial, and SMS facilities.

6. New home delivery

6.1. Operating context – key pressures on the service

- Inflation ⇒ Increasing costs impacting HRA capital funds available for development.
- Rent cap ⇒ Reducing income impacting HRA capital funds available for development.
- Inflation & interest ⇒ Higher build and borrowing costs impacting scheme viability.
- Inflation & interest ⇒ maximising rents charged reducing tenant affordability.
- Regulation ⇒ Higher costs of stock maintain divert investment from new homes.

6.2. Impact on the service

These pressures continue to impact on the Councils ability to deliver new homes, reducing capital funds available for development and stretching the viability of individual schemes. Along with other local authorities the Council has been actively lobbying the Department for Levelling Up, and through this has managed to secure small reductions in Public Works Loan Board borrowing rates and increased levels of Right to Buy receipt retentions for the next year. These measures are welcome but will not alone resolve the extent of the financial pressures faced. Grants from Government remain available for affordable housing (Affordable Homes Programme 2021- 26), which the Council has successfully secured on its own schemes, but the amount offered has not increased proportionately with cost rises in the current operating environment.

These same pressures face private developers, and the pipeline of affordable homes contributions secured via Section 106 agreements, which is already impacted via viability constraints in the town, is likely to come under further pressure.

For prospective tenants, rents at or close to 80% market rents create affordability challenges, particularly for working tenants not in receipt of full housing welfare benefits, and those tenants that are looking to move into work or increase their hours.

6.3. Addressing the issues

Despite these challenges the team is delivering a pipeline of new developments, helping meet the Corporate Plan commitments to build new Council homes. This diverse programme of sustainable new build schemes and acquisitions, which uses a mix of HRA capital funding and Government grants, comprises of around 150 homes, including:

- Thirteen recently handed over homes at Brede Close and Fort Lane.
- Nineteen homes at the Glenn, Southfields Road, scheduled to handover this Autumn.
- Twenty homes at Calverley Close, Old Town, scheduled for completion in 2024/25.
- Up to thirty purchases, utilising funding secured from the *Single Homeless Accommodation*, *Next Steps Accommodation*, and *Local Authority Housing* funding programmes. These are providing new homes for former rough

sleepers, and families arriving through the *Ukrainian Family* and *Afghan Resettlement* schemes.

Beyond these schemes feasibility and early due diligence is being undertaken across a further nineteen Council-owned brownfield land sites, identified as having the joint capacity to deliver around 60 new homes.

6.4. **The view ahead**

The team are working hard to deliver this new housing supply, which is providing valuable new affordable homes, but the numbers are simply not enough to meet the level of demand resulting from local housing pressures. So, alongside these the Council is actively considering alternative ways of boosting affordable housing delivery, by working with partners to enable development, through:

- Accelerating work to understand the opportunities and constraints of 'key development sites', each with the potential to accommodate more than 25 homes. There are 28 such sites across the town, including three in the Meads area due to be vacated by the University of Brighton next year.
- Reviewing levels of section 106 housing provision and taking steps to ensure that all opportunities for maximising affordable housing quotas are being taken.
- Participating in 'One Public Estate', a consortium of public agencies, including the NHS, East Sussex College Group and East Sussex County Council, reviewing estate strategies to identify sites that can be brought forward for residential development.
- Developing a more active programme of engagement with registered housing providers, to promote the availability of sites across the town and check their appetite for development or regeneration.

As part of a forward plan the Council are also considering options for delivering lower cost temporary accommodation for homeless households, via the purchase of accommodation for use as hostels, long-term leasing, new mechanisms to fund the refurbishment of high-cost voids in HRA stock, and the capacity for change of use for under-utilised retirement housing blocks.

This work will be steered through the Affordable Homes Working Group, a newly convened meeting of officers who regularly discuss how planning, development and allocations can best meet housing demand.

7. **Tenancy Services**

7.1. **Operating context – key pressures on the service**

- Cost of living ⇒ Tenants experience lower wellbeing and are left more vulnerable.
- Inflation ⇒ Tenants may restrict spend on food / utilities again impacting wellbeing.
- Rent cap ⇒ Rent increases drive financial hardship and susceptibility to exploitation.
- Inflation ⇒ Restricting funding available to maintain communal areas and estates.

7.2. **Impact on the service**

Cost-of-living pressures have had a dis-proportionate impact on social housing tenants, with rising levels of financial hardship resulting in Homes First managing greater numbers of marginalised households, who experience lower levels of wellbeing and higher degrees of vulnerability.

These higher levels of marginalisation have contributed to more anti-social behaviour (ASB) being reported to the team and left more vulnerable households at risk of domestic abuse, addiction, and exploitation. At the end of June 2023 the team was managing an active case load of 124 serious cases of ASB, harassment and domestic abuse.

The look and feel of estates are a key concern for tenants, as well as being a key driver of satisfaction overall. The budgetary challenges set out in section 3, above, are placing severe restrictions on the level of communal and external decorations being undertaken, and there is real concern that this will lead to a rapid deterioration of the look and feel of the Council's estates.

7.3. **Addressing these challenges**

The service has put in place a number of strategies and plans to help reduce the impact that these issues are having on local communities, to help manage the associated risks and the impact of vulnerability on tenants. These include:

- Implementing a triage approach to tackling ASB, hate crime and domestic abuse. The most serious cases are now managed by a dedicated Tenancy Resolution Team, whilst lower-level cases remain with specialist advisers, to be managed alongside other tenancy issues.
- Deploying a balanced approach of enforcement and support, focussing on early intervention, close working relationships with the police, and effective signposting to other partners where cases are precipitated by mental health issues or other complexities.
- Pursuing possession orders and eviction through the courts to address high-risk and serious cases of ASB, or where the earlier action taken has not worked.
- Employing a dedicated officer to support residents displaying hoarding behaviours, signposting them to services that can address associated anxieties, whilst delivering practical help to de-clutter and tidy homes. Better Care funding has been used to support the programme, which is currently working with 45 residents.
- Supporting multi-agency forums that tackle high-risk cases of ASB, hate crime and the exploitation of tenants by criminal gangs through cuckooing (where vulnerable residents homes are taken over for use as drug dealing dens).
- Appointing a specialist advisor to renew how Homes First respond to tenants reporting domestic abuse, delivering an approach aligned to the DAHA¹¹ accreditation scheme. This places the interests of victims at the centre of actions designed to promote safeguarding and reduce risk. So far this year the service has supported 79 residents.

¹¹ Domestic Abuse & Housing Alliance (DAHA) standards - [Who we are - daha - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance \(dahalliance.org.uk\)](https://www.dahalliance.org.uk)

Over the past year the team have put in place a new approach to recording estate and block inspections, supported by new processes agreed with Neighbourhood First and new software. Related initiatives have included improving the quality of information on estate inspection boards and introducing branded uniforms as part of a programme to improve Homes First's visibility on estates. A detailed review of all estate service contracts is currently underway, but concerns remain that any resulting improvements could be impacted by the lack of external decorations in the capital programme.

7.4. **The view ahead.**

Over the next year the team plan to further enhance the support offer to tenants:

- Working with Brighton Housing Trust, the ESCC commissioned housing support provider, to review service levels and ensure that the impact of referrals is optimised.
- Drawing on the expertise of a new drug and alcohol support worker, to assist current tenants living with dependency issues.
- Harnessing the power of data tools currently deployed by the income maximisation team, to help identify tenants experiencing financial hardship and tailor the support offered.
- Implementing outcomes from the review of estate service delivery, to drive value for tenants and help mitigate the impact of reduced redecorations on the look and feel of estates.

8. **Corporate Plan & Council Policies**

8.1. Taking steps to address the challenges presented by the current operating context, will help support the successful delivery of the Eastbourne Corporate Plan 2022-2026 (refreshed), which sets out clear goals for the Council to:

- Increase the number of new homes purchased and built.
- Reduce the number of families housed in temporary and emergency accommodation.
- Utilise public sector land and assets, in discussion with other partners.
- Promote sustainable, quality, affordable homes, including low-cost home ownership.

Over the coming months officers will continue to drive the delivery of the current steps being taken to counter these housing pressures and work new measures into 2024/25 business plans.

9. **Business case**

9.1. There is no single business case covering the subject matter of this report. Related strategies and plans set out how individual services are delivered and how targets are set and measured. These include housing & homelessness strategies, asset management strategies, and corporate plans.

10. **Financial appraisal**

10.1. The report above details the challenging financial and operational context in which the Council is delivering housing services. The issues are varied and complex

and ranges from the impact of inflation and increasing interest rates, the impact of government policy on rent setting, and the impact of increased homelessness and temporary accommodation pressures regionally where government subsidy payments only cover a proportion of the expenditure the council incurs. The Quarter Two financial monitoring report which is also being presented to committee highlights the scope of financial pressures the council faces. However, this report also identifies several strategies that should reduce the financial impact to the council and help to mitigate the financial pressure that have been identified [in the Q2 finance report].

Deputy Chief Finance Officer consulted on 7th November 2023.

11. Legal implications

- 11.1. Legal advice has been, and will continue to be, taken in respect of the numerous work streams arising out of this report and in respect of legislative changes that impact upon the provision of housing services.

Lawyer consulted: 13th November 2023 (Legal ref: 12514-JOINT-KS).

12. Risk management implications

- 12.1 Specific risks associated with this report are set out in the individual business plans and strategies associated with the services delivered. However, a sector risk assessment issued every Autumn by the Regulator of Social Housing, provides a useful barometer of the key issues facing the sector. The 2022 statement highlighted many of the issues covered in this report, including the risks associated with:

- Inflationary and interest rate pressures, labour shortages and supply chain disruption.
- Failure to ensure that homes are maintained to Decent Homes standards and an inability to respond effectively where dis-repair is reported.
- Evidence of systematic failure to maintain properties by some sector providers.
- Failure to comply with health & safety obligations in full.
- A lack of preparation for new requirements set out in the Building Safety Act 2022.
- Not taking measures to protect rental income by failing to identify tenants at risk and not offering them adequate support.
- Providers failing to meet their core obligations of providing good quality housing services to tenants.
- Not having in place plans to meet new regulatory requirements strengthening obligations to engage with tenants and provide them with transparent reports of performance.

13. Equality analysis

- 13.1. There are no direct equality implications for the Council arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

14. Environmental impact analysis

14.1. There are no direct environmental impact implications for the Council arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

15. Appendices

15.1. None

16. Background papers

16.1. None.

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Agenda Item 14

Report to: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 04 December 2023

Title: Council Tax Discounts and Premiums

Report of: Tim Whelan, Director of Service Delivery

Cabinet member: Councillor Robin Maxted, Cabinet member for finance and resources

Ward(s): All wards

Purpose of report: To determine the level of certain Council Tax discounts and Council Tax premiums with effect from 1 April 2024 and 1 April 2025

Decision type: Budget and policy framework

Officer recommendations to the Cabinet: The Cabinet recommend to full Council the approval and implementation of the following:

1. From 1 April 2024
 - (a) The adoption of a standard 0% discount for all Class C and D chargeable dwellings; and
 - (b) Levying the maximum level of premium i.e.:
 - Premium of 100% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) after 1 years up to 5 years of becoming empty;
 - Premium of 200% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) between 5 years and up to 10 years; and
 - Premium of 300% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) for 10 years or more.
2. From 1 April 2025
 - (a) The continued application of 0% discount for Class C & D and Empty Homes premiums at 100% effective when dwellings have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 1 year; and
 - (b) The application of a premium (Second Homes Premium) of 100% for all dwellings the are no one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished.
3. Exception to premiums

Where premiums are to be applied, the Council is mindful of the current consultation by government which recommends exceptions in certain circumstances outlined within this report. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, it is recommended that the Section 151 Officer is given delegated powers to implement the Council's policy on premiums in line with statute, the Council's requirements and any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

Reasons for recommendations: (a) To reduce the number of empty homes within the Borough in line with the Council's Empty Homes Strategy; and

(b) To encourage the use of premises as main residences by local residents rather than second homes.

Officer recommendations to the Scrutiny Committee The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.

Contact Officer(s): Name: Nick Ducatel
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The report identifies decisions required by full Council and makes recommendations to change the Council's approach in respect of certain discretionary areas within Council Tax legislation. In the main, the changes will take effect from 1 April 2024. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act will allow the Council to make further amendments to the levying of Council Tax premiums within the Borough with effect from both 1 April 2024 and 1 April 2025.
- 1.2 A large part of the Council Tax legislation is mandatory on all billing authorities within England. Discounts (such as Single Person Discounts), disregards and exemptions are set by statute with very little discretion allowed. However, there are a number of areas where each Council may determine the type and levels of charge to be made.
- 1.3 The main discretionary areas in place currently are as follows:
- (a) Second homes (premises which are no-one's sole or main residence but are furnished);
 - (b) Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished premises;
 - (c) Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished premises which require or are undergoing structural repairs; and
 - (d) Currently, premiums where premises have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a period exceeding 2 years.
- 1.4 When determining its policy, each billing authority has to decide the level of discount (if any) to be granted and the amounts (percentage) of any premium by the 31 March prior to the financial year in which it wants to introduce the changes.
- 1.5 Where a change is proposed, there is a requirement to determine the level of any discount or premium and a decision is now required to be made by full Council under Section 11A, 11B and the new 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 1.6 Once determined, any resolution of the Council will be published in a local newspaper(s) within 21 days of the decision.

The current situation

1.7 Currently there are 281 Long term empty properties and 781 second homes within the Borough and the Council has adopted the following level of discounts and premiums.

	Current policy
Second Homes No one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished. 28-day planning restriction ¹ (Class A)	0% discount
Second Homes No one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished. No planning restriction ² (Class B)	0% discount
Class C (Unoccupied dwelling with is substantially unfurnished)	100% discount for 4 weeks only
Class D Structural repairs (Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) (Maximum 12 months)	50% discount for 12 months only
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes premium) After 2 years and up to 5 years of becoming empty.	50% premium
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) Dwellings empty between 5 years and up to 10 years	50% premium
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) Dwellings empty for 10 years or more	50% premium

1.8 Until the legislation changed in 2013, mandatory exemptions would have been granted in place of Class C and Class D discounts giving a period of no charge for 6 months and 12 months respectively. It can be seen that, since that time, the Council, along with the majority of other billing authorities in England, has reduced the 'discount' available.

1.9 Class C discount was changed to 0% on 1 April 2020 and Class D remains as detailed above. The Council levies a 100% Council Tax charge on empty dwellings (homes) and dwellings in Class D would be subject to a 100% charge once the discount period had ended. Second homes are immediately charged at 100%.

¹ restricted by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days

² the occupation of which is **not restricted** by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year.

- 1.10 Premiums were also introduced by government in 2013 with a view to encouraging homeowners to occupy homes and not leave them vacant in the long term. Initially premiums could only be charged at 50% but current legislation has now changed to allow a progressive charge to be made as follows:
- Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 2 years or more, up to 100%;
 - Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 5 years or more, up to 200%; and
 - Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 10 years or more, up to 300%.
- 1.11 The Council has continued to charge premiums at the original level of 50% and it should be noted that premiums are charged in addition to the 100% Council Tax payable on empty premises.
- 1.12 Government, together with local authorities (including the Borough) has unfortunately seen a rise of in the number of empty homes together with a growth in second homes. Inconsistencies in the legislation have also been identified whereby a premium can be avoided by the taxpayer merely furnishing an empty premises, when it would become a 'second home' which currently has a maximum charge of 100%. The Council has previously identified this and, for a number of years, has proposed changes in the legislation to avoid this 'loophole'.
- 1.13 By amending the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the recently enacted Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 ('the 2023 Act') addresses these inconsistencies and also brings more dwellings into use. This report makes recommendations to change the discounts currently being granted by the Council and also to introduce changes to the regimes for charging premiums as allowed within the legislation.

Changes to empty homes premiums (From 1 April 2024)

- 1.14 Section 80(1)(b) of the 2023 Act will permit billing authorities in England to impose an empty homes premium after one year instead of two. This gives effect to a commitment made by Government in the [Levelling Up White Paper](#) .
- 1.15 Section 80(1)(a) provides that billing authorities must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State when deciding whether to implement an empty homes premium and it is expected that the current guidance drafted by government in 2013 will be updated. This change to guidance will come into effect from the 2024/25 financial year.
- 1.16 Sections 81(2) and 81(4) provide that from 1 April 2024, a property can be charged an empty homes premium at 100% after one year, **even** if it became empty before 1 April 2024.

Introduction of premiums for second homes (From 1 April 2025)

- 1.17 At present, English billing authorities may only impose an empty homes premium on properties that are 'unoccupied and substantially unfurnished'. This term is defined via case law, not in legislation. However, it does not cover dwellings that are no one's sole or main residence but are furnished. An empty homes premium

could, therefore, not be imposed on properties that are maintained as second homes for regular use by their owners.

- 1.18 Clause 73 of the Bill will insert a new section 11C into the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This will permit billing authorities to apply a premium to properties that have no resident and are “substantially furnished”. The maximum Council Tax charge in these cases would be a standard 100% charge plus, if the recommendations are accepted by Council, a premium of 100% making a total Council Tax charge of 200%.
- 1.19 There would be no requirement for a property to have been used as a second home for a fixed period of time before the premium can apply.
- 1.20 As with other changes introduced by the Bill, section 11C (3) requires that the first decision to impose this class of premium must be taken at least 12 months before the financial year to which it would apply. In effect this means that premiums for second homes will not take effect until the 2025/26 financial year at the earliest. However, it is essential that a decision is made by Council before 31 March 2024 to give the required one year notice.
- 1.21 The Bill provides that a dwelling cannot be subject to both a second homes premium and an empty homes premium imposed under section 11B of the 1992 Act, and that an existing empty homes premium would cease to apply to a property which became subject to a second homes premium.

Premiums – generally

- 1.22 In line with all similar legislation, any decision made by the Council must be publicised in at least one local newspaper, within 21 days of its being taken.
- 1.23 Should the Council at any time wish to vary or revoke a decision to impose any type of premium, this can be done at any time before the beginning of the financial year to which it would apply.
- 1.24 The Secretary of State has the power to prescribe certain classes of property that will not be subject to an empty homes premium. Currently these are homes that are empty due to the occupant living in armed forces accommodation for job-related purposes, or annexes being used as part of a main property.
- 1.25 In line with that, a consultation has also been issued by government on proposals to delay the application of premiums and it is expected that the areas included in the consultation will form either guidance or regulations which authorities will be required to adhere to.

Changes proposed from 1st April 2024

- 1.26 The continued pressure on local authority finances (both the Borough Council and the Major Preceptors) together with the need to encourage all owners of domestic premises to bring them back into use, makes it essential that the Council changes its approach to empty homes.
- 1.27 From 1 April 2024, the Council has the opportunity to make changes to both its discretionary discounts and also to the current premium regime in order to

maximise its income and that of the major preceptors (in proportion to their share of the Council Tax). **In view of this, it is recommended that the Council adopt the following changes with effect from 1 April 2024 as follows :**

	Current policy	Proposed policy
Second Homes No one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished. 28-day planning restriction ³ (Class A)	0% discount	0% discount (no change)
Second Homes No one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished. No planning restriction ⁴ (Class B)	0% discount	0% discount (no change)
Class C (Unoccupied dwelling with is substantially unfurnished)	100% discount for 4 weeks only	0% discount
Class D Structural repairs (Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) (Maximum 12 months)	50% discount for 12 months only	0% discount
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty homes premium) After 1 year up to 5 years of becoming empty.	50% premium	100% premium
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty homes Premium) Dwellings empty between 5 years and up to 10 years	50% premium	200% premium
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty homes Premium) Dwellings empty for 10 years or more	50% premium	300% premium

1.28 The proposed changes with effect from 1 April 2024 will effectively align the Council's position with a large majority of billing authorities and, in the case of premiums adopt the maximum level available within the new legislation.

Changes proposed from 1st April 2025

³ **restricted** by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days

⁴ the occupation of which is **not restricted** by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year.

- 1.29 From 1 April 2025, the new legislation will allow all English billing authorities to charge a premium of up to 100% on second homes (no one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished).
- 1.30 The intention of the legislation change is to close the current loophole in relation of empty homes premium and also encourage the use of second homes as a primary residences.
- 1.31 **It is recommended that the Council resolves to apply a premium of 100% on second homes with effect from 1 April 2025.** The legislation requires that the authority gives at least one year's notice from the date of a full Council resolution and the change can only be effective from the commencement of a financial year, the earliest being 1 April 2025.
- 1.32 In line with the legislation, the Council must be mindful of guidance issued by the Secretary of State and any application of the premiums must take accounts of any exceptions laid down within regulation.

Exceptions from the premiums (empty homes premiums and second homes premium)

- 1.33 For information, government has released a consultation paper entitled [Consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England](#). The consultation (which has now ended), sought views on possible categories of dwellings which should be dealt with as exceptions to the council tax premiums. It covers the empty homes premium, and also the second homes premium, provisions for which are included within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.
- 1.34 The consultation proposes that there will be circumstances where either premiums will either not apply or be deferred for a defined period of time. These are as follows:
- **Properties undergoing probate** - the government proposes that these properties should be exceptions to both the second homes and empty homes premiums for 12 months. The exception would start once probate or letters of administration is granted. This does not affect the Class F exemption or the ability for billing authorities to charge the normal rate of council tax following the expiry of the Class F exemption;
 - **Properties that are being actively marketed for sale or rent** - the government proposes that this exception would apply for up to a maximum of 6 months from the date that active marketing commenced, or until the property has been sold or rented, whichever is the sooner. It will be essential that the Council will need to determine in its policy, what evidence will be required to support any exception;
 - **Empty properties undergoing major repairs - time limited to 6 months** - the government proposes that empty properties undergoing major repair works or structural alternations should be an exception to the premium for up to 6 months once the exception has been applied or when the work has been completed, whichever is the sooner. The exception could be applied at any time after the property has been empty for at least 12 months, so long as the Council is satisfied that the necessary repair work is being undertaken;

- **Annexes forming part of, or being treated as, part of the main dwelling** - the government proposes that such annexes should be an exception to the council tax premium on second homes;
- **Job related dwellings** - currently, there is a council tax discount of up to 50% for properties which are unoccupied because the owner is required to live elsewhere for employment purposes. The discount applies where the dwelling is provided for the better performance of the duties of the employment, and it is one of the kinds of employment in the case of which it is customary for employers to provide dwellings for employees. The government proposes that the dwelling should also be an exception to the second homes premium. The exception will not apply to cases where someone chooses to have an additional property to be closer to work while having a family home elsewhere or where an individual is posted to a new location but maintain their previous address;
- **Occupied caravan pitches and houseboat moorings** - the government proposes that these caravans and boats should be an exception to the council tax premium on second homes; and
- **Seasonal homes where year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited or has been specified for use as holiday accommodation or prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence** - the government proposes that properties that have restrictions or conditions preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in any 12-month period, or specifies its use as a holiday let, or prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence, should be an exception to the second homes premium.

1.35 It is understood that regulations or guidance (which has to be followed in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill) will be in line with government's proposal. In view of this, the Council will need to ensure that any charging policy is in line with legislation. **It is therefore recommended that the Council's Section 151 Officer is granted delegated powers to amend the Council's policy of premiums in line with legislative or government requirements.**

2 Outcome expected and 'safety net'.

2.1 The expected outcomes of the recommendations are as follows:

- (a) Taxpayers will be encouraged, through the changes in discounts and the implementation of the premiums, to bring empty properties into use and to revert the use of second homes to primary residences;
- (b) The reduction of empty homes and second homes within the Borough in line with the Council's Empty Property Strategy; and
- (c) Increased Council Tax income from empty homes and second homes.

2.2 There may be circumstances where the implementation of these changes (percentage increase in the level of premiums) may cause exceptional hardship to a taxpayer. In such cases, the Council will consider applications for a reduction in liability under its Section 13A (1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 - Reduction in Council Tax liability policy.

2.3 Where such an application is received, it will be considered on an individual case basis taking into account the circumstances of the taxpayer and the situation

regarding the level of Council Tax charged. Should the taxpayer be aggrieved by any decision of the Council a further right of appeal will be with the independent Valuation Tribunal.

3 Consultation

3.1 There is no statutory requirement to consult on any matters contained within this report. However, a resolution must be passed by full Council on or before the 31 March 2024 in order for the changes to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2024. In the case of second homes premium, a resolution made on or before 31 March 2024 will allow the premium to come into force from 1 April 2025 (its earliest commencement date).

4 Corporate plan and council policies

4.1 The recommendations in the report are in line with the following Council policies:
 (a) Corporate Plan 2022 -26 - by bringing back empty properties into use;
 (b) Sustainability Policy - by enabling communities to thrive; and
 (c) The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy - by increasing the Council Tax Base.

5 Business case and alternative option(s) considered.

5.1 Should the Council decide not to accept the recommendations, the existing discounts and premiums will remain in place.

6 Financial appraisal

6.1 Should the recommendations be accepted; any additional income would be shared with both the Council and the major preceptors in proportion to their share of the collection fund. Based on current modelling, the increase in Council Tax is estimated to be as follows:

2024/25

	Current policy	Recommendations	Estimated income per annum
Second Homes No one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished. 28-day planning restriction (Class A)	0% discount	0% discount (no change)	N/A
Second Homes No one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished. No planning restriction (Class B)	0% discount	0% discount (no change)	N/A
Class C (Unoccupied dwelling with is substantially unfurnished)	100% discount for 4 weeks only	0% discount	£312k

	Current policy	Recommendations	Estimated income per annum
Class D Structural repairs (Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) (Maximum 12 months)	50% discount for 12 months only	0% discount	£58k
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty homes premium) After 1 years up to 5 years of becoming empty.	50% premium	100% premium	£376k
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty homes premium) Dwellings empty between 5 years and up to 10 years	50% premium	200% premium	£118k
Premium - Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty homes premium) Dwellings empty for 10 years or more	50% premium	300% premium	£113k

2025/26

	Current policy	Recommendations	Estimated income per annum
Second Homes Premium No one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished. Premium of 100% is charged in addition to the second home Council Tax charge of 100%	N/A	100% premium	£1.510m

6.2 It should be noted that, should the recommendations be accepted, any additional income detailed above, the Council and preceptor shares would be:

	2024/25	2025/26	% Share
Total Additional Council Tax Raised	£977,000	£2,487,000	
Eastbourne Borough Council	£118,217	£300,927	12%
East Sussex County Council	£714,187	£1,817,997	73%
Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner	£99,654	£253,674	10%
East Sussex Fire and Rescue	£44,942	£114,402	5%

6.3 The award of any S13A(1)(C) (reduction in liability) is a general fund expense and would normally be met in full by the Council. In view of the fact that the additional funds from the changes in discounts and premiums proposed in this report are shared with major preceptors, it is proposed that the cost of any award are met from the collection fund.

6.4 **It is recommended that the Council's Section 151 Officer is authorised to agree with the major preceptors the funding of any award under S13A(1)(C) (reduction in liability) from the collection fund as outlined within 2.2.**

7 Legal implications

7.1 The legislation relevant to this report is as follows:

- section 11A (discounts: special provision for England) and section 11B (higher amount for long-term empty dwellings: England) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ('the 1992 Act');
- section 11C (higher amount for dwellings occupied periodically) of the 1992 Act (an amendment made by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023); and
- section 13A(1)(c) (reductions by billing authority) of the 1992 Act.

7.2 Where Cabinet's recommendations are accepted, a resolution is to be made by full Council.
The decision needs to be published in at least one local newspaper.

7.3 Due to the changes in the legislation, the Council will be required by statute to be mindful of any regulations under section 11D of the 1992 Act and guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Date of legal input: 31.10.23

Legal ref: 012479-JOINT-OD

8 Risk management implications

8.1 The main risk associated with the implication of the recommendations (both the changes to discounts and premiums) will be the increase in non-compliance, with some taxpayers actively trying to avoid the new charges by providing incorrect information to the Council.

8.2 The Council already has processes and procedures in place in order to ensure that **all** charges are applied correctly. Further compliance procedures will be established to ensure that the new second homes premium is applied in accordance with the legislation and the Council's requirement.

9 Equality analysis

9.1 There are no anticipated impacts on protected characteristics associated with this report. The proposals do, however, include the potential generating of positive outcomes for local people who are struggling to secure sustainable accommodation in the district/borough, and may subsequently ease current inequalities around access to local homes.

10 Environmental sustainability implications

- 10.1 The recommendations are directly in line with the Council's Sustainability Policy - by enabling communities to thrive. The recommendations are designed to bring empty homes back into use and to encourage second home owners to ensure that the dwellings are used as a primary residence.
- 10.2 The additional income from the changes to discounts and premiums will be shared, as part of the collection fund, with both the Council and the major preceptors in accordance with their share of the Council Tax.

11 Background papers

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

[Levelling Up White Paper](#)

[Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill \(Bill 169 2022-23\)](#)

[Consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England](#)

Report to:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	04 December 2023
Title:	Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030: Annual Report
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Planning and Regeneration
Cabinet member:	Councillor Jim Murray, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Water Champion
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To note progress to date and approve publication of the Annual Update (Appendix 1)
Decision type:	Key
Officer recommendation(s):	Cabinet is recommended to: (1) Approve the ‘Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030’ Annual Update as attached in Appendix 1 for publication on the website (2) Note progress to date on the strategy and action plan as contained within Appendix 1 (3) Approve to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Lead Member for Climate Change, to complete a light touch refresh of the Climate Change Strategy and action plan in readiness for the new financial year 2024/5.
Reasons for recommendations:	To progress towards the aims of achieving Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030 as resolved in July 2019
Officer recommendation to the Scrutiny Committee	The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Jo Wunsch Post title: Sustainability Advisor E-mail: jo.wunsch@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01323 415120

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This paper reports on the progress of the Climate Emergency Strategy and action plan adopted two years ago that was approved by Cabinet in November 2020 as a result of the Climate Emergency Declaration made at Full Council in July 2019. The strategy sets out the borough wide vision for Eastbourne Carbon Neutrality by 2030 (ECN2030).
- 1.2 Appendix 1 has been brought forward for approval by Cabinet and contains detail that is summarised within this report. The Appendix will be placed as a standalone document on the council's climate change web page and will sit alongside the full strategy.
- 1.3 The report provides a summary emission report for the year 2022/23 along with a progress summary against the baseline year 2018/19.

The baseline and all subsequent years have been adjusted to account for gas consumption at the Congress Theatre and Welcome Building, and for gas and electricity consumption at the Sovereign Centre.

- The emissions trend shows that there has been an overall 20% reduction on the baseline year.
 - There has been a 16% decrease in emissions from gas consumption and 30% decrease in electricity consumption.
 - There has been a reduction in fuel use of just over 22%.
- 1.4 Scope 3 (indirect) emissions data has been expanded. Work continues to improve the amount and quality of the data collected to enable the council to manage and reduce those emissions for which it is responsible.
 - 1.5 The carbon footprint of the borough for 2020 has reduced by 14.5% from 2018.

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), now Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) has reported local authority data in CO₂ equivalents but they have only back dated this re-calculation to 2018.

The borough has had an annual reduction of 8% on 2019 emissions.

The Tyndall Centre and the University of Manchester have carried out analysis that recommends a minimum of a 12.3% per year reduction to deliver a Paris aligned carbon budget. The borough as a whole is a long way off meeting this year-on-year reduction.

- 1.6 Partnership working remains key to the success of any local authority's climate change and carbon reduction ambitions and this is no different for Eastbourne Borough Council. Working with our partners such as: the Eastbourne ECO-Action Network; the Sussex Local Nature Partnership; the South Downs National Park and the Universities of Brighton and Sussex; as well as our neighbouring local authorities and other community groups, the council has progressed regional and local projects regarding:
 - Publication of Decarbonising our Housing Stock: Roadmap for 2030 zero carbon

- Enabled funding bids by others, in particular Treebournes' tree tagging / tree champion scheme to care for the 1000 streets planted in the town.
- Provided supporting evidence for Eastbourne Food Partnerships Sustainable Food Places bronze award application.
- Secured funding for 84 retrofits from Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) 2.
- Development of an affordable housing scheme in the town centre with low carbon heating, a green roof, and sustainable travel plan.
- Participation in Solar Together, a bulk purchase solar PV and storage scheme, 87 residents and 2 small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) have accepted offers from the scheme (as of October 2023).
- Delivery of 18 electric vehicle charge points aimed at residents with no access to off street charging in 3 council car parks.
- Enabled the Sustainable Transport Summit to take place on November 17th, organised by Eastbourne ECO-Action Network volunteers.
- Production of Carbon Neutral e-bulletin.

Other actions are detailed within the update to the Theme Areas and the Action Plan Update within Appendix 1.

2 Eastbourne Borough Council Carbon Emission Report

- 2.1 This report provides a summary of the carbon report for the financial year 2022/23, along with a comparison with the baseline 2018/19.
- 2.2 From 2018/19 to 2022/23, the council's scope 1 and 2 emissions have reduced by 20% in total.

From 2022, reporting began on the Sovereign Centre gas, electricity, and water; and the gas consumption of the Congress Theatre/Welcome Building complex. Due to the scale of the emissions from these two buildings, it has resulted in a re-calculation of each year reported to date, including the base year. The information in table 1 has been updated as a result and cannot be compared to updates prior to 2022.

- There has been a 16% decrease in emissions from gas consumption and 30% decrease in electricity consumption.
- There has been a reduction in fuel use of just over 22%.
- Electricity emissions are reported using the standard grid electricity factor. The council continues to purchase a Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) backed green tariff supply.

Table 1. Eastbourne Borough Council emissions table

<i>Emissions source</i>	<i>tonnes CO2e</i>				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Gas	2941	3094	2194	2484	2447
Liquid Fuel	815	752	779	690.5	633
Electricity	902.5	880	613	772	629
Total	4659	4726	3586	3947	3709

3 Scope 3 emissions

- 3.1 The council continues to expand upon its Scope 3 emissions reporting. This year's report is contained within Table 3 of Appendix 1.

The council acknowledges that its greatest source of emissions will be from purchasing and contracting and it continues to improve reporting methods. The council is starting to include clauses in contracts requiring suppliers to report emissions attributed to the contract. The council aims to include similar clauses in more contracts moving forward.

4 Eastbourne Borough Carbon Emissions Summary

- 4.1 This information can be found on page 8 of Appendix 1.

5 The Climate Emergency Strategy -Themes and Action Plan Update

- 5.1 The strategy currently contains 66 actions across 8 action areas. The full spreadsheet in section 5 sets out the detailed information of actions within each area.
45 (68%) actions are currently reported as green, 8 (13%) are amber, 0 are red and 12 (19%) complete.

Appendix 1 (page 18 onwards) sets out the full updated action plan.

6 Financial appraisal

- 6.1 There are no immediate Financial Implications arising from this report. However, many of the actions within this plan will have financial implications for the council. Before proceeding with any of them, financial evaluation will be undertaken to assess the costs and benefits. As work develops and further funding is required, schemes will be subject to individual business cases as appropriate in compliance with the council's Budget and Capital Strategies. The need to pursue and secure external grant funding, collaborating with other organisations is recognised.

7 Legal implications

- 7.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 created a framework for reducing the UK's carbon emissions. It legally binds the government to carbon budgets that set limits on the UK's greenhouse gas emissions during five-year periods. They include a target to be over three quarters of the way to net zero in the next 13 years. 'Net zero' means that the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK is equal to or lower than the amount of greenhouse gases removed from the atmosphere in the UK. The UK has also committed internationally to reduce its emissions by at least 68% by 2030 from 1990 levels, as part of its 'Nationally Determined Contribution' (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. In October 2021, BEIS issued The Net Zero Strategy, which sets out the government's policies and proposals to ensure the UK continues to meet its carbon budgets under the Climate

Change Act 2008 and achieves its NDC under the Paris Agreement. It also sets out the government's vision for a decarbonised economy in 2050.

- 7.2 The Climate Change Act did not include a statutory duty for local authorities to develop plans and deliver cuts in line with its carbon budgets. Nor did it set local authorities their own carbon budgets. However, this does not preclude local authorities from developing their own climate change and sustainability plans to enhance environmental conditions across their own areas and to contribute to national efforts. The council has power to do this under its general power of competence conferred by sections 1 to 4 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 7.3 It is legitimate (indeed advisable) for the council to work with other local organisations on a partnership basis to advance its plans. Paragraph 1.6s above and Appendix 1 sets out examples of such support and collaboration.
- 7.4 Action to reduce carbon emissions across the borough of Eastbourne is an executive function and proper for Cabinet to determine. Accordingly, Cabinet is the appropriate body to consider and approve the recommendations set out on page 1 of this report.

Legal input provided 21.11.23

Legal ref: 010465-EBC-OD

8 Equality analysis

- 8.1 An Equality Analysis already exists for this topic: Cabinet paper November 2020: [Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030: A Plan for Action](#)

Further analysis is done on a project-by-project basis.

9 Environmental sustainability implications

- 9.1 The strategy is key to delivering the carbon neutrality goal of Eastbourne Borough Council by 2030. It will seek to ensure that carbon implications are taken into account throughout the Council and in all decisions.

Implementation of actions to achieve carbon neutrality is key to mitigate the predicted negative impacts of climate change on the environment, economy and communities.

10 Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Eastbourne Climate Emergency Annual Report- December 2023

11 Background papers

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

- Cabinet paper November 2020: [Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030: A Plan for Action](#)
- Cabinet Paper November 2022: [Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030: Annual Report \(lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk\)](#)



EASTBOURNE

Carbon Neutral 2030

Eastbourne Borough Council

- Carbon Emissions Report
- Strategy Update



December 2023

Eastbourne Borough Council: Eastbourne Climate Emergency Strategy Update

December 2022

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1. Introduction

This update report on the progress of the Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030 Strategy adopted in November 2020 provides an overview of how work has progressed on the initial action plan and how this work has evolved over the last year. It provides a brief update to the evidence base and reports on the projects that have been delivered by the Council, the community and in partnership.

The Council provides a summary emission report for the year 2022/23 along with a progress summary against the baseline year 2018/19.

The borough emissions are reported using publicly available data produced by Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), formally Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). DESNZ/BEIS data is national and consistent over many years but only consists of scope 1 (direct emissions from fuel use) & 2 (electricity consumed) emissions within the local authority boundary.

No analysis is carried out on the borough data and it is provided for monitoring purposes only this year. A more in-depth analysis of borough emissions will be carried out in 2024/25. This should enable a review of the figures pre, during and post COVID-19 lockdowns.

2. Eastbourne Borough Council Carbon Emissions Report

This report provides a summary of the carbon report for the financial year 2022/23 along with a comparison against the baseline 2018/19.

2.1 Methodology

We have calculated the baseline using the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol methodology and the appropriate annual conversion factors for each year issued by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) previously Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). By using this method and these figures we are ensuring that the baseline emissions we measure can be reported accurately every year to 2030 using a peer reviewed and agreed process.

Eastbourne Borough Council generally uses the 'operational control' approach to define the organisational boundary and to inform the emissions inventory boundary described in the table below.

It should be noted however that with regards to metered gas and electricity, all sites, regardless of who operates the site, are considered to be in scope 1 or 2 if the council is responsible for paying the bills (even if these costs are re-charged to the leasee) AND for maintaining the premises. Where these conditions are not met the sites will sit within scope 3, for example Towner Art Gallery.

Scope 1 and 2 emissions form the organisational baseline and are considered to be directly controllable by the Council.

Category	Description	Data used in this analysis
Scope 1	Direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by Eastbourne Borough Council	Metered gas data (for buildings where the council pay the gas bills) Litres of fuel consumed for fleet vehicles and machinery
Scope 2	Indirect emissions from the generation of energy purchased by Eastbourne Borough Council	Metered electricity data (for buildings where the Council pay the electricity bills)
Scope 3	Indirect emissions that result from other activities that occur in the value chain, either upstream or downstream.	As per table 2.

2.2 Data summary & review

April 2018 to March 2022

From 2018/19 to 2022/23 the Council's scope 1 & 2 emissions have reduced by 20% in total.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of emissions by source.

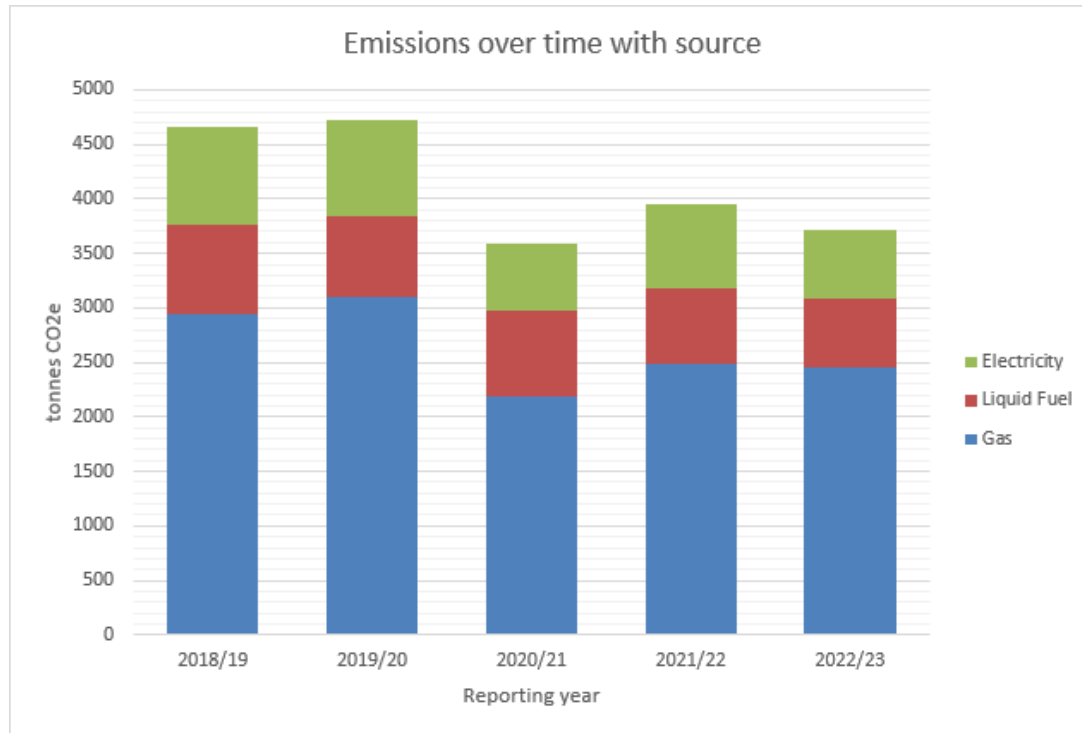
- There has been a 16% decrease in emissions from gas consumption and 30% decrease in electricity consumption.
- There has been a reduction in fuel use of just over 22%.
- Electricity emissions are reported using the standard grid electricity factor. The Council continues to purchase a Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) backed green tariff supply.

Graph 1 visually describes the main sources of emissions each year. The effect of the COVID lockdowns is most obvious here as is the consumption increase as a result of returning to normal. Gas remains the bulk of emissions and the most affected by the lockdown reduction as a result of reduced building use.

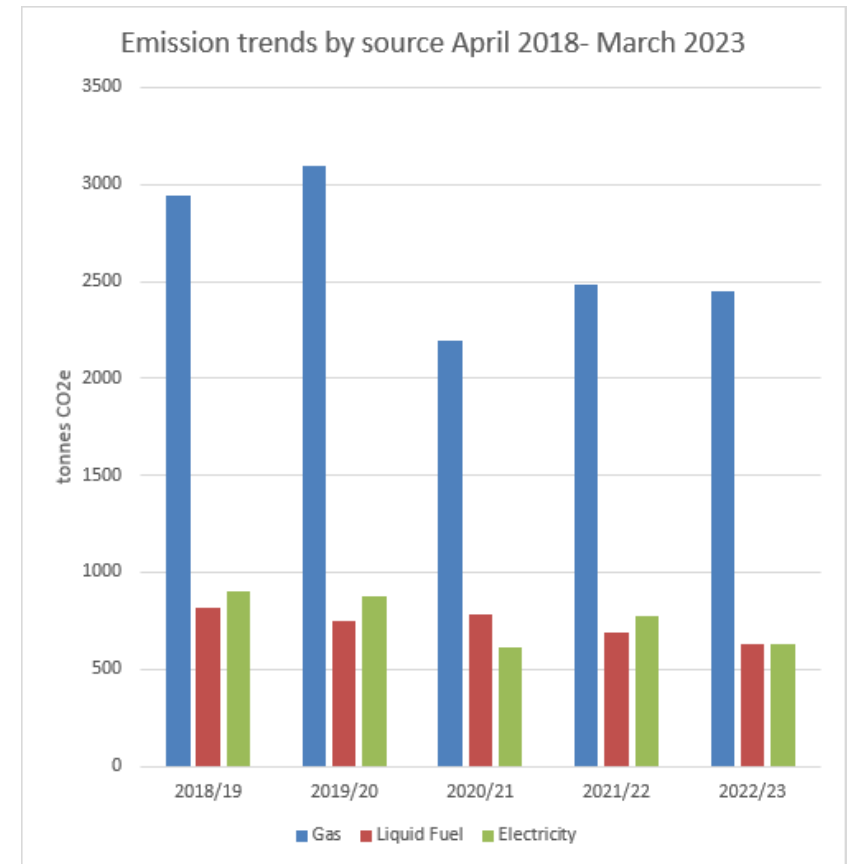
Table 1. Eastbourne Borough Council emissions table

<i>Emissions</i>					
<i>source</i>	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Gas	2941	3094	2194	2484	2447
Liquid Fuel	815	752	779	690.5	633
Electricity	902.5	880	613	772	629
Total	4659	4726	3586	3947	3709

Graph 1. Emissions over time



Graph 2. Emissions trends by source



2.3 Scope 3 emissions

The council continues to expand upon its Scope 3 emissions reporting. The council acknowledges that our greatest source of emissions will be from our purchasing and contracting and continues to improve reporting methods. The council is starting to include clauses in contracts requiring suppliers to report emissions attributed to the contract. We hope to include similar clauses in more contracts moving forward.

Table 2. Scope 3 emissions

Source	Data source and conversion	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Airbourne	Tourism team data records					6281
Elec transmission & distribution losses (Scope 2)	Utilities consumption information	79	64	53	68	32.3
Water supply & treatment	Direct from utility company		39	35	32	TBC
Water supply & treatment- Sovereign Centre	Direct from meter reads- NB. Substantial change/improvement to GHG conversion factors for 2021)	15	15	6	5	TBC
Towner Art Gallery- energy use only	Direct from consumption information (gas & elec)		232	125	153	TBC
Staff- Public transport	Revised method 21/22- Estimated km based on spend (rail assumed at 54p/mile)			0.3	0.8	6.6
Staff- Mileage	Calculated using miles claimed and an average petrol car			28	19	22.1
Grounds Maintenance contract (vehicle and machinery fuel)	Contractor				84	69.7
Housing Maintenance contract (vehicle fuel) 2021	Contractor				80	92.5
Wave Leisure facilities	To be calculated in 2024 - currently within scope 1 & 2- requires recalculation of the carbon baseline					
Well to tank (WTT) diesel (litres)			178	213	167	150.2
WTT unleaded (litres)			1.4	1.1	0.5	0.7
WTT gas (kWh gross CV)			268	236	276	253.5
WTT gas (m3)			134	50	337	165.7
WTT elec generated			104	68	201	105.2
WTT elec T&D			9	6	18	9.6
Total (tonnes CO2e)					1442	7189.2

3. Eastbourne Borough Carbon Emissions Summary

Data Source	2018	2019	2020	2021
DESNZ data- UK local authority and regional CO2 emissions – data tables (excel) 'territorial emissions'	304.7 kt CO ₂ e	282.4 kt CO ₂ e (7% reduction on 2018)	259.8 kt CO ₂ e (8% reduction on 2019)	277.4 (6% increase on 2020 but a 9% decrease overall)

The main source of emissions remains domestic buildings, closely followed by transport.

The Tyndall Centre and the University of Manchester have carried out analysis that recommends a minimum of a 12.3% per year reduction to deliver a Paris aligned carbon budget. The borough as a whole is a long way off meeting this year-on-year reduction.

Their 2021 budget tool suggests a cumulative carbon dioxide emission budget of 2.1 million tonnes for the period 2020 to 2100.

Eastbourne Borough Council has pledged to help make Eastbourne Carbon Neutral by 2030. We must not be put off by the challenge but must rally together and work together to improve the environment of our town for our residents, children, businesses and visitors now and in the future in order to mitigate global climate change.

4. The Climate Emergency Strategy- PROJECT CASESTUDIES

Below you will find a selection of key projects recently completed or underway. Some have been delivered by the council, some by the community and some in partnership. This work and the projects currently being planned is fundamental to the delivery of Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030.

The strategy currently contains 66 actions across 8 action areas. please see the full spreadsheet in section 5 for more information of actions within each area.

45 actions are currently posted as green (68%), 8 amber (13%), 0 red and 12 complete (19%)



Housing & Energy

The Glenn – Affordable, sustainable, low carbon living.



'The Glenn' in Southfields Road, is a council development of 17 two-bedroom and two one-bedroom affordable properties. Three units are fully accessible ground floor flats, each with their own garden. The site, a former girl's school, is a town centre brownfield site. Tenants will benefit from a sustainable travel plan which includes a 12-month bus pass, a £100 bicycle voucher to spend against a new bike and membership to a new Car Club. The build was with a Fabric First Approach, and the development includes the council's first green roof, solar panels that are part of a Solshare system enabling each flat to receive enough energy each day to run all 'stand-by' appliances for free - a first for council housing in the country. The flats are heated with air source heat pumps and every resident has access to use a large bike store.

Energise Sussex Coast Energy Champions



Eastbourne Eco Action Network has partnered with Energise Sussex Coast to run Energy Champion Training courses and set up Community Energy Projects in the Eastbourne area. Energy Champions are friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable local people who are passionate about making a difference to the environment as well as the welfare of their local community. Energy champions have been offering help and advice at foodbanks by accessing support through the energy price crisis, advising on saving energy and bringing bills down and providing freebies such as LED lightbulbs, draught-proofing kits, mould monitors and energy monitors. The champions are helping with problem bills by talking to energy suppliers, advising how to access free or part-funded energy efficiency measures, the cheapest energy tariffs, and accessing grants and the Warm Home Discount. They help residents with energy and water debts, applying for grants for white goods and household items, and easy DIY home energy saving to keep homes affordably warm for people now working from home. They offer home visits from their Green Handyman to install energy saving measures such as draught proofing.

Decarbonising our Housing Stock: Roadmap for 2030 zero carbon



The Council is now better placed to understand how it can deliver zero carbon homes thanks to the completion of a ground-breaking study between Lewes District and Eastbourne Councils, the University of Brighton and the Councils' sustainability joint venture Clear Futures. The study looked at the most realistic solutions that could be delivered by 2030, which includes more investment in local green energy and a light-touch approach to retrofit. Delivering these solutions though will require additional funding, a coordinated effort between Local Authorities, central Government, and energy companies, as well as the development of local energy systems. The methodology for this work was to analyse and evaluate our housing stock using archetypes, SAP and dynamic modelling, remote seasonal monitoring, physical inspections from PAS 2035 assessors and architects, stock profiling, and asset plan modelling. The work was underpinned by a peer review panel made up of leading national expert individual and organisations.

Solar Together



Solar Together Sussex brings the cost benefit of bulk purchasing solar PV panels and battery storage to residents of the district. The council participated in the summer 2023 solar together scheme. The scheme offers residents solar PV panels with optional battery storage and as well as batteries for those with existing solar PV systems. Home electric vehicle charge points were also included in the scheme for the first time. 87 households and 2 SMEs in Eastbourne have accepted their offers from Solar Together.



Transport

Electric Vehicle ChargePoints in three Council car parks



points.

The council entered into a 15-year contract with Connected Kerb, one of the UK's leading providers of electric vehicle charging solutions, and have installed 18 standard electric vehicle chargers in 3 of our car parks; Devonshire Park, Redoubt and Hyde Gardens. The charger points went live in August 2023 and are being well used by the public. The new chargers aim to help the switch to electric vehicles, and support Eastbourne residents with no access to off-street parking by providing reliable charging infrastructure, which as well as encouraging greater EV uptake will also help improve the town's air quality. An additional charge point has been installed in Hyde Gardens for sole use of an EV Car club vehicle.



The council continues to work with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) who are responsible for on street charge

Sustainable Transport & Active Travel Summit

The summit on 17th November 2023 provides a forum for developing sustainable transport systems with more opportunities for active travel which is essential for achieving our carbon neutral target. Active travel is key to promoting better physical, mental and social health for our residents and visitors.

This summit explores:

- How can the transport system in and around Eastbourne be made more attractive, efficient, and **sustainable** without undermining the economy and causing undue disruption to locals and visitors?
- What would a **sustainable** transport system in Eastbourne look like?
- How can we encourage more **active** travel in Eastbourne?

The summit is bringing together: experts in sustainable transport, planners and designers of infrastructure, officers and elected representatives from our local authorities, car clubs and cargo bike pioneers, local business, local universities, colleges, schools and community stakeholders.

Providing an excellent opportunity to share ideas and expertise through a mixture of presentations, networking opportunities, a summit exhibition, and Q&A sessions. We hope that participants will leave inspired and with plans for making the changes we need for a more active and sustainable future.

The Sustainable Transport & Active Travel Summit is being organised by Eastbourne ECO Action Network (EEAN) working with Eastbourne Borough Council and the Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce.



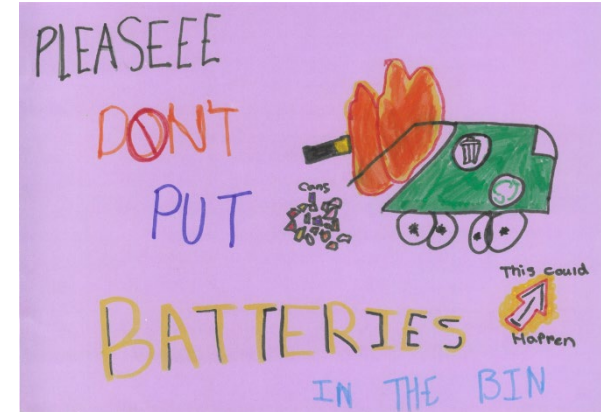
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT &
ACTIVE TRAVEL SUMMIT 2023



Workplaces

Community recycling workshops

The council’s Community Engagement and Recycling Officer delivers workshops not only on recycling but on the journey of household waste. Demand for the workshops became apparent as residents enquired about what happens to their recycling and waste once collected. The talk is available to schools, community groups & organisations, and residents. It covers how recycling first travels to the Haulaway facility and then continues its journey to the Material Reclaim Facility in Kent. Information about what can be put in recycling containers to avoid contamination along with information on how to recycle Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment recycling (WEEE), batteries and dual material products like tetra pack and blister packs are addressed. A recycling talk was given to 20 children aged 4 to 14, at a summer school in Eastbourne, and at the end of the talk the children decided to make some posters. The winning poster design is being used for our social media campaign to educate residents on safe battery disposal.



Biodiversity

Changing Chalk - A Year in Butts Lane Meadow (Little Sheepdown)



Changing Chalk is a four-year project to create connections across the urban and rural areas of the Downs and restore and reconnect the fragmented areas of remaining chalk grassland. Changing Chalk supports nature’s recovery and climate resilience and creates opportunities for work, learning and leisure time for people by providing engaging activities for people to enjoy, enhancing health and wellbeing. The Changing Chalk Ranger leads a volunteer group in Butts Lane Meadow. In October 2022 volunteers began removing scrub, pushing back edges to create more variation in microclimates for insects and creatures. Hand tools were used as they are potentially more wildlife friendly. Plenty of birds were spotted over the colder months, including long tailed tits, goldfinch, blue tits, coal tits, green woodpecker, buzzards. As Spring approached, violets and celandine started to appear. Common lizards were uncovered when cutting back the scrub edges and reptile mats were used to log reptiles and amphibian species. Smooth and palmate



newts and a pair of very pale toads were even spotted in early April. Scrub removal stopped for the bird nesting season, and the volunteers started identifying a full range of chalk grassland indicator species (some rare and nationally scarce), providing food for bees and butterflies. Common spotted, pyramidal, twayblades and Autumn Lady's Tresses orchids appeared.

Activities for volunteers included, pollinating insect identification skills with Buglife, countryside skills session with young people and Froglife, and a hibernaculum to support amphibians and reptiles during winter was dug. A year later the edges that had been scalloped, have flourished with plant species. The hibernaculum is being used as a common lizard sunbathing platform and a rare melanistic (black) adder spotted warming up. All this makes the work extremely rewarding - maintaining and maximising the biodiversity potential of this small but incredibly species-rich site nestled between the downs and town.

Sustainable Horticulture at the Council

As part of the councils Pollinator and Biodiversity Policies, we ensure that we look at the best ways to manage the land that we own. This may include leaving some grass areas uncut, or cut to different lengths, to create linked up biodiversity areas and areas where wildflowers can grow for the benefit of pollinating insects. As well as wildflowers, these areas create great habitats for other bugs, beetles, and lizards. We often enhance these areas with newly seeded wildflower areas, with plants that are particularly useful for pollinators.

We have significantly reduced our use of annual bedding plants – restricting them to high profile sites. Annual bedding looks attractive but does require a lot of water, especially during hotter summers. It also needs heated green houses for its production, which is expensive and burns energy, adding to climate change. Previous areas where bedding was grown have been changed primarily to perennial planting, again with an emphasis on pollinator plants or wildflower seeding. Our bedding plants and shrubs are grown in non-peat or peat reduced composts wherever possible and where plastic pots are used these are returned to the supplier for re-use.

The council has a pesticide policy that states that we will not use pesticides unless there is a specific problem, such as Knot weed. In these cases, all other options would be considered first, and if essential, a minimum amount of pesticide would be applied. Many of our parks are classed as “Pesticide Free”



parks, where no pesticides are used. The council has not used Glyphosate in its parks, open spaces and play areas for at least 4 years. Looking forward, we will be bringing in more sustainable equipment into our parks and open spaces, including using electric powered trimmers and hedge cutters.

The council-managed areas of the downland



Eastbourne Borough Council are working to obtain a Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (CSHT) grant for the Council managed areas of the downland, to help steer and provide funding for the management over the next 5 years. The main aim is to maintain and enhance the valuable habitats we have here.

The scheme will cover both woodland and open areas. The application is a two-phase process. The initial application was successful, and we are now in the second phase, which involves designing the scheme in more detail, alongside specialists from the Forestry Commission and Natural England. Subject to agreement from the Rural Payments Agency, the scheme will hopefully commence in January 2024 and last for a period of 5 years.

We therefore don't have the final details yet, but one key focus is on the restoration of species rich grassland (in particular chalk grassland), to improve the condition of Seaford to Beachy Head Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as well as other areas of priority habitat. Scrub and woodland management will also be important factors, for example to rotationally manage areas of scrub and to maintain glades / rides within the woodland, all of which will benefit biodiversity.



Food

Eastbourne Food Partnership - Food grown by and for communities.

Eastbourne Food Partnership have been bringing people together around Good Food to build food systems that work better for people and planet and create a joyful food culture that everyone can take part in.



Photo credit: Rebecca Maer

In a year of empty supermarket shelves and price rises, growing local offers an opportunity to build more resilient communities in Eastbourne and increase access to fresh fruit and vegetables. This year, Eastbourne Food Partnership joined forces with Rooted Community Food and Eastbourne Allotments and Gardens Society to launch a Crop Drop at Gorringer Road. The Crop Drop aims to empower allotment growers to share their freshly grown produce with community projects. Whether repurposing gluts or 'growing a row' to give away, growers can leave their produce at the Crop Drop in the knowledge that it will be delivered with care by the Rooted Community Food team to one of the town's community food projects. The produce at the Crop Drop, along with organic fruit and veg grown directly at the Rooted community garden by their team of volunteers, can be accessed at low cost at one of the town's community fridges or larders. By the end of September, 1.2 tonnes of allotment-grown produce had been delivered to 7 different food projects across the town, which equates to 3,000 daily portions of ultra-local fruit and veg.



Climate Adaptation

Pevensy Bay to Eastbourne Coastal Management Scheme

The Environment Agency in partnership with Eastbourne Borough Council are developing a new, £100+ million large coastal flood and erosion risk management project for Pevensy Bay to Eastbourne.

This is one of the largest coastal flood risk projects in the country, as we plan to make Pevensy Bay to Eastbourne resilient to coastal flooding in response to the current climate emergency. The scheme will reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion to an estimated 10,000 residential properties as well as key infrastructure, local businesses, heritage sites and nature conservation areas. Along with reducing the flood risk, we will also be looking to increase biodiversity by 20% and reduce the amount of carbon generated throughout the life of the project, by at least 45% with an aim of becoming Net Zero by 2030.

In December 2022 a workshop was held with over 60 secondary school students from the Coastal Schools Partnership in East Sussex. The students learned about the scheme and today's coastal challenges. They then took part in a flood risk planning activity, where they considered all possible options to decide which flood risk solution would be best for their allocated zone. Students then had the opportunity to discuss the activity and their choices with parents at the end of the day. Our post-workshop survey showed that 100% of respondents felt they better understood the impact of rising sea levels and how we can protect against this.

Seaford to Eastbourne Nature Recovery Project to boost wildlife and access to nature.

Eastbourne Borough Council are involved in discussions surrounding Natural England's Nature Recovery Project, working with other partners in the area. The Seaford to Eastbourne project traverses 12,000 ha of the iconic land and seascape of the South Downs, the project builds on partnerships with South East Water, local authorities, farmers and fishers. The project will build on research into chalk aquifers in the area which confirms the importance of using healthy chalk grass and chalk heath habitats to deliver clean and plentiful water. The work to integrate habitat and natural flood management schemes will create clean water supplies for nearby towns and benefit species, such as the rare wart-biter cricket. Ambitions further extend out to sea where the project partners will seek to boost short-snouted seahorse populations found near Beachy Head. The project is also researching how NHS staff who work in complex mental health can be trained in nature-based interventions, supporting the communities within Seaford to Eastbourne

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Eastbourne Borough Council are a Supporting Authority for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which is led by East Sussex County Council (ESCC). Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are 'a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits', as set out by Government in the Environment Act 2021. As well as having a role in the planning system and directing public funding for nature recovery, LNRS will inform the delivery of 'nature-based solutions' for outcomes such as flood management, carbon sequestration and improvements in water quality.



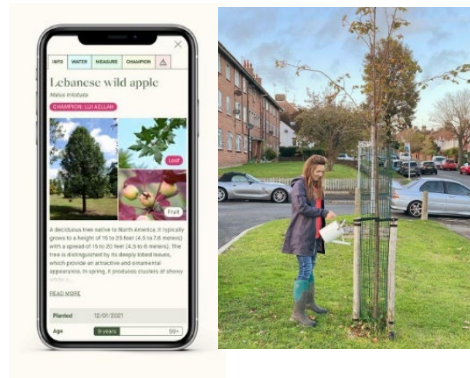
Carbon Capture

Beachy Head East – Marine Conservation Zone

The coastal waters between Beachy Head and Hastings on the Sussex coast hide a local treasure: beneath the waves is a wealth of wildlife of immense ecological and cultural value. This area is vitally important to the local community, with local fishermen, anglers, divers, marine archaeologists, beach users, swimmers, sports enthusiasts, and walkers all using and enjoying the space, and experiencing a deep connection to the ocean. The relationship between people and the sea here stretches back for generations. Many members of the local community, including organisations and businesses, supported efforts to make Beachy Head East a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) to protect and maintain this beautiful area now and for future generations. Beachy Head East MCZ was designated in 2019. One of the things that makes this area particularly special is the diverse mosaic of habitats that provide homes, feeding and breeding areas for masses of marine life. Within the approximately 195km² of the site, you can find fragile chalk reefs, sandstone reef systems, vulnerable

blue mussel beds. The waters contain two marine Sites of Nature Conservation Importance: The Royal Sovereign Shoals and the Horse of Willingdon Reef. It is home to threatened and declining species such as the tube-building ross worm, native oyster and short-snouted seahorse, and provides important feeding grounds for cuckoo wrasse, plaice, Dover sole and small spotted catshark and possible spawning beds for herring. It is also a site of historic shipwrecks and cretaceous fossils. Underwater chalk reefs like those found at Beachy Head East are rare in Europe but are particularly important for local marine life.

Treebourne – Tree tagging/ tree champion project



A fantastic partnership between the Council and Treebourne has successfully planted 1000 new street trees throughout the town over the past two planting seasons. An ingenious scheme has been launched to help residents care for these newly planted trees. Each tree now has a special tag on its protective tree's cage. From a phone the QR code on the tag can be scanned to discover a wealth of information about the tree. Facts about the flowering times, how big it will grow as well as data on the amount of carbon these trees are soaking up. The App allows residents to register to become a Tree Champion, this could mean taking care of watering the tree in dry spells. By tending to these trees, residents are helping to enhance our streets and our town. As they grow the trees will provide cool shade during hot summers, contribute to cleaner air, and create a habitat for local wildlife.

<https://streets.treebourne.org>

5. Action Plan Update 2023

Action Plan Update December 2023

TIMEFRAMES

Short	2023-2024	Amber	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.
Medium	2024-2026	Red	Performance that is below target. Projects that are not expected to be completed on time within requirements.
Long	2027-2030	Complete	Target/activity or project has been completed.

RAG Status	Green	Performance that is at or above target. Project is on track.
	Amber	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.
	Red	Performance that is below target. Projects that are not expected to be completed on time within requirements.
	Complete	Target/activity or project has been completed.

1. Housing & Energy

Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME			RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status
Direct Actions -to be undertaken and delivered by the council									
1.1	Maintain asset register with up to date social housing stock condition surveys	Provides baseline information to enable retrofit and long term planning		BAU		Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing- BAU	73% of assets have had their stock condition inspections completed this year. The subsequent project Decarbonising Our Housing Stock (DOHS) was delivered. Next steps will be subject to funding.	Green
1.3	Develop and deliver the project plan (and long-term housing asset management plan) to decarbonise all social housing based on findings and experience of the Decarbonising Our Housing Stock project	Completed trials/pilots of new techniques and technology to reduce the emissions of social housing, method is agreed to evaluate remaining stock for correct retrofit measures, plan to retrofit all housing stock has been developed	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		£500k allocated from HRA	Outline plan by March 2023	Alternative funding arrangements are being explored to progress this work. The ground breaking study at the following link sets out our next steps- https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/article/1853/Decarbonising-our-Housing-Stock-Roadmap-for-2030-zero-carbon	Amber
1.4	Explore collaboration on joint Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund bid to test joint working. If successful consider scaling up for major works.	Best value is achieved through collaborative working, best solutions are determined and method is agreed to deploy retrofit measures, initially as pilots with a plan developed for roll out of appropriate solutions across the portfolio	Short-term 2022-2024			Delivery costs to be determined once plan is prepared	Mar-24	Alternative funding arrangements are being explored to progress this work.	Amber
Enabling Actions- these actions by the council will enable others to reduce emissions									
1.5	Develop an ongoing programme of awareness raising and promotion of energy efficiency initiatives, especially in fuel poor and hard to reach communities	Educate and raise awareness, those most vulnerable benefit from energy efficiency advice and measures	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	Supporting Tech resort drop ins. New Energise Sussex Coast Community Champion Scheme launched and promoted. Updates and advice in tenants magazines and community drop-ins provided at Food Banks.	Green
1.6	Promote the Solar Together solar panel purchasing project or other similar retrofit schemes as and when they occur to support the 'able-to-pay' market	Private sector homeowners have easier access to retrofitting advice and suppliers	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	Monitoring of 2023 scheme ongoing.	Green
1.7	Support and facilitate the Warm Home Check Service (East Sussex) scheme	Fuel poverty in the district/borough reduces		Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	We continue to support and facilitate the Warm Home Check Service. A number of homes are being assisted to meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards -MEES (EPC above E).	Green
1.8	Explore collaboration on joint Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund bid to test joint working. If successful consider scaling up for major works.	We can get better value for money by collaborating with other authorities	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2025	Alternative funding arrangements are being explored to progress this work.	Amber
1.9	Work in collaboration with others to advertise and develop bids for the Governments Green Homes Grant and associated funding streams	Private sector housing can access funds to help retrofit and improve energy efficiency	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	2025	Successful grant application submitted - exploring next steps in line with strategic direction of travel.	Green
1.10	Support the roll out of smart meters through promotion of the SmartEnergyGB scheme	Supports transition to smart energy grid and makes energy use more visible to residents which enables reductions	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	As and when there is a policy change, we will promote the scheme accordingly.	Green
1.11	Work with the LEPs to deliver the South2East Energy Strategy	South2East Energy Strategy Outcomes met and decarbonisation at a regional level is progressed	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	Continue to work with ESCC, D&B's - work with LEP to be determined.	Green

1.12	Implement the actions defined in the Eastbourne Housing Strategy 2020-2024- section B3 'Promoting access to housing that meets modern standards	Housing standards in the rented sector improve	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2024	Target under review as part of refresh proposed.	Amber
Indicator		Method/data source	Outturn 2021						
HE.1	Carbon dioxide emissions from domestic dwellings	From (March) 2022 BEIS Local & regional emissions data table	2017: 137.7 ktCO _{2e} 2018: 133.3 ktCO _{2e} 2019: 127.4 ktCO _{2e} 2020: 125.3 ktCO _{2e}						
HE.2	Average SAP rating of Eastbourne Borough Council Housing Stock	Outturn from Eastbourne Homes Ltd. asset database.	2021 data: 71.2 (EPC rating = C) 2022: 73.27 (EPC rating = C)						
HE.3	Percentage of fuel poor households in the borough	Outturn from East Sussex in Figures dataset	2018= 8.5% (LIHC definition) 2019= 8.5% (new LILEE definition) 2020: 10.3%						
HE.4	Solar PV generation: number of sites and total generation capacity	BEIS regional renewables statistics 2014-2021	2019: 1,362 installations generating 5.7 MW 2020: 1379 installations generating 5.8MW 2021: 1416 installations generating 6MW						
2. Transport									
Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME		RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status	
Direct Actions									
2.1	Procure supplier of electric vehicle chargepoints and produce delivery plan	The council can make a decision as to how to progress with increasing charging infrastructure in the town and a new project delivery action will be created if this goes ahead	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	Aug-23	Phase 1 complete to schedule - all EV charge points in and signage complete - further work required on completion of TRO. Phase 2 to follow possible change of target.	Green
2.2	Complete Phase 1 of the waste and recycling vehicle fleet review	Optimisation of routes and fleet reduction	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	2022	Complete in 2021 - to close.	Complete
2.3	Produce pathway to decarbonise the remaining fleet vehicles operated by the Council	Low carbon fleet.		Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Pathway can be delivered using existing resources- Fleet decisions to be costed at the appropriate time	2030	Pathway is complete - cabinet approved 2022.	Complete
2.4	Work in partnership with ESCC to deliver new cycling and walking initiatives as detailed in the Draft East Sussex Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and seek opportunities for funding.	Additional cycling and walking routes	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2026	County successful in funding bid, EBC has received the majority of this funding, includes School street in Langley.	Green
2.5	Produce pathway to decarbonise non- RCV fleet vehicles operated by Neighbourhood First (small & medium vans, cars, other vehicles)	Plan to move to a low carbon fleet		Medium Term 2025-2027		Fleet decisions to be costed at the appropriate time	end 2024	Looking at potential sites and working on the strategy (aim to complete by end 2023) which will inform delivery the following year.	Green
Enabling Actions									
2.6	Facilitate setting up a commercial and/or community car-share club with a low carbon vehicle	Residents can car share instead of owning their own vehicle- reduces vehicle numbers in town and provides control over type/efficiency of vehicle used.	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	ASAP	Working with Car Club provider, Connected Kerb, ESCC & Development Team to facilitate launch of new car club in Eastbourne.	Green
2.7	Work with contractors to decarbonise fleet vehicles working our contracts	The wider town's fleet is decarbonised	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2026	Mears (housing contractor) have a zero carbon manager and a net zero 2030 strategy.	Green
2.8	Work with Eastbourne Eco Action Network (EEAN) CIC to set up road closures under the auspices of school streets/play streets	Rat runs are potentially reduced, streets are made safer for walking and cycling especially at school drop off/pick up times	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	On-going	When EEAN request support, we will work with them subject to capacity on an ad hoc basis.	Green
2.9	Organise lobbying work on transport issues required at a county level and nationally, in partnership with EEAN	Coherent lobbying is delivered by both community groups and Councillors to achieve transport decarbonisation aims	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	On going action for Cllr Swansborough and County Councillors. EEAN organised a successful transport summit supported by EBC (November).	Green
2.10	Work with ESCC to understand and overcome any barriers to setting up a Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) and see a QBP or similar established for the town/area	A QBP would provide confidence to service providers to invest in services and enable the improvement of bus infrastructure- the result of this should be increased public transport use	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	2023	Where capacity allows ongoing partnership working with ESCC continues to keep a watching brief on QBP activity.	Amber

2.11	Develop a pathway to a low carbon taxi fleet	Reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality.	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2026	Survey completed in summer 2023 and associated report compiled in the autumn is informing next steps.	Green
Indicator		Method/data source	Outturn 2021						
TR.1	Carbon dioxide emissions from transport	From (March) 2022 BEIS Local & regional emissions data table	2017: 96.8 ktCO _{2e} 2018: 93.8 ktCO _{2e} 2019: 92.3 ktCO _{2e} 2020: 75.6 ktCO _{2e}						
TR.2	Number of Council enabled electric vehicle chargepoints	Number of completed installs each financial year	2021/22 = zero to date- 18 planned to August 2023						
3. Workplaces and Tourism									
Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME		RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status	
Direct Actions									
3.1	Transfer the council to a green electricity provider	100% of electricity supplied will be REGO backed energy that will qualify a 100% reduction in carbon emissions from consumed electricity	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	Completed	Current contract expired in Sept 2024 - subsequent procurement arrangements are being progressed - still 100% green electricity planned.	Green
3.2	Complete the Council Non- Housing Stock Condition Surveys and subsequent possible Asset Management Strategy	The Council will know the condition of assets and which it will retain long term so we can plan to reduce emissions		Medium Term 2025-2027		Can't be delivered within existing resources. Additional revenue would be required.	end 2025	Delivery of this target is dependant upon funding. Exploring as part of business planning, a bid to progress this work is to be completed.	Amber
3.3	(Combined with 3.4) Develop and deliver a carbon reduction plan for all non-housing assets	Plan allows for structured and planned delivery to meet carbon neutrality goal	Revised timeline	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can't be delivered within existing resources. Additional revenue would be required.	2026	Delivery of this target is dependant upon funding. Exploring as part of business planning, a bid to progress this work is to be completed.	Amber
3.5	Introduce sustainability criteria into council procurement policies with weighting given to tenderers with proven sustainability policy	Support for sub-contractors with green credentials to work with LEC	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2023	Working towards introducing criteria into every procurement, acknowledging some are easier to introduce than others given the nature of the product etc.	Green
3.6	Offset the emissions from Airbourne 2022	A temporary solution to the emissions of Airbourne until the tourism decarbonisation plan is in place		Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	2030 (timescale amended to fit target)	We have measured emissions... only 3% flying. We continue to reduce and monitor emissions, and make sure our marketing around travel encourages people to travel sustainably to and from the event. Further work is required to arrive at an offset policy in line with continuing to explore potential for offsetting schemes.	Green
3.6a	Gain better data over next 18 months, at a variety of events now a more normal schedule is resuming post COVID	The Council has a clear understanding of the carbon and environmental impact of it's events	Short-term 2022-2024			Budget will need to be found to fund data gathering	2024	Continue to track the environmental impact of events and ensure potential events providers/3rd parties organisers comply to the councils' environmental policies. Output forms are completed at applications stage and post event. Baseline developed from Oct/Nov 2023 - Numbers of form pre and post events and key findings will be measured.	Green
3.7	Eliminate use of Single Use Plastic (SUP) at EBC operated events and third party events supported by EBC wherever possible	Reduced plastic waste. EBC events no longer hand out SUP water bottles or carrier bags. Vendors are instructed not to either			BAU	Can be delivered using existing resources	BAU	Measured by the form at the link below, further statistics to follow: https://form.jotform.com/222572592547059	Green
3.8	Eliminate use of SUP at customer facing venues such as Cafes, Visitor Services and heritage service sites	Reduced plastic waste. Visitor Services switched to paper bags and introduced free water refill scheme. Cafes selling glass vessels, biodegradable takeaway cups and paper straws	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	2022	Action complete and to be removed - Carbon Charter previously created for Tourism.	Complete
3.9	Reduce harmful chemicals used in the upkeep of the grounds at Devonshire Park and Eastbourne Downs Golf Course (EDGC)	Alternatives with reduced environmental impact are constantly to be investigated	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2026	New target owner to scope and report on new target accordingly.	Green

3.10	Replace diesel fuelled handtools used in the upkeep of the grounds at Devonshire Park and Eastbourne Downs Golf Course (EDGC) with electric alternatives	Reduced emissions from diesel and fuel oil		BAU		Finance to be determined if existing resource is insufficient	BAU	Have begun to replace hand tools at EDGC with electricals as they come to end of life - same at Devonshire Park, expected completion date end 2023 - Target to be updated next quarter to possibly include EDGC.	Green
3.11	Reduce water usage at Devonshire Park through collection of moisture data for targeted irrigation	Reduced emissions from water use		BAU		Can be delivered using existing resources	Completed	Target tracking and scoping arrangements to be determined next quarter following new target owner review.	Complete
3.12	Eliminate use of unsustainable paper for printed marketing materials	Reduced emissions from consumption of paper products		BAU		Can be delivered using existing resources	Completed	The print department has been using sustainable paper and products for a number of years, and paper from Responsible Sources. 'Printing presses' have not been used for about 8 years, thus the inks are not used either, all products have been removed from the department. We now only use Copiers.	Complete
3.13	Replace diesel or fuel oil large machinery with electric alternatives (with electricity on a green tariff)	Reduced emissions from diesel and fuel oil		Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Finance to be determined if existing resource to replace machinery is insufficient	2030	New target owner, will be scoping to report back next quarter and potentially smartening the target accordingly.	Green
Enabling Actions									
3.14	Develop a tourism decarbonisation plan	Low carbon tourism is encouraged and developed to support economic recovery		Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources		This is being covered as part of the assurance review. A strategy document for the whole Tourism department will be produced and decarbonisation will feature heavily - timeline 6 months (original aim Dec 23).	Green
3.15	Promote public transport for tourists into Eastbourne	Reduced emissions from visitor transport		Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Can be delivered using existing resources		This is factored into everything Tourism promotes, no statistics available from providers so unable to monitor effects/milestones.	Complete
3.16	Develop comprehensive training and guidance for staff on climate change and carbon reduction. Also specific training to ensure decisions properly take into account the carbon emission implications	All staff will improve their environmental awareness to enable carbon reductions in their work and private life. It will be clear to Councillors, officers and the public the carbon consequences of all decisions		Short-term 2022-2024		Can be delivered using existing resources	End 2024	The aim is to have live "Carbon Literacy Training" to reflect biodiversity needs through OLLE as a mandatory course by 2024. Link to Clr training - https://www.communityenergysouth.org/carbon-literacy-programme	Green
Indicator		Method/data source		Outturn 2021					
WP.1	% change in carbon emissions from Eastbourne Borough Council Operations	Scope 1 & 2 emissions for 20/21 compared to baseline year 18/19	15% Reduction						
WP.2	Indicator revised: Carbon Footprint of events	Airbourne 2022	Airbourne emissions are currently in draft. More data collection been trialed.						
WP.3	Number of staff to have undertaken carbon reduction training	TBC	Zero- training being finalised						
4. Biodiversity									
Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME		RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status	
Direct Actions									
4.2	Local Plans – work closely with Planning Policy and planners to achieve biodiversity wording that is fit for purpose and ambitious to arrest declines	Green and biodiversity beneficial Local Plans.	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Can be delivered using existing resources	2025	BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) technical advice note is used to advise developers. Action complete. BNG is mandatory from Autumn 2023.	Complete	
4.3	Council Officer training in biodiversity	Decision makers are better informed about biodiversity and	Short-term 2022-2024		Can be delivered using existing resources	2024	The aim is to have live "Carbon Literacy Training" to reflect biodiversity needs through OLLE as a mandatory course by 2024 - refer to 3.16.	Green	
4.4	Reduced mowing practices	Improved habitat for insects		BAU	Can be delivered using existing resources	BAU	Ward councillors are currently considering mowing schedules in their patches as a driver to review mowing practices.	Complete	

4.5	Reducing the use of pesticides	Improved habitat for insects		BAU		Can be delivered using existing resources	BAU	Following our Biodiversity and pesticide strategies and action plans to enhance the biodiversity of public and open spaces, we have created more wildflower areas across the borough, as well as developing a small wildflower meadow.	Complete
4.6	Increase wildflower and pollinator planting where suitable	Improved habitat for insects		BAU		Can be delivered using existing resources	BAU	Ocklynge Cemetery has been an example of where we have increased wildflower and pollinator planting. However the mowing regime is under review.	Green
4.7	Provide direct assistance when required to tree planting projects at suitable sites such as those currently being delivered by Treebourne at Tugwell Park and Sevenoaks Recreation Ground	Carbon capture and improved biodiversity.	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	BAU	An active recruitment of tree champions is underway with Treebourne leading on this.	Green
Enabling Actions									
4.8	Develop pipeline of projects for biodiversity net gain and offsetting (not offsetting - there is no carbon offsetting policy)	Increase in biodiversity and projects enabled		Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	2030	Green Consultancy is seeking to understand the opportunities relating to BNG for Eastbourne.	Green
4.9	Review land holdings for possible projects	Internal and Partnership projects enabled	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2022	Exploring potential for tree planting.	Green
4.10	Develop a programme of works on EBC land to increase joining up of biodiversity corridors & ecological networks	Increase in biodiversity Improved well being of residents	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Resources to be determined on project basis	Ongoing	Spatial study for Eastbourne will be delivered in Q3 and this will facilitate a developing programme.	Green
4.11	Support Changing Chalk bid and project if successful	Community ranger for countryside/nature/downland education and involvement		Medium Term 2023-2026		Can be delivered using existing resources	2024	Bid successful. Memorandum of understanding with Railway land Trust to deliver agreed outcomes.	Green
4.12	Continue to work with community groups, education and communication	Community groups encouraged and work progressed	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	On-going	Working with Friends of Hampden Park, Treebourne and Friends of Eastbourne Seafront. Working to secure funding and deliver projects, examples include the Sovereign bike track.	Green
4.14	Increase public access into Eastbourne Park	To enable opportunities for: appreciation of nature; educational experiences ; and outdoor exercise	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2024	Government funding for a kiosk and toilets at Shinewater to create a gateway to the park is in progress. Spend and delivery from April 2024 until April 2025. Match funding has been secured as part of the previous budget process.	Green
Indicator									
BIO.1	Number of trees planted (as per CC.1)	Method/data source	Organisational records						
2020-21: Treebourne have planted 14000 trees; EBC have planted 96 street trees 2021/22: Treebourne 1000 street trees and 2000 whips at Old Mansion Close; EBC- 153 (includes the 48 planted as part of the Lord Lucas cherry project) So total EBC arranged and found funding was 105 (12-14cm girth trees)									
BIO.2	Biodiversity improvement/gain as a result of actions undertaken	TBC	N/A						
BIO.3	% net biodiversity gain achieved on development sites	TBC	N/A						
BIO.4	% of SSSI's (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) in a favourable condition	Local Authority Monitoring Report 2021 (update due Dec 2022)	2018/19= 71.4% 2020/21= 71.4%						
BIO.5	Number of planning applications infringing on identified habitats, designated sites or reserves	Local Authority Monitoring Report 2021 (update due Dec 2022)	2018/19= 24 2020/21= 21 PA's abutted a designated site or reserve (none directly infringed) and 8 abutted identified habitats and 4 directly infringed a habitat.						
BIO.6	% of housing units delivered on previously developed land	Local Authority Monitoring Report 2021 (update due Dec 2022)	2018/19 = 99.2% 2019/20 = 96.5% 2020/21 = 88.3%						
5. Food									
Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status		
Direct Actions									

5.1	Support local food growing initiatives by making suitable land available and incorporating it into our work with social housing tenants as part of DOHS	More residents can access local food and grow their own		BAU		Can be delivered using existing resources		Complete - New target proposed - "Work with partners to support and facilitate food growing initiatives on suitable land."	Complete
Enabling Actions									
5.2	Support the Eastbourne Food Partnership in developing and meeting their aims, including enabling food networks	More residents have access to local food	Short-term 2022-2024			To be determined		Input at steering group, promotion of aims and events, ongoing partnership working and officer and councillor support of pathways to food security workshop at the Towner.	Green
5.3	Support initiatives that promote or enable low carbon and nature-friendly farming locally eg South East Downs Farm Cluster	Although there is minimal agriculture within Eatsbourne itself- this wider working will facilitate local (Sussex) food production	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Resource not identified		Resources have yet to be identified for this work.	Amber
Indicator									
FD.1	Area of land that has been made available for food growing	Method/ data source	Outturn 2021						
		Council records	None to date						
6. Waste									
Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME			RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status
Direct Actions									
6.1	Comprehensive public consultation exercise to engage residents in recycling more	Recycling rates increase- target of 45% for 21/22	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	N/A	Continue to do flats recycling project, visiting, delivering info, assessing bin needs, Eastbourne homes blocks deliver a recycling workshop, two recently in St Anthonys area and 2 more in Langley. Continuous discussion on improving recycling facilities with info/flyers to every resident in Eastbourne town. Priority for work has been based on locations near removal of the "bring" sites. Getting reports of bad areas/problems, team will investigate further to improve or inform residents further. Offer given to do home visits if requested and appropriate.	Green
6.2	Review waste & recycling service provision to align them with the requirements of increasing recycling and decreasing residual waste.	We recycle more than we incinerate, and our collection methods and schedules enable that and champion it.	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources		Complete in 2021 - New target proposed - "Monitor waste & recycling service provision with the requirements of increasing recycling and decreasing residual waste as measured by the previous National Indicator 192. "	Complete
6.9	Continue with planned communications with regular emphasis on food waste reduction eg. 'How to use Christmas leftovers', and general reduce, reuse, recycle messaging	We recycle more than we incinerate, and our collection methods and schedules enable that and champion it. Recycling rates increase- target of 45% for 21/22		Ongoing		Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	Recent edition of RRR bulletin focused on curbside recycling what can/can't be recycled, love food/hate waste - an impact of food waste on the climate.	Green
Enabling Actions									
6.4	Promote and enable the REFILL (and Plastic Free) campaign	The public has easier access to drinking water to reduce the need to buy single use bottles.	Short-term 2022-2024			Can be delivered using existing resources	On-going/periodically in summer months	Work closely with the lead of plastic free Eastbourne and recycling refill stations, continuing support. Installed 7 refill station across Eastbourne over the past year, no ongoing target and must be maintained by the Council once installed. view from neighbourhood first is to pause this.	Green
6.6	Help develop local reuse and repair schemes which divert waste, for example Freegle, Freecycle, repair cafes etc.	Encourages a local circular economy and these schemes provide the most help and benefit to people in greater need.	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	Hampden park sheds have asked for help on a library of things for Eastbourne, donations from businesses/residents to be stored. They have been asked to provide a proposal to identify their storage needs.	Green

6.7	Work with community groups to facilitate litter picks and when possible provision of equipment	We have a clean town		Ongoing		Can be delivered using existing resources	Ongoing	New group has been set up in the Old Town area called Motcombe Wombles, doing regular litter picks in the Old Town area. They have set up a facebook page and joined other facebook groups to share best practice.	Green
Indicator		Method/data source	Outturn 2021						
W.1	Total amount of waster produced	Waste data flow	2018/19 = 34,713 tonnes 2019/20 = 46,992t 2020/21 = 48,879t 2021/22 = 35,380t						
W.2	% of waste recycled	Waste data flow	2018/19 = 35.2% 2019/20 = x % 2020/21 = 32.8% 2021/22 = 38.9% (forecast TBC)						
7. Climate Adaptation									
Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME		RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status	
Direct Actions									
7.1	Complete the new Local Plan and ensure that planning policies and guidance reflect our carbon neutral ambition	New development is low carbon, energy efficient and is resilient to future climate change		Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2024	Continue to gather evidence to inform land allocations. The timetable as identified by The Local Development Scheme (LDS) remains applicable.	Green
7.4	Partnering with Treebourne to plant street trees	Reduced urban heat island		Ongoing		Can be delivered using existing resources and as funding streams arise	Ongoing	An active recruitment of tree champions to care for street trees is underway with Treebourne leading on this. Project is completed - see 4.7.	Green
Enabling Actions									
7.2	Ensure planning policy reflects the need to avoid substantial development on flood plain	Essential flood plain is retained and flood risk is minimised	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027		Can be delivered using existing resources	2025	We continue to gather evidence to inform land allocations. This involves liaising with the Environment Agency and The Lead Local Flood Authority on the potential flooding risks for the Borough.	Green
7.5	Pevensey to Eastbourne Coastal Management Scheme	Risk of flooding reduced to 10,000 homes as well as key infrastructure & businesses, nature & heritage sites. 20% increase in biodiversity and net zero carbon generated from project by 2030.	Short-term 2022-2024	Medium Term 2025-2027	Long Term 2027-2030	EBC/Environment Agency	2024 to have designed the project pathway plan	EBC in partnership with the Environment Agency will embark on engagement activity starting Q3 to discuss options for the next 10 years of the coastal management programme.	Green
Indicator		Method/data source	Outturn 2021						
CA.1	Number of units approved contrary to Environment Advice regarding flooding	Local Authority Monitoring Report 2020 (update due Dec 2021)	2018/19= zero 2021/22 = zero						
8. Carbon Capture									
Action reference	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME		RESOURCES	Date for completion	Annual Update December 2023	RAG Status	
Direct Actions									
8.1	Determine our method to enable local carbon offsetting	The residual borough emissions at 2030 are offset using local projects		Medium Term 2023-2026	Long Term 2027-2030	Methodology can be delivered using existing resources- Financial resources for offsetting to be determined and agreed as part of this work	2026	Target to be reviewed.	Green
Enabling Actions									
8.2	Continue to provide project support for partnership projects, including expertise, volunteer management and fund raising support	Partners projects are enabled and supported to achieve multiple outcomes dependent on project	Short Term 2020-2022	Medium Term 2023-2026	Long Term 2027-2030	Can be delivered using existing resources	On-going where resources allow	This work has been mainstreamed into our business as usual activities, and partnership works continues accordingly	Green
8.3	Provide suitable land to enable tree planting and re-wooding	Carbon capture through trees, increased biodiversity, improved mental wellbeing, increased summer shading	Short Term 2020-2022	Medium Term 2023-2026			On-going where resources allow	Suitable land is in short supply. Project complete.	Complete
Indicator		Method/data source	Outturn 2021						
CC.1	Number of trees planted (as per BIO.1)	Organisational records	2020-21: Treebourne have planted 14000 trees; EBC have planted 96 street trees 2021/22: Treebourne 1000 street trees and 2000 whips at Old Mansion Close; EBC- 153 (includes the 48 planted as part of the Lord Lucas cherry project) So total EBC arranged and found funding was 105 (12-14cm girth trees)						
CC.2	Value of annual offsets	TBC	£ = None Carbon offset = 0 tonnes						

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Report to:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	04 December 2023
Title:	Corporate Property and Assets Strategy
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillors Robin Maxted, Cabinet member for finance and resources Councillor Colin Swansborough, Cabinet member for enterprise, community spaces and heritage assets
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To agree a new Corporate Property and Assets Strategy, in line with recommendations from the Assurance Review.
Decision type:	Key
Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:	(1) To agree the strategy (appendix 1), to inform future asset related decisions. (2) To authorise the Director of Regeneration and Planning to adopt the strategy and produce a formatted version for public release.
Reasons for recommendations:	Need to update/replace previous related documentation in light of Assurance Review recommendations.
Officer recommendation to the Scrutiny Committee	The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Mark Langridge-Kemp Post title: Head of Property and Asset Management E-mail: mark.langridge-kemp@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 07900057102 Name: Jo Harper Post title: Head of Business Planning and Performance E-mail: jo.harper@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 07925893201

- 1.1 Since June 2023 the council has been delivering an improvement and efficiency programme called Stability and Growth (S&G). This grew out of earlier savings programmes developed during and after the covid pandemic. The overall aim of the programme is to tackle the range of financial challenges currently faced by local government, and by Eastbourne in particular, and to ensure the council remains on a stable financial footing for the future.
- 1.2 One of the key pillars of the strategy is to review the council's assets. This pillar is designed to assist the council in determining which assets it should retain, and which it would be preferable to earmark for disposal. The strategy appended to this report provides a clear structure for the future approach to the council's assets, which will inform the Assets Pillar of the S&G programme.
- 1.3 Since the Covid Pandemic of 2020, the council has been in a very challenging financial position. Central government agreed to provide Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) in the form of capitalisation at that time but made clear that it expected the council to dispose of assets in order to pay back the EFS. An Assurance Review was undertaken by CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) on behalf of central government in 2021 which made some key recommendations. One of the main requirements was that the council establish an asset disposal list, with a view to disposing of suitable assets. This list has been developed and is regularly interrogated and reviewed by the Strategic Property Board to ensure all opportunities for disposal are progressed.
- 1.4 A follow up, light-touch review was completed by CIPFA in April 2023 and was reported to Cabinet in September. This recommended, amongst other issues, the following;
- “that the council produce a thorough, integrated, and strategic approach to property by the end of 2023. This should:*
- Explicitly reference the Recovery and Stabilisation Plan goals*
 - Be consistent with and support the work to reduce tourism-income dependency and diversify the local economy*
 - Accordingly describe the character of the council's desired 'target' portfolio of held assets. This should be supported by a clear taxonomy detailing asset type and purpose. Retained assets could be classed as commercial or regeneration-related. Moreover, the portfolio's implications for income and investment should be made explicit*
 - Reinforce the current restrictions on spend by setting out a presumption against new asset acquisition and associated increases in indebtedness. The permissible circumstances for new investment should be made explicit and should relate to exceptional or unforeseen circumstances.”*
(CIPFA – April 2023)
- 1.5 Accordingly, this report provides Cabinet with a strategy which meets the above requirements. Ahead of its publication, the council has already taken action which demonstrates a serious commitment to acting on the aspirations of the CIPFA report and of the strategy.

2 Action taken to date

- 2.1 As mentioned above, the council's asset disposal list is now a central part of every meeting of the Strategic Property Board. As a result of this, a number of disposals have already been agreed.
- 2.2 Starting from 2021, when the Assurance Review was published, the council has;
- Disposed of 3 Cornish Cottages (21/22)
 - Undertook a Community Asset Transfer of Langney Playing Fields (21/22)
 - Leased the former Tourist Information Centre (22/23)
 - Appropriated Bedfordwell Road to HRA (21/22)
 - Appropriated Southfields Car Park to HRA (21/22) – now developed for housing
 - Leased the former Pavilion café (23/24)
 - Disposed of the Royal Hippodrome Theatre (22/23)
- 2.3 The council is shortly to dispose of a number of other properties, including Ocklynge Lodge and 2, 4, 6 and 8 Saffrons Road.
- 2.4 Beyond this, the council is also in active discussions around a number of further assets, including;
- Motcombe Pool - where a Community Interest Company was set up in 2022, alongside a Friends of Motcombe Pool support group. Encouraging levels of grass-route level commitment to this project are now starting to bear fruit with a bid to the Communities Opportunity Fund currently being prepared.
 - The Redoubt (and potentially other key heritage assets) have been the subject of considerable interest from the Heritage Lottery Fund to whom a funding bid will be made in 2024.

3 Outcome expected and performance management

- 3.1 Following the adoption of this strategy, the council will continue its programme of asset disposal consideration through the Strategic Property Board.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Given that the production of this strategy has been a requirement of the council's Assurance Review, it is felt that formal, public consultation would not be appropriate in this instance. However, informal engagement with key cabinet members has been undertaken as part of its' development.

5 Corporate plan and council policies

- 5.1 The Corporate Plan for 2022 – 2026 referenced that the council would be; *'Reviewing our property portfolio with a view to strategic disposals, taking into account capital worth, revenue yield and social value'*.

- 5.2 In addition, the draft corporate plan for 2024 – 2028, recently out for public consultation, states that the council will ensure the “*delivery of an integrated property strategy which provides a clear future approach to commercial activity, addresses the councils’ future asset requirements and tackles the challenges of the town’s heritage assets.*”

6 Financial appraisal

- 6.1 The Council’s Asset Strategy supports delivery of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan whilst meeting the obligations set out as part of the Assurance Review undertaken by CIPFA. It is designed to ensure the council prioritises where and how it uses its financial resources to meet ongoing challenges, ensuring that assets are appropriately identified and monitored and that they are fit for purpose and provide value for money. Where the council is required to invest in new assets it must ensure that that they are suitable and able to maximise the benefits for Eastbourne Residents.
- 6.2 As reductions to public sector spending are likely to continue throughout the lifetime of this Strategy, the Council will have to manage property with fewer resources and will need to target those resources where they will make the greatest positive impact, contribute to the Council’s financial resources, improve returns and secure capital receipts.

7 Legal implications

- 7.1 Pursuant to restrictions contained in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council cannot dispose of land held in the general fund for a consideration less than the best that can be reasonably obtained in the market, except with the express consent of the Secretary of State. Disposal includes freehold and leasehold sales. The rule applies to leases where the lease term exceeds seven years.
- 7.2 The Secretary of State has given a general consent (General Disposal Consent (England) 2003) so that specific consent is not required for the disposal of land where the authority considers it will help to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social, or environmental wellbeing of its area. Disposal at less than best consideration is always subject to the condition that the undervalue does not exceed £2m.
- 7.3 If publicly owned land is disposed of at less than best consideration, a public body may be providing a subsidy. Any such subsidy will need to be determined in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022.
- 7.4 The Council’s Contract Procedure Rules state that no sale of land where the value exceeds £50,000 or £25,000 if amenity land (or a lease where the estimated rent exceeds £25,000 per annum) shall be made except after auction or the invitation of tenders or expressions of interest following appropriate public advertisement, unless authorised by Cabinet.

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8 Risk management implications

- 8.1 The delivery of this strategy is essential to the council's future financial stability. Risks of non-delivery will be varied, dependent on the specific assets under consideration. However, challenges that have the potential to impact include; there being no suitable purchaser for assets the council wishes to dispose of, the price offered for such assets being less than the council would hope to achieve through disposal or transfer, transfer of assets not being achieved quickly and therefore not being able to impact on budgets in a timely way.
- 8.2 Mitigations to tackle these risks will include early dialogue with potential buyers or lessees and undertaking realistic valuations. However, it is recognised that many of the above risks are heavily influenced by national and international considerations, and therefore are, to a great extent, outside of council control.

9 Equality analysis

- 9.1 An equality and fairness analysis (E&FA) has been undertaken and has concluded that there are no issues that require consideration at this time. Given the breadth of the asset portfolio it is not possible to make generalisations across this wide range of assets as to how those with protected characteristics may be differently affected. Therefore, it is considered more appropriate to undertake a more detailed E&FA when a specific asset or group of assets is being assessed for potential change of use or ownership.

10 Environmental sustainability implications

- 10.1 The council has a commitment to tackling climate change and to become carbon net zero by 2030. When considering its future approach to assets, the council will need to be aware of;
- The costs of addressing sustainability within its retained assets (e.g. using environmentally sustainable heating methods)
 - The challenges of climate change and the increased risks that places on retained assets, particularly where there may be risk of coastal flooding, for example.
 - The opportunities in using land assets for improving biodiversity, such as rewilding of Downland sites.
- 10.2 Current joint work between the council, Environment Agency and other partners is seeking to reduce the level of risk of such flooding to the town. However, currently, some of the council's heritage assets in particular, such as the Bandstand and the Redoubt fortress, could be at greater risk because of their location.

11 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Eastbourne Borough Council Property and Assets Strategy

12 Background papers

None

Eastbourne Borough Council Corporate Property and Assets Strategy

December 2023

Introduction

1. Eastbourne Borough Council has a significant portfolio of assets. This is made up of a variety of land and buildings that have been in the ownership of the council for varying lengths of time. Some assets have been owned by the council since it came into being in 1974, and in public ownership since well before that time, and others have been more recently purchased with the aim of promoting regeneration in the town and enabling the tourist economy to flourish.
2. Following the pandemic of 2020, and associated national financial challenges, the council needs to ensure its assets strategy is commensurate with current and future organisational requirements. This strategy is therefore all about the council 'living within its means'.

Purpose

3. The purpose of this strategy is to provide a sustainable way for the council to manage its assets in the short, medium and long term and ensure that borrowing levels remain within strict constraints for the foreseeable future. The council needs to ensure that any assets it retains can be maintained within the spending limits of the authority.
4. The strategy provides a framework within which decisions can be taken around the retention and disposal of assets and is in line with the draft Corporate Plan for 2024 – 2028, which states that *"we will re-imagine [our assets] in a way that better provides for the town's future and enables sustainability in the longer term."*

Types of assets

5. To enable the council to take a systematic approach to its asset portfolio, a categorisation process has been undertaken and has divided the assets into the following 'types'.
 - Income Generation
 - Leisure and Community
 - Public Convenience
 - Car Parks
 - Operational
 - Heritage
 - Miscellaneous

6. For each of these categories, a different set of approaches is appropriate. A summary of these is set out below.

Income Generation

7. This group of assets are mainly leased out, usually on a commercial rent basis, and are owned with the primary purpose of creating income for the council. In order to make decisions on the future of these assets, consideration needs to be given to the income being achieved, against the potential benefit of disposal.

Leisure and Community

8. These assets are owned to enable use by local communities and include green parks and open spaces, the open downland, sports facilities and community spaces. It is unlikely that the council would want to dispose of these assets, although the level of rent subsidy offered in some instances may need to be reviewed.

Public conveniences

9. Public conveniences provide services to residents and visitors, with a significant proportion being on the seafront, supporting the tourism offer. Level of usage will again be an issue with regard to how many of these facilities should be retained. However, the tourism value of these facilities, particularly on the seafront, is not to be underestimated.

Car parks

10. Car parks provide parking facilities for residents and visitors and generate an income to the council. The value of each car park, and the level of return received from each, will need to be considered ahead of any retention or disposal decision.

Operational

11. These buildings and structures are used by the council directly to deliver services to the public. Whether these assets need to be retained will depend on the nature of the service provided in each instance and whether that service is to be continued, either by the council, or by another operator.

Heritage

12. These assets include important parts of the heritage infrastructure of the town, and particularly the seafront, and provide a unique challenge for the council. They are very much valued by the local population but are expensive to manage and not easy to transfer to any alternative ownership.

Miscellaneous

13. This is a small group of assets that do not fit within the other asset types; the priority for the Council is to ensure these assets remain safe.

14. It should be noted that this strategy does not deal with Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets as these are subject to their own distinct arrangements.

Governance

15. The council recognises the importance of strong governance and clear public accountability in its decision-making. This applies to assets as much as any other area of the council's work. However, due to the commercial sensitivity of some decisions around assets, there may often be a need for early deliberations to be undertaken outside of the public domain. However, wherever possible, decisions are taken in public.

Strategic Property Board

16. The Strategic Property Board brings together key elected members, with officers, to meet regularly to discuss property issues. It is a non-decision-making group which considers issues and options ahead of formal decisions at Cabinet. It is not a public meeting.

Cabinet

17. The Cabinet is made up of 6 Members. Of these, lead responsible for assets sits jointly between The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Property and Asset management (non - heritage) and the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Community Spaces and Heritage Assets. Both of these members are actively involved in any decisions informally ahead of the Strategic Property Board and Cabinet. Cabinet is responsible for making any decisions with significant resource implications for the Council. These are public meetings.

Stability and Growth Programme

18. Since June 2023 the council has been delivering an improvement and efficiency programme called Stability and Growth (S&G). This grew out of earlier savings programmes developed during and after the covid pandemic. The overall aim of the programme is to tackle the range of financial challenges currently faced by local government, and by Eastbourne in particular, and to ensure the council remains on a stable financial footing for the future.
19. The S&G Programme has 5 pillars, one of which specifically focuses on assets. The Asset pillar is designed to assist the council in determining which assets it should retain, and which it would be preferable to earmark for disposal. This strategy therefore provides a helpful framework for the delivery of the Assets pillar.
20. A further pillar of the S&G programme monitors how the council is progressing in responding to two recent external reviews. The first of these is an

Assurance Review completed by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) on behalf of the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities. This review was a requirement of Government following the Exceptional Financial Support received by the council following the financial challenges of the Pandemic.

21. The initial CIPFA review in 2021 was fully responded to by the council. A follow up review in 2023 recommended a further small number of recommendations, including that the council should produce a thorough, integrated, and strategic approach to property. This strategy has been prepared, in part, as a response to that recommendation.

22. A second recent review – a Peer Challenge by the LGA (Local Government Association) - recommended that the council create strategic frameworks to guide the delivery of key priorities. Again, this strategy responds to that recommendation.

Principles guiding the assets strategy

23. In considering future options around assets, the council must be mindful of the requirements and priorities of the borough. Only in exceptional circumstances will the council retain an asset which requires council subsidy to maintain.

24. Being mindful of this, the strategy has 5 key principles;

- a. The council will ensure any assets it retains have a clear purpose, in line with corporate priorities, and/or provide an income to the council of equal or greater value than the cost to the organisation of holding that asset.
- b. If the council does not have a clear purpose for retaining an asset, it will either sell it, or, if the current purpose of the asset is to be retained, lease it to another provider better placed to deliver the same or similar outcomes for the borough from that asset.
- c. Where an asset is to be retained, efforts will be made to ensure income from that asset is maximised through suitable rental or other forms of income generation (such as ticket sales, membership schemes or other relevant approaches).
- d. In the case of heritage or other relevant specialist assets, the council will not normally invest extensively itself, but will endeavour to secure alternative funding mechanisms which minimise the impact of these assets on the council tax payer.
- e. Community asset transfer is to be considered where appropriate to enable transfer of an asset to an organisation where there is an identified social, economic or environmental benefit. The transfer may be, in such cases, at

undervalue justified by the community benefit. This could be via a freehold/leasehold disposal, short lease or licence and would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Tourism Assets

24. Eastbourne is a popular tourist destination. As such, many of the council's assets support the visitor economy, and form part of the asset types mentioned in this strategy. This includes the Devonshire Park Quarter which offers two theatres, a concert venue, art gallery, conference facilities, an international tennis centre and a pub. This entire complex is owned by the council. A separate strategy (Dec 2023) sets out details of the future plans for this complex, alongside wider plans to enable diversification of the economy to reduce reliance on tourism.

Other public investments/partnership working

25. The council is always open and receptive to opportunities to collaborate with other public agencies over asset developments. Equally, where any council assets may need to take account of future public sector infrastructure requirements in the borough (for example flood defences), the council will take a proactive approach to engaging and working in partnership to achieve the best long term collaborative outcomes.

Asset maintenance

26. Key to a successful asset strategy is a clear plan for maintaining those assets. The council is committed to ensuring all assets within its ownership are maintained in a way that ensures their ongoing viability.

27. Of primary importance is Health and Safety, Statutory Compliance, and ensuring that buildings are weathertight. Beyond this there is secondary priority to reduce the council's carbon footprint where possible. Avoiding degradation of an asset must also be a key consideration. Therefore, any decision regarding retention or disposal will need to consider the long term maintenance implications of retention. As a baseline, a 10 year period will be used for assessment of such implications.

Financial implications

28. As has already been stated, the council must ensure that its asset strategy enables the assets it retains to be affordable. This will be achieved through maximising income potential, either by direct provision of services, or through rental or leasing arrangements.

29. In the past the council has purchased assets as a method of increasing its income potential. It is clear that, in the current and foreseeable future, such investments are unlikely to be either achievable or desirable. For the council to make such investments, a higher level of risk would need to be accepted

than the council is currently able to tolerate, given its financial position.

30. The Council's Asset Strategy supports delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan whilst also ensuring compliance with our Capital and Investment Strategies. It is designed to ensure the council prioritises where and how it uses the council's financial resources to meet ongoing challenges, ensuring that assets are appropriately identified and monitored to ensure that they are fit for purpose, continue to deliver efficiency and provide value for money. Where assets are no longer fit for purpose or represent poor value for money the council should look at options to dispose or repurpose them as appropriate to unlock remaining value in that asset.
31. Equally where the council is required to invest in new assets it must ensure that that they are fit for the purpose and able to maximise the benefits for Eastbourne Residents. The Council's assets are fundamental to the efficient and effective operation of Council services, providing accommodation for staff, making services accessible to the local community, generating income and enabling development and service contributions by third parties.
32. Financial and other pressures on the council's resources will require all services to be flexible. Services will need to develop operating models that are agile and able to respond to the changing context and needs of the Council. As reductions to public sector spending are likely to continue throughout the lifetime of this Strategy, the Council will have to manage property with fewer resources and will need to learn to target those resources where they will make the greatest positive impact, contribute to the Council's financial resources, improve returns and secure capital receipts.

Appendix

<u>Property</u>	<u>Current Holding Reason</u>
Beachy Head & Downland Car Parks	Car Park
Church St / Vicarage Road Car Park	Car Park
Devonshire Park Car Park, College Road	Car Park
Fishermans Green Car Park	Car Park
Greencroft, Multi Storey Car Park	Car Park
Hyde Gardens Car Park	Car Park
Junction Road Multi Storey Car Park	Car Park
Prince William Parade Car Park	Car Park
Sovereign Centre Car Park	Car Park
Treasure Island Car Park , Royal Parade	Car Park
Wish Tower Car Park, King Edward's Parade	Car Park
Bandstand	Heritage
Dovecot (Listed Grade II), Motcombe Gardens.	Heritage
Redoubt Fortress Museum (Scheduled Monument including Aquarium)	Heritage
The Hermitage (Listed Grade II), Manor Gardens, Borough Lane	Heritage
Wish Tower Museum/Martello Tower	Heritage
1 Grove Road	Income Generation
1 Hampshire Court	Income Generation
13 Seaside Road	Income Generation
137-139 Seaside Road	Income Generation
1-5 Seaside Road	Income Generation
17a and 19a Milfoil Drive	Income Generation
2 Hampshire Court	Income Generation
2 Kent Court	Income Generation
204-206 Terminus Road	Income Generation
210 Terminus Road	Income Generation
212 Terminus Road	Income Generation
214 Terminus Road	Income Generation
216 Terminus Road	Income Generation
220 Terminus Road	Income Generation
222 Terminus Road	Income Generation
224 Terminus Road	Income Generation
226 Terminus Road	Income Generation
228 Terminus Road	Income Generation
232 Terminus Road	Income Generation
234 Terminus Road	Income Generation

<u>Property</u>	<u>Current Holding Reason</u>
236 Terminus Road	Income Generation
238 Terminus Road	Income Generation
240 Terminus Road	Income Generation
244 Terminus Road	Income Generation
246 Terminus Road	Income Generation
248 Terminus Road	Income Generation
250 Terminus Road	Income Generation
254 Terminus Road	Income Generation
256 Terminus Road	Income Generation
258-262 Terminus Road	Income Generation
2-9 Fife Court	Income Generation
51-53 Seaside Road	Income Generation
67-69 Seaside	Income Generation
94-99 Holly Place	Income Generation
95,97 and 99a Milfoil Drive	Income Generation
Aerial Site, Bullock Down Farm	Income Generation
Avenue Snacks	Income Generation
Bandstand East Kiosk	Income Generation
Bandstand West Kiosk	Income Generation
Bistrot Pierre Restaurant	Income Generation
Black Robin Farm	Income Generation
Boat Berths, East of Sovereign Centre	Income Generation
Bullock Down Farm	Income Generation
Butts Brow Emergency Repeater Station	Income Generation
Carlisle Road Kiosk, adj. Lifeboat Museum	Income Generation
Carpet Gardens Kiosk above Shelter E, opp. Terminus Road	Income Generation
Chalk Farm	Income Generation
Chalk Farm Hotel, Coopers Hill	Income Generation
Chalk Farm Nursery	Income Generation
Congress Theatre	Income Generation
Cornish Farm	Income Generation
David Lloyd Club	Income Generation
Devonshire Park Locker Room	Income Generation
Devonshire Park Theatre	Income Generation
Devonshire Place Kiosk above Shelter D, opp. Hartington Place	Income Generation
Driving Test Centre Wartling Road	Income Generation
Eastbourne Downs Golf Course	Income Generation
Factory 3 Faraday Close	Income Generation
Factory, 11 Marshall Road	Income Generation

<u>Property</u>	<u>Current Holding Reason</u>
Factory, 15 Marshall Road	Income Generation
Factory, 9 Marshall Road	Income Generation
Fishermans Green Ex Tennis Kiosk (Nascafe)	Income Generation
Former Tourist Information Centre	Income Generation
Fort Fun	Income Generation
Gildredge Park Cafe	Income Generation
Hampden Park Café	Income Generation
Holywell Bathing Huts	Income Generation
Holywell Cafe	Income Generation
Holywell Chalets	Income Generation
Howard Square Kiosk above Shelter B	Income Generation
Marine Road Kiosk, adj Shelter G, opp. Queen's Gardens	Income Generation
Martello Inn Car Park	Income Generation
Natural Fitness Centre	Income Generation
Net Shop 5 Fishing Station	Income Generation
Net Shop No 1	Income Generation
Net Shop No 2	Income Generation
Net Shop No 3	Income Generation
Net Shop No 4	Income Generation
Net Shop No 6	Income Generation
Seafront Shelter B, West Rocks Club	Income Generation
Seafront Shelter E, Boardwalk Cafe, opp. Terminus Road	Income Generation
Seafront Shelter F, Boardwalk Pizzeria, adj. Carpet Gardens	Income Generation
Seafront Shelter G Opp. Queen's Gardens (pt)	Income Generation
Seafront Shelter G, Opp. Queen's Gardens (pt)	Income Generation
Shop 1 Antrim Court	Income Generation
Shop 12 Antrim Court	Income Generation
Shop 13 Antrim Court	Income Generation
Shop 6 Antrim Court	Income Generation
Shop 7 Antrim Court	Income Generation
Shop 8 Kent Court	Income Generation
Spyglass Iconic Beach Hut 2	Income Generation
St Aubyns Kiosk, adj Slipway opp. St Aubyn's Road	Income Generation
Swiss Chalet Kiosk, opp. Hartington Place	Income Generation
The Beachy Head Pub	Income Generation
The Boat House	Income Generation
The Glass House	Income Generation
The Stage Door Pub	Income Generation
Treasure Island Amusement Complex	Income Generation
Trinity Place Service Station	Income Generation
Unit 1 Hampden Retail Park (Pure Gym)	Income Generation

<u>Property</u>	<u>Current Holding Reason</u>
Unit 2 Hampden Retail Park (Dreams)	Income Generation
Unit 3 Hampden Retail Park (Halfords)	Income Generation
Unit 3a Hampden Retail Park (East Sussex College Group)	Income Generation
Unit 4 Hampden Retail Park (B&Q)	Income Generation
Unit 5 Hampden Retail Park (Costa)	Income Generation
Welcome Building	Income Generation
What Unearthed Beach Hut 3	Income Generation
Winter Garden Theatre	Income Generation
Wish Tower Kiosk adj. Slipway opp. Lifeboat Museum	Income Generation
All Saints Park, King Edwards Parade	Leisure and Community
Allotment Society Office Building	Leisure and Community
Angling Club House	Leisure and Community
Archery Recreation Ground All-Weather Pitches	Leisure and Community
Archery Recreation Ground, Seaside	Leisure and Community
Ashgate Rd Allotments	Leisure and Community
Beachy Head Open Downland	Leisure and Community
Buzz Active (Spray Water Sports)	Leisure and Community
Churchdale Rd Allotments	Leisure and Community
College Green, St Anne's Road	Leisure and Community
Devonshire Park Tennis Courts	Leisure and Community
Donkey Field, Eastbourne Park	Leisure and Community
Eastbourne Sports Park, Part owned and managed by EBC	Leisure and Community
Eastbourne United FC, The Oval Club House, Pavilion, Spectator Stand & Pitch	Leisure and Community
Ebne Sov. Sailing Clubhouse (east site)	Leisure and Community
Elm Grove, Playing Field (South Area)	Leisure and Community
Fisherman's Club	Leisure and Community
Fisherman's Green Tennis and Basket Ball Courts	Leisure and Community
Five Acre Field, Lottbridge Drove	Leisure and Community
Gildredge Park	Leisure and Community
Gildredge Park Bowling Greens & Pav.	Leisure and Community
Gildredge Park Bowls Machine Store adj to bowling greens	Leisure and Community
Gildredge Park Tennis Courts and Pavilion	Leisure and Community
Gorringe Rd Allotments	Leisure and Community
Green St Farm Allotments Filching Road	Leisure and Community
Hampden Park and Lake	Leisure and Community
Hampden Park Bowling Greens and Pavilion	Leisure and Community
Hampden Park Community Hall, Brodrick Road	Leisure and Community
Hampden Park Sports Centre	Leisure and Community
Hampden Park Tennis Courts	Leisure and Community
Hampden Park Tennis Courts (hard)	Leisure and Community

<u>Property</u>	<u>Current Holding Reason</u>
Hampden Park Timber Pavilion	Leisure and Community
Hampden Pk Rugby Club, 4 pitches, pavilions & Car Pk	Leisure and Community
Hampden Pk Rugby pitches (Council)	Leisure and Community
Hartfield Square Gardens.	Leisure and Community
Helen Gardens	Leisure and Community
Helen Gardens Bowling Pavilion and Green	Leisure and Community
Heritage Centre	Leisure and Community
Highfield Estate Allotments, Bodiam Crescent	Leisure and Community
Holly Park	Leisure and Community
Howard Square Gardens.	Leisure and Community
Hydneye Lake (Shinewater Park)	Leisure and Community
Indoor Bowls Hall, Hampden Park.	Leisure and Community
Italian Gardens	Leisure and Community
Langney Community Hall	Leisure and Community
Langney District Pond	Leisure and Community
Life Boat Museum, Wish Slope.	Leisure and Community
Lifeboat House, Fisherman's Green	Leisure and Community
Lifeguard Station and First Aid Post (previously Bathing Station)	Leisure and Community
Lifeguards HQ adj. Rowing Club	Leisure and Community
MacMillan Drive Recreation Ground	Leisure and Community
Manor Gardens Tennis Courts	Leisure and Community
Manor Gardens, Borough Lane.	Leisure and Community
Manor Rd Allotments	Leisure and Community
Marchants Field Allotments, Tutts Barn Lane	Leisure and Community
Motcombe Gardens & Pond	Leisure and Community
Motcombe Gdns Bowling Green & Huts	Leisure and Community
Motcombe Swimming Pool & House, Motcombe Road.	Leisure and Community
Old Town Community Centre	Leisure and Community
Old Town Library	Leisure and Community
Old Town Recreation Ground Pavilion, Longland Road	Leisure and Community
Old Town Recreation Ground Tennis Courts	Leisure and Community
Old Town Recreation Ground, Longland Road	Leisure and Community
Parade Bowling Club	Leisure and Community
Princes Park & Lake.	Leisure and Community
Princes Park Bowling Greens and Pavilion(RSBC)	Leisure and Community
Princes park Model Power Boat Clubs	Leisure and Community
Priory Heights Grazing Area	Leisure and Community
Priory Rd Allotments	Leisure and Community
Redoubt Centenary Field (Redoubt Gardens)	Leisure and Community
Regency Park Community Centre	Leisure and Community

<u>Property</u>	<u>Current Holding Reason</u>
Roselands Recreation Ground	Leisure and Community
Rowing Club adj. Lifeguards HQ	Leisure and Community
Scout and Guide Hall	Leisure and Community
Sea Cadets Headquarters	Leisure and Community
Seaside Recreation Ground Pavilion, Whitley Road	Leisure and Community
Seaside Recreation Ground, Whitley Road	Leisure and Community
Sevenoaks Rd Recreation Ground	Leisure and Community
Shinewater Community Centre	Leisure and Community
Shinewater Park	Leisure and Community
Shinewater Sports Centre (with Community Centre)	Leisure and Community
Slindon Crescent Grazing Area	Leisure and Community
Social Centre for Blind	Leisure and Community
Sovereign bathing huts	Leisure and Community
Sovereign Centre	Leisure and Community
Sovereign Harbour Community Centre	Leisure and Community
Sovereign Park	Leisure and Community
St John Ambulance Headquarters	Leisure and Community
Summerdale Allotments Gorringe Road	Leisure and Community
The Beachy Head Story	Leisure and Community
Towner	Leisure and Community
Tutts Barn Allotments, Gorringe Road	Leisure and Community
Upperton Gardens	Leisure and Community
Wellcombe Allotments Welcombe Upper Dukes Drive	Leisure and Community
West Langney Levels (formerly known as Langney Mount)	Leisure and Community
Western lawns	Leisure and Community
Westlords Recreation Ground	Leisure and Community
Whitbread Hollow Playing Field	Leisure and Community
Whitbread Hollow, Bird Ringers Hut	Leisure and Community
Willingdon Trees Community Centre	Leisure and Community
Wilmington Square Gardens	Leisure and Community
Winkney Farm Recreation Ground, Tugwell Road/Wilton Ave.	Leisure and Community
Wishtower bathing huts	Leisure and Community
Youth Hostel	Leisure and Community
Beachy Head Underground Bunker	Miscellaneous
Redoubt Colonnade	Miscellaneous
Crematorium Buildings Langney	Operational
Downland Water Supply network	Operational
Langney Cemetery Chapel and Columbarium	Operational
Ocklynge Cemetery Chapel	Operational
Seafront Offices	Operational

<u>Property</u>	<u>Current Holding Reason</u>
The Point, Devonshire Park	Operational
Town Hall	Operational
Winter Garden Racquets Court	Operational
Bandstand Public Conveniences (disabled east), Grand Parade	Public Convenience
Bandstand Public Conveniences (Gents east), Grand Parade	Public Convenience
Bandstand Public Conveniences (Ladies west), Grand Parade	Public Convenience
Beachy Head Public Convenience (with Disabled)	Public Convenience
Changing Places Toilet Seafront	Public Convenience
Devonshire Park Public Conveniences, College Road	Public Convenience
Fishermans Green Public Conveniences (with Disabled), Royal Parade	Public Convenience
Gildredge Park Public Conveniences	Public Convenience
Hampden Park Public Conveniences (part of Café - with Disabled), Hampden Park Drive	Public Convenience
Helen Gardens Public Conveniences (Part of Pavilion), King Edward's Parade	Public Convenience
Hyde Gardens Public Conveniences at rear of TIC (with Disabled)	Public Convenience
Lower Holywell Public Conveniences (with Disabled)	Public Convenience
Old Town Recreation Ground Public Conveniences part of Pavilion	Public Convenience
Prince William Parade Public Conveniences with Disabled	Public Convenience
Princes Park Public Conveniences (with Disabled)	Public Convenience
Seaside Recreation Ground Public Conveniences	Public Convenience
The Pier Public Conveniences (disabled east)	Public Convenience
The Pier Public Conveniences (Gents west)	Public Convenience
The Pier Public Conveniences (Ladies east)	Public Convenience

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