

# Public Document Pack

**Becky Shaw**  
Chief Executive

If calling please ask for:

Natalie Jones-Punch on 033 022 25098  
Email: [natalie.jones-punch@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:natalie.jones-punch@westsussex.gov.uk)

[www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)

County Hall  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1RQ  
Switchboard  
Tel no (01243) 777100



13 November 2020

## Cabinet

A virtual meeting of the Cabinet will be held at **10.30 am** on **Tuesday, 24 November 2020**.

**Note:** In accordance with regulations in response to the current public health emergency, this meeting will be held virtually with members in remote attendance. Public access is via webcasting.

**The meeting will be available to watch live via the Internet at this address:**

<http://www.westsussex.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

## Agenda

- |          |    |  |
|----------|----|--|
| 10.30 am | 1. | <p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt please contact Democratic Services before the meeting.</p> |
| 10.35 am | 2. | <p><b>Minutes</b> (Pages 5 - 8)</p> <p>Cabinet Members are asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2020 (attached, cream paper).</p>  |
| 10.40 am | 3. | <p><b>Urgent Matters</b></p> <p>Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances.</p>  |
| 10.45 am | 4. | <p><b>For debate and discussion:</b><br/><b>Youth Cabinet Address</b> (Pages 9 - 10)</p> <p>The Chairman of the West Sussex Youth Cabinet will address the Cabinet to provide an update on its activities, campaigns and future plans. The Cabinet is invited to consider and discuss the update.</p>  |

The Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee will be invited to speak for up to three minutes on the Youth Cabinet address.

Each of the main Minority Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes on the Youth Cabinet address.

11.15 am      5.      **For debate and discussion:**  
**Exceptional Pressures Update** (Pages 11 - 26)

The Cabinet is asked to consider and comment on the exceptional pressures update report.

Scrutiny Committee Chairman and each of the main Minority Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes on the Council's response to exceptional pressures upon service provision.

Cabinet Members may respond to comments made and the Leader may sum up the discussion.

11.45 am      6.      **For decision:**  
**West Sussex County Council Economy Reset Plan 2020-24 (CAB11\_20/21)** (Pages 27 - 64)

The Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations as set out in the attached key decision report.

The Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee will be invited to speak for up to three minutes to provide the views of their Committee.

Each of the main Minority Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes each on the report.

The Cabinet will then discuss the report and proposals prior to taking any decision.

12.15 pm      7.      **For decision:**  
**West Sussex County Council Reset Plan (CAB12\_20/21)**  
(Pages 65 - 82)

The Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations as set out in the attached key decision report.

Scrutiny Committee Chairman and each of the main Minority Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes on the WSCC Reset Plan.

The Cabinet will then discuss the report and proposals prior to taking any decision.

- 12.55 pm      8.      **For debate and discussion:**  
**Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22** (Pages 83 - 106)
- The Cabinet is asked to agree to progress the proposed savings as set out in the attached report.
- The Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee will be invited to speak for up to three minutes to provide the views of their Committee on the report.
- Each of the main Minority Group Leaders will be invited to speak for up to three minutes each on the report.
- 1.40 pm      9.      **For discussion:**  
**Notice of Motion on the Provision of Free School Meals in school holidays** (Pages 107 - 110)
- The Cabinet is asked to consider the motion on the Provision of Free School Meals in school holidays and agree a response to be submitted to the Council.
- 1.50 pm      10.      **Emerging Issues**
- Cabinet Members are invited to provide any verbal updates on current significant issues for their respective portfolios which may benefit from discussion.
- 1.55 pm      11.      **Date of Next Meeting**
- The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on 15 December 2020.

**To all members of the Cabinet**

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Cabinet**

20 October 2020 – At a virtual meeting of the Cabinet held at 10.30am with restricted public access.

Present:

Cllr Marshall (Chairman), Cllr Crow, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Hunt, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Russell and Cllr Urquhart

Apologies were received from Cllr Barrett-Miles

Also in attendance: Cllr J Dennis, Cllr Hillier, Cllr M Jones, Cllr Turner, Cllr Waight and Cllr Walsh

### **36. Declarations of Interest**

36.1 No interests were declared.

### **37. Minutes**

37.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

### **38. Scope of services for a proposed Children's Trust**

38.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning.

38.2 The report was introduced by Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People who outlined that, following an inadequate Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in early 2019 and subsequent Direction from the Secretary of State, the authority is required to establish a Trust service delivery model and to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Education (DfE). The model proposed will encompass the whole of the Children's Services department, including Education and Skills, within the scope of the trust. Including the entire service within the Trust aligns with the recommendation of the Children's Commissioner and maintains a clear and integrated approach as the service continues on its improvement journey. The Trust would become effective in October 2021.

38.3 Cllr Stephen Hillier, Chairman of the scrutiny 'services for a proposed Children's Trust Task and Finish Group' (TFG) provided the conclusions of the group:

- There was unanimity that all services should sit within the trust.
- The Board of the trust should comprise membership with solid experience, and that education and early help should be equally represented for effective overall delivery.

- Future costs to the Council and disruption to staff were considered as potential risks and areas for potential future scrutiny.
- Supported the implementation of the Trust, and that the Executive Director for Children, Young People and Learning be appointed as Chief Executive of the Trust.
- That consideration be given to how the trust engages with other services within the County Council.

38.4 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group highlighted that former mistakes within the service should be learnt from. He asked what the Trust would cost the taxpayer over the next three to five years and questioned how the Board would be subject to scrutiny, and how governance arrangements deal with accountability. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People clarified these points.

38.5 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group asked whether staff were protected by the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) regulations and this was confirmed. He stated that all members should have been consulted on the scope of the Trust and commented that the proposed scope surrendered responsibility as the local education authority. He requested a progress update at full Council in March 2021.

38.6 Resolved - that Cabinet:

1. Approves the proposals for the principal provisions for the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Education as the basis for the establishment of a Children's Trust in accordance with the direction given to the Council by the Secretary of State for Education.
2. Gives authority to the Chief Executive to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Education based on the proposals for inclusion as approved by the Cabinet.

### **39. For debate and discussion: Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance and Annual Report**

39.1 Cabinet considered reports by the Chief Fire Officer.

39.2 The reports were introduced by Cllr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities who outlined the requirement to produce a Statement of Assurance under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. He highlighted the governance arrangements of the Fire and Rescue Service through Cabinet and a newly established Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee. The annual report highlighted operational performance, including improvement work, and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) actional plan delivery.

39.3 Cllr Steve Waight, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee noted the improvement journey undertaken over the past eighteen months. The Committee felt the Annual Report was an excellent document which provided a comprehensive overview of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service, including prevention and protection.

39.4 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group raised the reduction in performance and asked what steps had been taken to address this in high risk areas. He queried why incident statistics had not been published in the Statement of Assurance. The Chief Fire Officer responded to his questions.

39.5 Resolved – that Cabinet reviews and notes the Statement of Assurance and Annual Report, and commends the content and work undertaken, taking into account the views of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee and Minority Group Leader.

#### **40. For debate and discussion: West Sussex County Council Response to Covid-19**

40.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive. The report was introduced by Cllr Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health who advised that case numbers were increasing and a three-tier system had been introduced nationally. Laboratory capacity had been increased in Sussex and track and trace support, once set up, would make managing the pandemic at local level easier. A joint winter planning document devised with health services had been submitted to NHS England who had praised the plan as an exemplar and the best in the region.

40.2 Dr Stephen Horsley, Interim Director of Public Health provided an update on local case figures and work on infection control. Lucy Butler, Executive Director for Children, Young People and Learning provided an update on the changing situation in schools in the county and provided figures of cases and attendance levels at schools.

40.3 Cllr Bryan Turner, Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee noted that, although case numbers were increasing, they remain lower than the majority of the country and welcomed this. He highlighted that some care homes were not allowing new admissions or visitors and considered how passported funding to those homes could increase confidence in dealing with patients with the virus.

40.4 Cllr Joy Dennis, Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee noted the Committee was reviewing the impact of Covid-19 including additional cost pressures and that lobbying of the Government should continue in order to press for greater financial assistance. Covid-19 had impacted business as usual performance indicators and temporary measures had been introduced to reflect the change in challenges.

40.5 Cllr Stephen Hillier, Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee felt the response of WSCC to the pandemic was positive and had found the updates from Public Health and Education and Skills to have been timely and helpful. He noted that at its next meeting, the Committee would be considering the impact of the pandemic on children and educational outcomes.

40.6 Cllr Steve Waight, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee referenced the HMICFRS inspection of WSCCs response to the Covid-19 pandemic and that scrutiny would await the outcomes from both

this and the next full inspection to provide feedback to Cabinet in the intervening period.

40.7 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group noted that an effective track and trace system was crucial to control the virus.

40.8 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group felt the testing capacity did not enable track and trace as an effective mechanism. He highlighted the different rates across the County and asked if this was being explored. He raised the economic implications across the county and questioned how the discretionary funding allocation was being advertised.

40.9 Cabinet Members and the Chief Executive responded to the points raised in discussion. The Leader summarised that as the county entered a second wave of the virus, it was still recovering from the first, with further unprecedented challenges expected. Lobbying to government had increased and conversations were taking place with Members of Parliament who were keen to understand the local challenges.

40.10 Resolved – that Cabinet notes the update and discussion, including comments from Scrutiny Chairman and Minority Group Leaders in the council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### **41. Emerging Issues**

41.1 Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People advised that Ofsted was currently undertaking a focussed visit, the findings of which would be published in early December on the Council's website.

#### **42. Date of Next Meeting**

42.1 The next meeting of Cabinet would be held on 24 November 2020.



**Key decision: Not applicable**  
**Unrestricted**  
**Ref: n/a**

---

## **Report to Cabinet**

**November 2020**

### **West Sussex Youth Cabinet Update**

#### **Report by the West Sussex Youth Cabinet**

**Electoral division(s):**

---

#### **Summary**

The West Sussex Youth Cabinet has been invited to attend the Cabinet meeting on 24 November to provide an update on its activities and future plans. This paper has been provided by the Youth Cabinet to give some background information to support its update.

#### **Recommendations**

Cabinet is invited to discuss the update.

---

### **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 The Youth Cabinet and UK Youth Parliament for West Sussex is an organisation made up of 46 young people, between the ages of 11 and 18, who are elected to represent the views of young people in West Sussex.
- 1.2 We work on various campaigns. Some are decided by Make Your Mark, a ballot open to all young people in the UK that helps us establish focus points for campaigns. Others are agreed upon by the Cabinet, and what we feel is relevant to the youth of West Sussex, and the UK.

### **2 Our campaigns**

- 2.1 **Environment:** A campaign that focuses on educating people of all ages in West Sussex about ways to live sustainably, and the effects they have on the environment. We have a social media campaign continually running and working with outside companies to tackle climate change through the media. Other events have been organised, such as a series of beach clean-ups.
- 2.2 **Mental Health:** This campaign focuses on the mental well-being and services in West Sussex available to young people. The Youth Cabinet works with external groups and assists with the design and approach taken by many services. There is also a social media campaign running, encouraging positivity and offering advice on how to be mindful. A public blog is running under the Youth Cabinet, where young people and professionals can post blogs about their experience with mental health and any advice they may have.

- 2.3 **Tackling Racial Inequality:** This campaign is centred around ensuring West Sussex is an inclusive, and enjoyable environment for everyone. The Youth Cabinet ran three days of online webinars with speakers discussing racial inequality with signed up members of the public. A social media campaign is running, outputting educational posts about different cultures and religions. Our annual debate with county councillors this year was linked to this campaign; 'Racial Inequality: how to improve and influence the pastoral curriculum at schools and colleges in West Sussex, to ensure all young people have a better understanding of the issue and those experiencing discrimination get the support they need.'
- 2.4 **Covid-19 support:** During the first wave of Covid-19 we ran a social media campaign aimed at young people that encouraged them to get involved with challenges, and boredom busters for lockdown. As well as the more fun and practical side, we advocated for mental health throughout, and made sure our social media output was positive. This campaign will continue to run until it is no longer needed.

### **3 What next?**

- 3.1 Since the new term of this Youth Cabinet started, our working relationship with the County Council has improved significantly. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and council officers have attended several Youth Cabinet sessions and the Cabinet Member is having monthly informal meetings with the Youth Cabinet Chair to update on activities and identify future opportunities. The Cabinet Member's address to Full Council meetings now includes an update from the Youth Cabinet, raising its profile with all county councillors. Introductory sessions were held during the summer with each County Council Cabinet Member and members of the Youth Cabinet interested in their portfolio areas. Also, the Youth Cabinet is now invited to attend and contribute to all meetings of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 As a Youth Cabinet, we want to continue to strengthen the relationship. Our recent involvement with scrutiny committees and the area of interest meetings with individual cabinet members has proven beneficial to all the members of the Youth Cabinet. Further opportunities to be involved with more scrutiny committees or council projects would be welcomed. As a Youth Cabinet, we are going to aim to involve county councillors in our campaigns on a more regular basis.

### **4 Details**

- 4.1 There are no resource, risk, policy or legal implications for the County Council arising from this report by the West Sussex Youth Cabinet.

**Contact Officer:** Helen Kenny, Head of Democratic Services, 033022-22532, [helen.kenny@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:helen.kenny@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Appendices** - None

**Background papers** - None

---

**Report to Cabinet**

**November 2020**

**Exceptional pressures: update**

**Report by the Chief Executive**

---

**Summary**

Attached at Appendix A is an update on West Sussex County Council's continued response to the period of exceptional pressure on our service provision that we are currently facing in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, seasonal flu, winter disruption and the end of the Brexit transition period.

The Appendix provides information on cases in West Sussex, local outbreak management, the re-opening of schools and other priority issues.

West Sussex County Council is ensuring the ongoing COVID-19 response is managed in an integrated way with the other challenges potentially facing the authority and its partners over the next few months. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting to ensure an up-to-date picture is provided given the fast-moving nature of current events.

The pressures on the services, especially adults, are significant and growing. Action to ensure we are focussed on the highest priority activities is in hand and a review of longer-term projects is underway.

The resource implications of the COVID-19 emergency response continue to be assessed. There are significant risk implications. Decisions required to address COVID-19 include assessments in accordance with Council policy and the statutory framework of duties and responsibilities including those relating to Equality, Human Rights, Social Value, Sustainability and Crime and Disorder Reduction implications.

**Recommendation**

Cabinet will be asked to consider and comment on the Council's response to the current exceptional pressures.

Becky Shaw

**Chief Executive**

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Exceptional Pressures Report

**Background Documents:**

None

This page is intentionally left blank

**WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL EXCEPTIONAL PRESSURES BRIEFING  
24 NOVEMBER 2020**

**Priority issues**

- a) National and Local Outbreak Management (para 1 - 18)**
- b) Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and Community Hub update (para 19 – 34)**
- c) Schools reopening and attendance - update (para 35 - 42)**
- d) Care Homes update (para 43 – 66)**
- e) Impact on West Sussex County Council public facing services (para 67 – 68)**
- f) Managing Concurrent Pressures – Autumn Winter 20/21 (para 69 – 75)**
- g) Financial Position (2020/2021) (para 76 – 77)**

## Priority issues

### a) National and Local Outbreak Management

#### *National lockdown*

1. A second [national lockdown](#) is being enforced in England. It started on 5 November and will be reviewed by 2 December. People are required to:

1. Stay at home, except for specific purposes.
2. Avoid meeting people you do not live with, except for specific purposes.
3. Close certain businesses and venues.

2. There are a number of specific, limited exceptions.

#### *West Sussex Data*

#### *Recorded Cases*

3. **Scale** - On average for the 7 days between 29 October and 4 November 2020 there were approximately 124 new cases a day across the county.

4. The **seven-day incidence** rate varies among the districts and boroughs of West Sussex.

- Over the period 29 October to 4 November, Crawley had the highest rate of 129.9 per 100,000 population, Adur the lowest rate at 73.1 per 100,000.
- Overall, the county rate is now approximately 101 per 100,000. The rate for the South East region was 130.5 and for England the rate was 243.3 per 100,000.

Area	<b>Cases</b> in the 7 Days between 29 October to 4 November	<b>Rate per 100,000</b>
Adur	47	73.1
Arun	158	98.3
Chichester	147	121.4
Crawley	146	129.9
Horsham	145	100.8
Mid Sussex	133	88.1
Worthing	97	87.7
<b>West Sussex</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>101.0</b>

5. While we are seeing some larger numbers relating to specific outbreaks in care homes, or related to school/university and a few workplaces, most cases

are attached to residential postcodes and are single cases, **this is widespread community transmission.**

6. **Positivity Rates have been increasing overall but have fallen slightly in Crawley in recent days** – the highest rate (between 29 October to 4 November) in Crawley at 5.9% and lowest in Worthing at 2.9%.
7. **Pace of Change** - Using data as of 10 November 2020, current doubling time for cases in the county is 21 days. There has been some lengthening of doubling time in recent days; the Public Health and Social Research Unit are tracking this closely to see if the change is sustained.

#### *Age-Specific Incidence Rate*

8. Age is an important factor in the severity of disease and likelihood of needing hospital treatment, so changes in older age groups are especially concerning.
9. Of the 866 people who tested positive between 29 October and 4 November, **20% were aged 60 years or over.**
10. Young adults have the highest age-specific incidence rates however, it is important to note that there have been increases in all age groups.

#### *Local Tracing Partnership – preparation*

11. Preparations are well underway to establish a 'Local Tracing Partnership' (previously referred to as Locally Supported Contact Tracing).
12. The Partnership will provide additional capacity to the National NHS Test and Trace service by contacting positive cases that the national team have been unable to reach within 48 hours. It will act to ensure that these individuals are given advice and support as soon as possible and details of their contacts are collected and uploaded to the national system, in order to control the COVID-19 rate of reproduction (R), reduce the spread of infection, and save lives. The contacts of positive cases will be followed up by the national team.
13. A collaborative approach is being used to prepare to implement this service; West Sussex County Council is working in partnership with colleagues in East Sussex, and District and Borough Councils across the county with support from Public Health England.
14. West Sussex County Council's Customer Experience Service will manage the Local Tracing process with dedicated Community Hub staff undertaking the contacts for both West Sussex and East Sussex. The Community Hub was established in response to the first wave of the pandemic and incorporates a full ranging customer service centre approach. To ensure a fully localised approach despite operating consistently across both Counties the phone number seen by the individual contacted will be a local number.

### *Communications Approach*

15. Throughout our response to COVID-19 we have taken a proactive approach to communications to make sure we are doing everything possible to supporting residents, making sure they have access to the information and support they need and to spread the important public health messages in order to Keep West Sussex Safe.
16. We have taken a localised approach, reaching out to community leaders and influencers on the ground alongside a successful social media advertising campaign. This will continue throughout the lockdown with bespoke messages to make sure people understand the guidance and restrictions and how to keep themselves safe.
17. Alongside this we will continue to communicate detail of any service changes or restrictions relating specifically to county council run services. We continue to work closely with partners in health and district and borough councils to make sure the way we communicate with our residents is joined up and coordinated.
18. Our social media adverts have reached 493,727 social media accounts out of a possible 550,000 operating in the county; that's 90 per cent. Those adverts have been served 5,989,203 times.

### **b) Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and the Community Hub**

19. The Government has introduced new National Restrictions guidance, which will come into effect on 5 November and will apply until Wednesday 2 December.

### *Clinically Extremely Vulnerable*

20. The new National Restrictions guidance announced on 31 October will protect everyone, including those who have been deemed to be Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV), meaning that they face the highest risk of serious illness if they contract COVID-19. Residents who are in this group, should have received a letter from the NHS or from their GP advising them that they are assessed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or they may have been advised to shield in the past.
21. Down's syndrome (adults only) and chronic kidney disease (stage 5) have recently been added as conditions that meet the criteria of extreme clinical vulnerability, and therefore the new guidance also applies to individuals with either condition.
22. Government will not be re-introducing nationally provided food parcels. West Sussex County Council will receive funding to provide support to those Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people who may not be able to rely on friends, family or neighbours to access food and essential supplies. This support may include signposting to local community groups, assistance with using digital/online services, referrals to partner organisations as well as information and guidance.



### *Community Hub*

23. The Community Hub, launched in late March 2020, is fully prepared to provide a range of support and practical assistance for the more than 34,000 Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents across West Sussex.
24. Telephone lines are open from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week supported by website content and a series of e-forms to provide digital access. The core team has already been increased in size to ensure capacity to respond to increased demand during this Lockdown period.
25. We had already re-established proactive outbound calls to some of our most vulnerable residents. Almost 1000 calls have been completed already to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable individuals and will continue daily. This activity is being complemented by the Prevention and Assessment Team following up with residents who previously had multiple contacts to the Community Hub requiring an urgent/same day response to address a critical need or required a referral to Adult Social Care. This will include individuals who were previously contacted by the Library Service as part of the 'Keeping in Touch' programme and required additional support from Adult Social Care.
26. Clinically Extremely Vulnerable individuals, or their friends and family are encouraged to contact the Community Hub or use the new online registration service to:
  - Request priority access to supermarket delivery slots (if you have already got priority supermarket deliveries, you'll keep them).
  - Tell the County Council if they need support in order to follow this guidance that cannot be provided by friends, family or other support networks.
  - Update details, for example, your address.
27. This service can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support>.
28. The Community Hub will be able to complete registration by phone and we would encourage people to get in touch directly if they have an urgent need or have any questions.
29. The COVID-19 version of the County Local & Information Online (CLIO) system used within Libraries designed to provide Community Hub staff with immediate access to relevant information whilst on the telephone (e.g. supermarket details, community-based support options, opening hours of key partner organisations, etc) has been updated along with our website pages.
30. The County Council continues to utilise its own locally developed sustainable food and supplies offer available via the Community Hub, providing flexibility to support either a one off or ongoing requirement. Each food and supplies delivery is followed up by a call to minimise dependence by working on sustainable options where appropriate.

### *COVID Winter Grant Scheme*

31. On Sunday 8 November, the Government announced extra targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period. WSCC is set to receive almost £2M (£1,989,591.80) from this COVID Winter Grant Scheme managed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
32. Designed to provide direct assistance to families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals this grant covers the period from early December 2020 until the end of March 2021.
33. There is a requirement for the County Council to determine eligibility across the county and targets support within the scope of the grant conditions to provide direct assistance to individuals, vulnerable households and families with children particularly affected by the pandemic with meeting the cost of food, energy and water bills and other associated costs. Included in the scope is the opportunity to provide support to families who have access to Free School Meals during term time.
34. Proposals are currently being developed with partners on how deliver this support which will require a blended approach to meet the grant criteria. Discussions underway include the delivery model to support children and families in receipt of Free School Meals over the Christmas holiday and February half term and the utilisation of existing partnership arrangements and infrastructure. West Sussex County Council has flexibility in administering the funding within the confines of the scheme – which may include cash, the provision of food, vouchers, or funding through third party organisations.

### **c) Schools Reopening and Attendance – update**

35. Almost all schools have remained open through the first half term with only Littlegreen Academy closing in its entirety due to the need to isolate children and staff.
36. At the beginning of the autumn term strong risk assessments and plans were in place to ensure that the return was managed safely. These will now need reviewing in light of the changing situation.
37. Attendance in schools has been consistently above the national average and this is also reflected in the proportion of children with EHCPs attending school and also the proportion of children with a social worker. Data is submitted by schools to the DfE on a daily basis and the proportion of West Sussex Schools submitting their data runs at 74% which is above the national average.
38. Attendance has been consistently around 93% against a national declining trend in school attendance (83.6% nationally). The attendance of pupils with an EHCP similarly has remained high at 89.5% compared with a decline nationally to 76.4%. Attendance of children with a social worker remained high with 86.6% of pupils with a social worker attended school compared with 78.4% attending nationally.

### *Home to school transport*

39. Home to school transport is working well overall. There have been some investigations in key localities where suggestion has been made that public transport has made it challenging to maintain social distancing. Using Government support funding additional buses have been running into various schools around the county to ensure there is sufficient capacity on public bus services.
40. Following changes in national guidance, students from Year 7 upwards will now be required to wear face coverings on school transport as they are required to wear on public transport.

### *Local lockdown*

41. While our aim is to ensure schools remain open, every school will also have a plan for the possibility of a national requirement to close, a partial closure of a school owing to an outbreak in a 'bubble', 'class' or 'year group', and how they will ensure continuity of an education service should such scenarios occur.
42. We are assured our school leaders and governors, whilst operating with the national and local guidance we have provided, have been supported to take and make the very best decisions on behalf of children and families in their community.

## **d) Care Homes - update**

### *Care homes*

43. There are 235 care homes for older people in West Sussex. The care homes provide around 8,608 beds. A third of these are commissioned by the County Council with the remainder commissioned through other local authorities, health or funded directly by residents.
44. There is increasing concern among care market providers about the increase in COVID-19 within local communities, staff and residents in care homes, resulting in some closing to admissions as a preventative measure. Any care home with two or more confirmed Covid-19 case is advised by Public Health England to close to admissions for 28 days (twice the incubation period of COVID-19). Any closures, either preventative or advised by Public Health England, reduce options for care for people who are medically ready for discharge from acute or community hospital but require an admission to a care home either as an interim or longer-term option. This is also having a significant impact on availability of respite care, which has a real impact on informal carers and families.
45. Testing still remains an issue for providers, mainly delayed collections that can mean test results are void and delays in returning weekly test results. This is being picked up by the Sussex testing group. Supported living and extra care are outside of the testing programme, however there is a roll out

of an initial round of testing for staff and residents in supported living and extra care settings which meet certain risk-based criteria.

46. For the week commencing 9 November, 14 care homes for older people were closed due to confirmed cases among staff and/or residents (10) or as a precautionary measure (4). In the same period, 4 learning disability and one mental health service had confirmed cases.

47. For the same week, local data on care homes reports admissions are currently restricted in:

- 14 care homes for older people,
- 2 extra care setting,
- 10 care homes for mental health/learning disability,
- 0 domiciliary care providers, and
- 2 supported living settings.

48. On 16 October the County Council submitted a response to the Department of Health & Social Care, updating on its approach to designated settings for COVID-19 positive people being discharged from hospital with care needs which requires ongoing consideration and planning. The County Council is working closely with NHS partners and has been exploring potential options for supporting people with COVID-19 who are unable to return home, and those isolating and unable to isolate in their home, including community rehabilitation beds and available care home provision in specific settings which are empty either in part or in whole and could therefore isolate individuals safely. An expression of interest has been sent to the market to invite interest from providers to determine who would like to work with the County Council to mobilise designated accommodation to support COVID-19 positive people with care needs, requiring isolation who are unable return home.

49. The County Council continues to support care providers through a wide variety of means as detailed in previous reports. In addition, a resource pack is being created for all care providers to include current business continuity templates for care homes and community providers with a reminder for them to be reviewed (particularly with regard to disruption due to severe weather and outbreaks), resources on staffing including considerations when using agency (including block booking) and contingency when staff and agency do not respond. An infection control focussed provider newsletter was issued on 6 November and included information on the following items:

- New guidance to support safe care home visits during lockdown,
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Social Distancing,
- Updated PPE Guidance,
- Free weekly PPE,
- Impact of PPE when engaging with customers,
- Employers' responsibilities under the Health and Safety Executive,
- COVID-19 staff risk reduction,
- Management of staff and exposed patients and residents in health and social care settings,
- Flu vaccination for people with learning disabilities and autism.

50. There is also a new focus on covering gaps in services that are needed to continue to safely operate, in a way that supports good infection prevention control such as laundering, cleaning, and food preparation, together with information on key contacts. The County Council continues to work closely with the Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure providers receive the correct professional input. The Council has a robust (and now well tested) Care Setting Emergency Management Plan specifically developed for Covid-19 to support the overarching Outbreak plan.

#### *Infection Control Fund*

51. On 1 October tranche 1 of the second round of funding for the national [Infection Control Fund](#) was received and will be distributed by the County Council to providers in West Sussex. This time 80% of the funding is ringfenced for care homes and registered community providers, with a requirement for providers to have completed the NHS NECS Tracker or the CQC Home Care Survey for two consecutive weeks and commit to completing it weekly.

52. As part of the reporting requirements to Government, the County Council must submit:

- A self-assessment (on Service Continuity and Care Market Review) response by 21 October 2020 (completed).
- A response on providers business continuity, the Winter Plan and a signed statement of assurance by 31 October 2020 (completed).
- Monthly reporting on spend against the allocated (just under £11m) from November 2020 to April 2021.

53. On 2 November 2020 a regional response was submitted, which drew on the self-assessments, and the regional work led by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS).

#### *Adult Social Care: Our COVID-19 Winter Plan 2020-21*

54. On Friday 18 September the Government published the policy paper [Adult social care: our Covid-19 winter plan 2020-2021](#) (this references and builds on previous guidance and policy set out in the Social Care Action Plan (May 2020) and Hospital Discharge Guidance (August 2020)). The winter plan has been reviewed and the key issues for the local authority are:

- Ensuring everyone who needs care or support can get high-quality, timely and safe care throughout the autumn and winter period.
- Protecting people who need care, support or safeguards, the social care workforce, and carers from infections including COVID-19.
- Making sure that people who need care, support or safeguards remain connected to essential services and their loved ones whilst protecting individuals from infections including COVID-19.

55.The original social care action plan (May 2020) has been updated to incorporate readiness for winter and in response to the policy paper, enabling a single plan to be in place to:

- Maintain the focus on future planning,
- Enable a consistent approach with regular review and monitoring,
- Reduce the risk of disparate plans losing overall focus.

56.The key themes and actions were shared with a range of stakeholders for feedback and this formed the basis of the assurance letter required by the submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care on 31 October.

#### *West Sussex Adult Social Care Winter Plan*

57.The County Council has been working closely with NHS partners to identify the commissioning activity required to support additional pressures and demands over the winter period. A decision has now been confirmed to approve the plan and the commencement of the procurement of initiatives to support additional demands. Tenders have started to be issued to the market.

58.The plan includes the commissioning of additional Home First Hospital Discharge Care provision, additional capacity in domiciliary care, block purchase of residential dementia and nursing beds and enables more funding for community equipment services, 3 days free meals on wheels for people being discharged home from hospital and a focus on commissioning provision for people who may be isolating as a result of COVID-19. It is planned for additional provision to be in place by the end of November to support over winter. The local health and social care system have agreed to fund the Combined Placement and Sourcing Team until the end of the financial year, in recognition of how it has supported the hospital discharge pathway at a time of incredible pressure.

#### *Sussex Winter Operating Model (Plan) 2020/21*

59.The County Council and partners submitted their Winter Plan for 2020/21 to NHS England (NHSE) on 1 October.

60.In relation to discharge and social care, NHSE declared it was an “exemplar plan – should be shared a good practice” as there were good schemes for winter in place, a practice of continuous improvement, a data driven approach, comprehensive detailed plans for care homes support with clear strategic oversight.

#### *Mental health system*

61.There continue to be pressures within the inpatient beds for people with mental health needs that warrant an admission, with a significant number of people requiring placement in beds outside those delivered by Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust. There are some positive initiatives actively supporting discharges e.g. the discharge to assess beds in the community

and strong oversight of any delays to discharge. However, these are not able to keep pace with admissions which are, as anticipated, higher than previously due to the COVID-19 mental health surge nationally and locally. The Council continues to work well with partners to support both prevention of admission and discharges wherever possible.

#### *People with learning disabilities*

62. There has been active and ongoing engagement with providers of day services to, wherever safe and possible, enable them to re-open or to continue to support people in alternative ways. This is particularly critical for those living in family settings or where a placement is at risk of breakdown and it is recognised that lockdown has been a particular challenge for some people with complex needs who have not been able to always access their usual support. Where placements have broken down, COVID-19 restrictions or anxieties have, at times, made sourcing an alternative particularly difficult.
63. The new guidance regarding those who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable now includes those with Downs Syndrome. This means people's needs for services require review and potentially alternatives identified.

#### *Hospital capacity*

64. At the present time there is adequate acute hospital and community bed capacity in West Sussex, although in the week ending 6 November, community hospital capacity in West Sussex was challenged due to the need to support neighbouring systems and one ward being closed due to a COVID-19 outbreak. Hospital discharge hubs and a combined placement and sourcing team continue to operate, as well as working with the CCG to secure appropriate levels of domiciliary care, care/nursing home beds and voluntary services to support effective discharge.
65. Hospitals are now facing increasing pressures with rising numbers of COVID-19 positive cases - symptomatic and asymptomatic - and there will be challenges to managing this on the wards. Hospitals are also being expected to deliver against the national restoration plans including for cancer treatments. The County Council played an active role in a week-long exercise to increase the pace of discharge and identify themes and issues that impact on this. This highlighted positive system working but also the pressures in the market and on services to support people going home.
66. The County Council's commissioned Hospital Discharge Care services are operating well since commencement in April 2020, supporting many people to return home following discharge from hospital. Demand for these services is increasing and, in the week ending 6 November all of these contracts across the County were operating at above the block contracted hours. Additional capacity for these care and support at home services is being sought, to commence from the end of November to support over the winter months as demands are anticipated to continue to increase.

#### **e) Impact on West Sussex County Council's public facing services**

67. Some changes have been made to services in light of the latest government announcement on COVID-19 restrictions.

- All wedding and civil partnership ceremonies between 5 November and 2 December have been postponed. Registration offices will remain open, so notice appointments can continue for marriage and civil partnership appointments.
- All death registration appointments will continue to be conducted by phone. Appointments can be [booked as normal](#), but people are asked not to attend the Registration Office.
- All birth registrations are still being done face to face, but customers will be seen strictly by appointment only, which can be [booked online](#).
- West Sussex Record Office will be closed from Thursday 5 November until further notice.
- West Sussex libraries are currently closed for browsing and only open for returns and collections. Opening hours are subject to change and residents can find the latest [information about your local library](#) on our website. Limited computer sessions are only available when pre-booked in advance.
- Residents can continue to reserve items directly from the [library catalogue](#) free of charge, and you will be notified when items are ready for collection. Library staff are also offering a select and collect service, where our expert staff put together a selection for you to borrow. Simply complete our [online form](#) or phone your [local library](#) and staff will let you know when your items are ready for collection from the library entrance.
- Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRSSs) will remain open in and operate to normal opening hours for the duration of the second lockdown, in line with the "reasonable excuse" exceptions to restrictions on movement set out in the most recent Government regulations. These permit visits to a waste disposal or recycling centre.
- Just like in the first national lockdown, our Highways teams continue their maintenance work in keeping West Sussex roads safe, and with improvement projects continuing, too.
- West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service will also continue to operate as usual during the new lockdown if residents need them.
- The service is encouraging residents to keep a checklist of fire safety advice to stay safe at home or where businesses are open and reduce the risk of an emergency incident occurring. This can be found on the [fire service COVID-19 web page](#).
- The fire service is continuing to provide free Safe & Well Visits to people in their homes on a risk-based approach. There is also the option for a Safe



& Well Visit via phone, Skype and by posting a useful resource document, instead of face-to-face.

68.A full list of the services that have been affected is available on our website by visiting [www.westsussex.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/coronavirus).

**f) Managing concurrent pressures – autumn/winter 20/21**

69.The County Council has been successfully managing the impact of COVID-19 since March 2020, but the pandemic is expected to continue to have impacts well into 2021.

70.A number of other pressures / risks have been identified and are being mitigated:

- Continuing COVID-19
- COVID-19 Mass Vaccination
- Seasonal Flu Vaccination Programme
- Health System – Operational Pressures
- Flooding and Severe Weather Events
- End of the EU Transition Period (AKA “D20”)
- Concurrent Major Incident

71.The Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) Framework identifies a risk of disorder, crime and community tensions within our local communities arising from any of the above.

*Incident Management Structure*

72.The current incident management structure was set up in March 2020 and, although designed for shorter duration incidents and emergencies, has proved effective and resilient.

73.The internal response structure (Strategic Management Group > Tactical Management Group > Functional Groups/Cells) was set up in March and mirrors the Sussex Resilience Forum’s approach. The internal structure was reviewed by ELT in October 2020 and is deemed fit for purpose to continue to oversee and manage our response to COVID-19 and any concurrent “exceptional pressures” as set out above.

74.The only exception to this is the setting up, under the Director of Highways and Transport, a Severe Weather and Flooding Sub-cell. This will not necessarily meet regularly but after an initial review of risks and actions, will be convened if and when required in advance of forecasted issues.

75.A further risk to the authority - which would potentially be increased by having to co-respond to multiple additional pressures – is staff / institutional fatigue. This risk is being addressed through the revision of degradation plans which outline which service areas could be de-prioritised in the event of severe stress, development of welfare support packages to staff and managers and consideration by ELT of options to augment / add resilience to existing staff resources.

**g) Financial Position (2020/2021)**

76. The latest estimated gross cost of the pandemic (as at 6 November) in 2020/21 to the County Council is £103.8m (£94.2m additional costs, together with income losses of £9.6m), whilst funding received from Government and partners currently totals £78.5m.
77. Each month, local authorities report their costs to central government through an online return. The impact of the pandemic on the demand for council services should become clearer as we progress through the autumn and projections for outturn for 2020/21 and future years will be adjusted accordingly.

**Key decision: Yes**  
**Unrestricted**  
**Ref: CAB11 (20/21)**

---

## **Report to Cabinet**

**November 2020**

### **West Sussex County Council Economy Reset Plan 2020-2024**

#### **Report by Executive Director Place Services**

**Electoral division(s): All**

---

## **Summary**

The County Council's Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 set out the Council's priorities and opportunities for economic growth in West Sussex. Work has progressed over the past two years and positive outcomes have been achieved. With the emergence of COVID-19 it has been agreed to 'reset' the Economic Growth Plan to provide the framework for the Council's response to the significant impact of the pandemic on the economy, businesses and residents.

An Economy Reset Plan has been developed for the period 2020 – 2024. It draws on the existing Economic Growth Plan and reflects those areas where additional focus is required to respond to the impact of the pandemic. The plan will be progressed within current corporate budget allocations and will support the case for additional external funding should it become available.

Cabinet is requested to endorse the Economy Reset Plan 2020-2024 for formal adoption, and to confirm it will supersede the current Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023.

## **Recommendations**

- (1) That Cabinet approves the adoption of the West Sussex County Council Economy Reset Plan 2020-2024 (Appendix A).
  - (2) That Cabinet confirms the Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 has been superseded by the Economy Reset Plan 2020-2024.
- 

## **Proposal**

### **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 COVID-19 is having a significant impact on the county's economy, businesses and workforce. There is evidence the impacts vary across the county and between business sectors. Although there are some examples of business

growth and wider investment during the pandemic, the overall economic position is of great concern and the numbers of people out of work is increasing.

- 1.2 The Council responded to the immediate economic crisis arising from the pandemic, for example by providing information for residents and businesses through corporate communication channels, and through highways and transport support for the re-opening of high streets. The Council has also engaged in lobbying with MPs and Government to make the case for West Sussex where there are significant impacts including from the aviation crisis, and the pressures on the adult social care market.
- 1.3 A corporate approach across the Council is required, led by Cabinet. The Council's role is mainly one of leadership and championing the county. Many partners and organisations will be involved in economy reset and recovery, including the Districts and Boroughs, the C2C Local Enterprise Partnership, business and trade representative organisations, trade unions, MPs, business community networks, further and higher education, and the voluntary sector. The Council will create and nurture strong partnerships to progress priorities.
- 1.4 The Economy Reset Plan has been developed over six months, and has involved a review of the `business as usual` Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 activities, a consideration of Government strategy and approach to the economy, the development of priority themes and headline actions informed by evidence and intelligence on the impact of the pandemic, engagement with our main partners and stakeholders on the proposals, and scrutiny of the draft plan by the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.5 The main changes from the draft Economy Reset Plan considered by Cabinet in July are an update to the evidence and intelligence on the impact of COVID-19 to reflect the latest position, a refresh of the current position and the County Council's response for each of the nine themes to reflect what has happened between July and November, the introduction of `headline actions to March 2022` reflecting progress made in refining the reset activities from July and incorporating feedback from partners, and a refresh of how government could help to ensure the Council's `ask` is current.
- 1.6 The economic landscape is highly fluid, reflecting the uncertainty around the public health situation. When the work on the Economy Reset Plan began, it was predicted there would be a swift bounce back for the economy and that reset activities would support recovery over the winter. The situation is now more uncertain, with new national restrictions introduced from 5 November to 2 December and Government announcing restrictions are likely to be in place until March 2021. For many businesses, enterprises, employees, and the self-employed/freelancers, the winter period is bringing significant challenges and the Council will do what it can to respond.

- 1.7 The economy reset plan will need to be a 'live' document as the impact of COVID-19 on West Sussex businesses, employers and the workforce evolves over time.

## **2 Proposal details**

- 2.1 The proposal is to adopt the Economy Reset Plan 2020-2024 in support of the Council's commitment to ensuring a sustainable and prosperous county. The Economy Reset Plan is a County Council plan, rather than a countywide plan. It reflects where the Council is well placed to respond to the challenges facing the broader economy due to COVID-19.
- 2.2 It is clear the economy will not be the same as it was before the pandemic, and so the Reset Plan recognises some of the Council's economy activities have or will need to be refreshed or changed. There is also a need for new areas of focus to address where the economy has been particularly adversely affected and where there are opportunities to support recovery.
- 2.3 The Economy Reset Plan has nine priority themes. These provide the framework for where the Council will focus its efforts and resources, build or support strategic alliances and partnerships, and lobby for attention nationally, regionally and locally. Themes 1 – 3 reflect the spatial economic challenges for Crawley and the wider Gatwick Diamond, and for the coastal and rural economies; themes 4 - 5 focus on the fundamental platforms of business start-ups, existing businesses, and employment and skills; themes 6 - 7 focus on two key sectors hit hard, the visitor economy, with links to hospitality, and the health and social care market, under considerable strain from COVID-19; and themes 8 - 9 focus on the opportunities the Council is keen to embrace around digital infrastructure and the application of digital technology and the importance of embedding climate change and the environment in the reset approach.
- 2.5 The headline actions for each theme reflect the pre-COVID 'business as usual' activities, and where the Council has agreed new or additional focus is required including on:
  - Crawley, the wider Gatwick Diamond economy and the businesses and people severely impacted by the aviation crisis and current position with Gatwick Airport
  - skills and employment reflecting the significant impact COVID-19 is having on jobs, the self-employed and those seeking to enter the labour market in the county
  - the needs of some sectors including the adult social care market, and tourism and the visitor economy
  - progressing work with District and Borough partners to accelerate the adoption and application of digital technology and skills to help address challenges and progress opportunities
  - opportunities to embed a zero-carbon and 'nature-based' solutions approach within the planning and decision-making for economic recovery.
- 2.6 In the short term over the winter, the Council will continue to work with partners to maximise any opportunities to support businesses and residents

through Government support; continue to lobby government on key issues affecting West Sussex; continue to invest through the capital programme in major infrastructure projects; support `buy local` activities and campaigns including for the festive season; and prepare reset and recovery activities for 2021.

- 2.7 The Economy Reset Plan will have a performance framework to ensure the Council can monitor progress and report on benefits. Corporate performance indicators will be agreed as part of the next iteration of the Council's Reset Plan, which will be in February 2021 alongside the budget. Performance indicators will include contextual economic indicators in support of the corporate priority outcomes and project-specific indicators arising from the Economy Reset Plan actions.

### **3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)**

- 3.1 The Economy Reset Plan priority themes and headline actions have been developed from a full consideration of where the Council is best placed to respond to the impact of COVID-19 on the economy.

### **4 Consultation, engagement and advice**

- 4.1 **External** – key partners and stakeholders were engaged on the draft Economy Reset Plan in August and were asked for feedback on the proposed priority themes and emerging activities. These included the Districts and Boroughs, the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, the South Downs National Park Authority, the three West Sussex Area Economic Partnerships, and business representative organisations. The draft plan was also shared with key partners and stakeholders relevant to priority themes including education and skills partners, neighbouring upper tier authorities, and sector specialist bodies. Extensive feedback was received with partners broadly welcoming the draft plan. Feedback also highlighted where partners would like additional attention or focus, including for start-ups and micro-entrepreneurs, town centres, digital infrastructure in rural areas, and on a more robust role around employment and skills. Where there was consensus in the feedback and the Council can respond, the areas for additional focus are included in the headline actions.
- 4.2 More broadly the Council has engaged community groups, undertaken research with residents to understand the effects of Covid-19 and what they need going forward, and involved almost 50 local partners in workshops to shape the four key priorities and outcomes for the corporate reset plan, underpinned by climate change. These activities have also informed the Economy Reset Plan.
- 4.3 **Councillors** - The Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Economy Reset Plan at its meeting in September 2020. The Committee broadly supported the approach and priority themes. The Committee highlighted support for the promotion of high-spend tourism activities such as vineyards and restaurants, the encouragement of incoming investment, and the promotion of high-level skills. These are reflected in the headline actions in the plan. The Committee also requested milestones for progress, with performance and accountability measures, so that Members can gauge progress and achievements. A performance framework for the plan will be adopted which will align with this request.

## 5 Finance

- 5.1 The adoption of the Plan will have no cost implications to the County Council. The headline actions will be achieved within existing budgets and through external funding already secured or committed. Efforts will be made to attract additional external funding to support the plan's priorities.

(a) **How the cost represents good value**

The adoption of the Plan will have no cost implications to the County Council.

(b) **Future savings/efficiencies being delivered**

None

(c) **Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact**

None

## 6 Risk implications and mitigations

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating Action (in place or planned)</b>
Uncertainty about the extent of the impact of the pandemic on the economy may delay or affect reset activities, risking the achievement of the intended benefits.	The Reset Plan development has taken into consideration the wider economic situation as far as possible. `Business as usual` activities have been refreshed or changed as appropriate, and new areas of focus will be designed to be flexible and able to respond to the fluid situation.
Uncertainty around the future trading relationship with the EU, and how this may impact on economic and business recovery.	The Reset Plan development has taken into consideration the wider economic situation as far as possible. Support for businesses around exiting the EU is being promoted. Any changes needed to the Reset Plan actions will be considered as the future relationship with the EU is confirmed.
Financial pressures resulting in a reduction in budget and resource to deliver the plan.	The Reset Plan is led by Cabinet and will be supported by a robust performance framework to ensure the wider benefits to businesses and residents are understood. This will inform decisions on budget allocations in the future.
Lack of support from partners to aspects of the plan.	The Reset Plan actions focus on where the Council is well placed to respond to the wider economic challenges facing the county. The Council is committed to a strong partnership approach and will be working hard to collaborate effectively with partners.

## 7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 Legal implications  
There are no legal implications identified as a result of this proposal.

7.2 Equality duty and human rights assessment

The Economy Reset Plan sets out the importance of ensuring the Council fully understands and responds to the impacts on residents and workers with protected characteristics, including age (with the potential for young people to be disproportionately affected); sex (for example women are more likely to work in sectors most hit by the pandemic including retail, hospitality and tourism jobs); and race (with data from the UK and overseas showing that the COVID-19 virus has a disproportionately significant impact on black and Asian ethnic minority people). The Plan sets out a range of headline actions to enhance equality and opportunity in the county, and it will be vital to monitor and review these as the situation evolves on the implications of the pandemic on people's lives and work.

7.3 Climate Change

One of the priority themes in the Economy Reset Plan is focussed on embedding climate change and the environment into the reset approach. A range of commitments and headline actions are included which will contribute to the Council's stated ambition to be Carbon Neutral by 2030, including through a focus on supporting and growing our green economy.

7.4 Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications identified as a result of this proposal.

7.5 Public health

There are no direct public health implications identified as a result of this proposal. The Economy Reset Plan activities will be fully consistent with public health advice and guidelines for businesses, residents and visitors during the pandemic. Public health messages will be communicated through business networks and communities.

7.6 Social value

There is not a direct procurement arising from this report. The headline actions may involve procurement activity in due course, which would follow appropriate governance including a consideration of social value. The overall Economy Reset Plan is seeking to improve the economic wellbeing of West Sussex, with associated social and environmental benefits.

**Lee Harris**

**Executive Director Place Services**

**Contact Officer:** Carolyn Carr, Economic Growth Manager, 0330 2223836  
[carolyn.carr@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:carolyn.carr@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Appendices:** Appendix A: West Sussex County Council Economy Reset Plan 2020-2024

**Background Documents:** None



## **West Sussex County Council Economy Reset Plan 2020 - 2024**

### **Update of West Sussex County Council's Economic Growth Plan 2018 – 2023**

#### **November 2020**

##### **1. Introduction**

The West Sussex economy pre COVID-19 was generally a diverse economy, worth around £22.8bn and performing strongly against the national average performance although with significant variation across the county. West Sussex is home to around 859,000 people, with a higher proportion of over 65-year olds than the national and regional average along with a lower proportion of people of working age.

In 2018 there were 387,000 employee jobs. Employee job growth between 2015-2018 was stronger in West Sussex (5.6%) than the national (3.7%) and regional average (1.9%). Crawley saw a 10% increase in employee jobs during this time and Arun and Worthing also saw stronger growth than the national average. Within West Sussex, Crawley, at 94,000, makes up around a quarter of all employee jobs, with Adur having the lowest proportion at 21,000 (5%).

In 2019 there were over 42,000 businesses, though growth over the last five years in the number of businesses has been lower in the county than in the South East region. West Sussex is very much a small firm economy with over 70% of businesses employing less than five people, the exception to this is found in Crawley which has one of the highest percentages of larger businesses (i.e. employing over 100) in the country.

Generally, at county level, there were higher than national and regional levels of economic activity, employment and self-employment rates, and lower levels of unemployment. However, West Sussex's economy underperforms against the strongest economies in the South East with earnings of West Sussex residents lower than the regional average. Earnings levels of those working in West Sussex are lower than the regional and national average except for Crawley where earnings of those working in Crawley are higher. In addition, GVA per head lags some areas in the South East. The North East (Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex) of the county has higher levels of GVA than the coastal districts with Gatwick Airport seen as a nationally significant economic asset and a strong driver of the West Sussex economy as well as the wider regional economy, and a significant employer itself. Key strengths in West Sussex were around a diverse range of sectors including health and life sciences, financial and business services, transport, distribution and wholesale further highlighting the importance of Gatwick, and the high-quality natural environment supporting a strong leisure and tourism offer.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 is having a significant impact on the county's economy and the pre COVID-19 economic landscape is changing rapidly. Businesses are being hit hard, there are significant levels of businesses who are dormant, residents are losing their jobs and livelihoods, and the implications of the aviation industry crisis on Gatwick airport are far-reaching and impact the

local, regional and national economy. The impact on the economy has severe social consequences too.

The County Council's economy reset plan reflects what we know so far from evidence and intelligence on the impact of COVID-19; what we have learnt through the response to the COVID-19 crisis; the opportunities we are keen to embrace; and what we have been doing and propose to do. We need to recognise that much of the impact of COVID-19 on the economy is unknown and unfolding. Autumn and winter are bringing additional challenges through a new wave of infections and new restrictions from Government, most notably new national restrictions from 5 November. We will also need to consider the changes arising from the end of the transition period with the EU for businesses, goods and services. For these reasons this needs to be a `live` document that is regularly updated.

The County Council is developing its overall reset and reboot plan which is informed by wider business and partner engagement. Given the impact, the economy is a priority for focus where we are seeking to engage widely and align strategically across the county and with Coast to Capital LEP. The economy reset plan focusses on where the County Council is well placed to respond to the challenges facing the broader economy, and on where we will seek to work collaboratively in response to the challenges.

We need to be mindful of resourcing the economy reset plan, and ensure our ambition and approach are realistic. The plan will support the case for additional resources where they become available from Government. A corporate approach across the Council is needed so Cabinet ownership and leadership are key.

## **2. Principles for the economy reset**

The economy, business and skills `reset journey` is complex, multi-faceted and phased over months and most likely years. Government strategy leads the way, and the County Council will adopt principles to underpin the approach. These include:

- a. led by **Cabinet** with appropriate engagement and governance, and forming part of a single integrated corporate plan
- b. guided by **Government strategy** and continuing to influence its development
- c. focussed on the future for West Sussex and the **WSSC priority outcomes** especially a sustainable, prosperous economy and helping people and communities fulfil their potential, recognising the economy will not be the same as it was before
- d. built on our assets and guided by **evidence and intelligence** on the impact of COVID-19 on the West Sussex economy, its businesses and workforce
- e. based on creating and nurturing **stronger partnerships** locally and regionally whilst recognising each organisation will be responsible for its own approach

- f. ensuring the **County Council plays a leading role** in recovery where appropriate, including through its own activities
- g. ensuring we are making the **best use of resources**, securing value for money in any County Council interventions.

### **3. Government Strategy and partner roles**

The LGA and WSCC are seeking to influence the development of the Government's policy and approach. We will want to consider mechanisms for boosting economic recovery; opportunities around Government programmes and funding streams; recognise national calls for a 'greener, fairer and more resilient' recovery; and how the economic position facing the country will relate to devolution, 'levelling-up', Local Industrial Strategies and the state of public sector finances. We will lobby Government where it is appropriate to do so in relation to the challenges the county is facing.

Many partners will be involved, including local authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnerships, business and trade representative organisations, trade unions, MPs, business community networks, further and higher education, and the voluntary sector.

### **4. Vision for reset**

The vision for the economy reset is focused on the future of West Sussex, and West Sussex County Council's priority outcomes. The priorities within the adopted Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 and the associated activities are still relevant and will provide much of the focus. However, it is recognised the economy will not be the same as it was before and there has been a review and in some cases a reset of the pre COVID-19 activities to reflect the changed landscape.

There are new areas of focus, to address where the economy has been particularly adversely affected or where there are opportunities – these include the implications of the aviation crisis on Gatwick airport and the wider area including the large numbers of people who have lost their jobs; the challenges faced by young people transitioning through academic and vocational provision and seeking to enter the labour market; the needs of particular sectors including tourism; opportunities to embed a zero-carbon and 'nature-based' solutions approach within the planning and decision-making for economic recovery; the potential to build on the experience of lockdown to maximise a digital technology led approach; the potential to build more inclusive and sustainable economies; and the need for a renewed focus on the adult social care market.

### **5. Evidence and intelligence on the impact of COVID-19**

The approach to reset is underpinned by evidence and insight, based on a clear understanding of the immediate and projected medium to long term impact of COVID-19 on the West Sussex economy and workforce. Local economic data will be important to inform place-sensitive national policy formulation, and to consider how structural changes in the economy will impact on the county – both

the positive innovations that have emerged and the negative ones such as business-types and job roles that will be shown to be reduced or non-viable.

It will also be important to ensure we fully understand and respond to the impacts on residents and workers with protected characteristics, including age (with the potential for young people to be disproportionality affected); sex (for example women are more likely to work in sectors most hit by the pandemic including retail, hospitality and tourism jobs); and race (with data from the UK and overseas showing that the COVID-19 virus has a disproportionately significant impact on black and Asian ethnic minority people). It will be key to understand and respond to ongoing implications for people's lives and work.

To date there has been some 'official' data from ONS that can indicate the impact of COVID-19 on economic activity in West Sussex, although much of the detailed data is at national level. Three key sources that do provide insight are:

The number of furloughed people by local authority

- at the end of July there were 133,00 people furloughed in West Sussex, representing around a third of West Sussex working residents aged 16+, the most recent figures indicate that the numbers furloughed in the county had reduced to 47,200 by the end of August
- Crawley continues to have the highest number furloughed but has also seen a decrease over the last month from 25,800 at the end of July, making up 20% of West Sussex furloughed jobs, to 10,300 by the end of August.
- Crawley continues to have one of the highest take up rates in the country with the latest take up rate of 16% compared with the West Sussex rate at 12% and the South East average at 10%. <sup>1</sup>

Take up of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme

- as at the end of August there were 28,900 claims for the second SEISS grant in West Sussex, a take up rate (i.e. the numbers of claims made against the total potentially eligible population) of 58%, the same as regionally. By the end of September this had increased to 32,100 claims, a take up rate of 65%, again the same as the South East region;
- Crawley has the highest take up rate of SEISS at 71% followed by Adur at 70%.

Number of residents out of work

- In September 27,890 West Sussex residents claimed Job Seekers Allowance or universal credit for the principal reason of being out of work
- The number of claimants went up by 174% between March and September which is higher than the regional increase of 152% the England increase of 117% increase.

---

<sup>1</sup> NB a person with several jobs could have been furloughed more than once and each 'employment' that has been furloughed is counted. The numbers of furloughed from HMRC are based on the residential address HMRC holds for each employee and doesn't necessarily reflect the employee's place of work.

In addition, from research and estimates of impact undertaken by various organisations and from our own collation of intelligence from across the county, we are aware of the potential impact and issues. The key messages emerging:

- The number of job vacancies initially plummeted virtually overnight and are now showing signs of recovery - with the biggest hits being in the leisure, recreation, food preparation and hospitality sectors;
- The number of business start-ups in West Sussex increased in June compared with last year; there were also far fewer business closures anticipated for this time of year, however many businesses remain dormant currently. This increase may suggest that individuals who are out of work or remain furloughed are exploring other employment options;
- Considering those sectors that are more likely to furlough or lay off workers, Centre for Cities identified hospitality, aviation and leisure as the most vulnerable and seeing an immediate negative effect. All these sectors are key to the West Sussex economy;
- Indications are that Crawley is the most impacted area in West Sussex in terms of jobs affected, and indeed comes out as one of the most affected in the country primarily because of the presence of Gatwick Airport;
- There is also some evidence that coastal towns are likely to be more at risk, as they are often already areas that have higher levels of deprivation as well as high proportions of those sectors that are currently shut down including pubs, restaurants and tourist accommodation;
- The care sector is fragile and under considerable pressure, including through workforce challenges;
- The employment and skills landscape are being severely impacted, including opportunities for school leavers; funded pre-employment support and provision, particularly for the vulnerable; apprenticeship provision; the impact on further and higher education settings; graduate employment; and considerable increases in unemployment.

## **6. The approach and role of the County Council**

The approach to the economy reset plan mirrors the corporate approach led by Cabinet, with the plan forming part of a single corporate programme. This enables Cabinet to direct relative priorities and ensure best use is made of assets, resources and energy, and that risks are understood.

The priorities and roles for the County Council vary across the economy reset plan and include at times lobbying, leading, enabling, partnering, supporting, or delivering. The reset plan is cross-cutting, with a range of Cabinet portfolios and corporate functions having a role to play alongside economy, including highways and transport, planning, education and skills, environment and sustainability, digital infrastructure, adults, policy, and intelligence and performance.

## **7. Priority themes**

The priority themes for the economy reset plan reflect:

- what we know so far from evidence and intelligence on the impact of COVID-19
- what we have learnt through the response to the COVID-19 crisis

- the opportunities we are keen to embrace
- a review of the Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 activities

The priority themes provide the framework for where we will:

- focus our own efforts and resources, including on immediate activities to signal confidence
- build or support strategic alliances and partnerships to act, as appropriate
- lobby for attention nationally, regionally and locally

The Economy Reset Plan has nine priority themes:

Themes 1 – 3 reflect the **spatial economic challenges** for Crawley and the wider Gatwick Diamond; and for the coastal and rural economies;

Themes 4 - 5 focus on the **fundamental platforms** of business start-ups, existing businesses, and employment and skills;

Themes 6 - 7 focus on two **key sectors** hit hard, the visitor economy, with links to hospitality; and the health and social care market, under considerable strain from COVID-19;

Themes 8 - 9 focus on the **opportunities we are keen to embrace** around digital infrastructure and the application of digital technology to boost business productivity and enhance digital skills; and the importance of embedding climate change and the environment in the reset approach.

Each theme is set out below covering:

- the current position and key challenges
- the response so far by the County Council working with partners
- the headline actions to March 2022 reflecting where we will focus our efforts and resources in the short to medium term to support and stimulate economic activity
- where appropriate, how government could help.

### ***Theme 1: Protect and Revive Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond Economy***

#### **Current position and key challenges**

- Aviation is undoubtedly one of the sectors that is worst affected by COVID-19 which has significant implications for how quickly Crawley and the wider Gatwick Diamond is likely to 'reset'.
- In 2016 Gatwick accounted for an estimated 36,000 jobs - or one in every 12 - in the Gatwick Diamond region, with a focus in Crawley Borough. The economic footprint for the wider Coast to Capital area was estimated as £2.7 billion and 43,000 jobs equal to six percent of the region's economy and four percent of its employment (Oxford Economics, 2016).
- The Centre for Cities has published a [report](#) which predicts that Crawley is the most exposed locality to the economic impact of the pandemic with high levels of business failure and unemployment likely.

- Gatwick Airport has warned it expects it to take up to four years for demand for flights to fully recover from the coronavirus pandemic. The introduction of travel corridors was initially expected to stimulate recovery, however the quarantine rules and regular changes to travel corridors has significantly impacted consumer confidence and demand.
- In September Gatwick announced plans for a significant restructure which could result in the loss of hundreds of jobs, with passenger numbers falling by 66% in the first six months to the end of June, and with a 61.3% fall in revenue and a £321m loss.
- Gatwick Airport Limited continues to engage with Government on a range of aviation support measures, in collaboration with other airports and industry bodies. Priorities include a more risk-based regionalised approach to quarantine; the introduction of testing for passengers to reduce and ultimately eliminate quarantine; and relief on business rates and regulatory commitments reflecting the vastly reduced passenger numbers.
- Government has established a Global Travel Taskforce to support the travel industry and the safe recovery of international travel, working across the Department for Transport and the Department of Health and Social Care.
- Government is expected to publish an Aviation Recovery Plan in the Autumn, which will signal the strategic direction for the sector.
- Gatwick airport's strong recovery will be key to the immediate economic recovery of Crawley and the wider area. It is also recognised that technological innovation in aviation will require a different mix of skills and may reduce the overall number of jobs the airport supports. Diversification of the economy in the medium to long term will be important, supported by an integrated approach to developing a skilled labour force in West Sussex that can respond to the changes.
- The Manor Royal BID's largest employment sector is wholesale and transport (approximately 10,000 jobs) of which 4,400 are in some way connected to aviation (15% of all Manor Royal jobs). Additionally, 1,000 businesses are classified in Accommodation, Food and Recreation. This highlights a degree of exposure that Manor Royal shares with the wider Crawley area.
- There are plans for an Innovation Centre in Crawley through a partnership between Coast to Capital, Crawley Borough Council and Thales, having been provisionally allocated £8.6 million investment through the Getting Building Fund. This has the potential to help stimulate new activity.

### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- Lobbied Government for tailored support for the area, with other Gatwick Diamond authorities and Coast to Capital.
- Supported the re-opening of high streets and workplaces, mainly through highways and transport using the DfT's emergency active travel fund and support for bus operators.
- Engaged proactively with Gatwick Airport Ltd and supported their 'asks' of Government where appropriate.

- Supported the Crawley Economic Recovery Task Force (CERT) and Town Deal Board.
- Used the Gatwick Diamond Initiative commissioned report on the economic impact of COVID-19 to inform the reset plan actions across the priority themes.

**We will:**

- Seek a strong recovery for Gatwick, and maximise the airport's role in securing investment and growth as part of wider economic recovery
- Work collaboratively to promote knowledge industries, trade and investment in response to changing market conditions and opportunities
- Refresh and continue to deliver the Growth Deals with the Districts and Boroughs to support town centre recovery and unlock housing and strategic employment sites
- Work with partners to secure infrastructure investment for strategic transport, digital infrastructure and town centres to support economic reset and recovery
- Seek to ensure strategies and policies in Local Plans prepared by the local planning authorities support economic recovery.
- Support collaboration with other public bodies to maximise our collective resources.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Service Lead</b>
1	Jointly deliver the Growth Deal with Mid Sussex District Council, resetting schemes as needed to maximise opportunities. The County Council will lead delivery of the A2300 improvement to provide dual carriageway link road between major growth areas including Homes England led Northern Arc and A23 corridor, and work with Mid Sussex District Council to deliver the Burgess Hill Place and Connectivity Programme.	Growth & OPE
2	Jointly deliver the Growth Deal with Horsham District Council, resetting schemes as needed to maximise opportunities. The County Council will invest in a new Fire Station and fire and rescue service training centre at Hurst Road, deliver the redevelopment of the former Novartis site as Horsham Enterprise Park, and work with partners to assess redevelopment options for the Hurst Centre linked with the Fire Station development.	Growth & OPE
3	Jointly deliver the Growth Deal with Crawley Borough Council, resetting schemes as needed to maximise opportunities. The County Council will lead delivery of the Eastern Gateway Public realm and Highway scheme and the Manor Royal highways scheme, and support delivery of Crawley Borough Council-led schemes: Station Gateway, Three Bridges Station project, Crawley growth programme Walking and Cycling schemes and Superhubs.	Growth & OPE
4	Support the Crawley Economic Recovery Task Force (CERT) and Town Deal Board led by Crawley Borough Council and ensure the priorities within the Town Deal action plan inform the new Crawley Growth Deal in 2021. Pursue options for the Council's own estate in Crawley, including the redevelopment of the County Building's site which will be demolished early in 2021.	Growth & OPE
5	Explore opportunities for the One Public Estate programme to benefit economic recovery through better use of public assets to meet our	Growth and OPE



	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Service Lead</b>
	current requirements, and focus feasibility funding on needs identified in the reset plan.	
6	Sustain and grow knowledge intensive industries through business support and skills activities (see later themes), inward investment activities, and through employment sites, with a focus on the Council's Horsham Enterprise Park development, Manor Royal and Burgess Hill's planned Science and Technology Park.	Economic Growth/ Growth & OPE
7	Respond to the Government's aviation recovery plan and continue to engage with and support Gatwick Airport through lobbying and partnership activities, where appropriate.	Economic Growth
8	Work in partnership with the Gatwick Diamond Initiative as it leads a new programme to attract inward investment and promote international trade.	Economic Growth
9	Deliver the identified priorities in the Council's Strategic Transport Investment Programme (STIP), and work with Government and partners to progress strategic transport improvements to support the economy and businesses in the north east of the county, delivering planned growth and positioning as a major transport hub. Longer term priorities include improving capacity of the Brighton Mainline (connecting Gatwick to Brighton, the south of the County and London), M23/A23 junction improvements, and improving services on the Arun Valley Line including the potential construction of a new station between Horsham and Crawley.	Highways, Transport & Planning
10	Maximise opportunities from the Department for Transport's (DfT) Emergency Active Travel Fund to enable sustainable travel choices on key commuting routes, including from the three schemes awarded DfT funding in summer 2020. Develop further permanent sustainable transport infrastructure improvements to improve connectivity and support planned growth through future investment in Horsham, Crawley and Mid Sussex.	Highways, Transport & Planning
11	Set out and progress the Council's commitments to supporting economic recovery for Crawley and the wider Gatwick Diamond across the reset plan priority themes.	Economic Growth

### **How Government could help**

- Recognise the Gatwick Diamond and Crawley as one of the places most affected economically and socially from COVID-19. Work in partnership with us on a plan that reflects the unique challenges faced by the place, and which aligns Government investment to 'reset' the economy of the area.
- Ensure committed Local Growth Funding remains allocated to projects and that flexibilities are endorsed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 or a planned project constraint. This will be important in helping to stimulate economic recovery.

### ***Theme 2: Protect and Revive the Coastal Towns***

#### **Current position and key challenges**

- Nationally, coastal communities are likely to be among the hardest hit areas as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Several reports have already cited the risk coastal locations face as they tend to have a high proportion of their business base in sectors than cannot or will be slower

to trade as lockdown is eased, and due to higher levels of deprivation. At the height of the pandemic in the summer for example, Bognor Regis had 60% of jobs in sectors not able to trade.

- A Coastal West Sussex Partnership commissioned report (May 2020) provided an early indication of the challenges for our coastal towns and economy, including from a dependence on hospitality and tourism, the presence of cultural and creative industries (including freelancers who have less access to support), and the relatively high proportion of older people who are at risk of being socially isolated and less economically active. Horticulture (particularly ornamental plants) and advanced manufacturing are also important sectors that have been hit hard.
- Before COVID-19, although the county's coastal areas were home to a diverse range of employment and high-profile employers, the employment and productivity gap between the coastal towns and the rest of the county was widening. Longer-term career opportunities were viewed as relatively limited, and this is likely to be exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic.

### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- Lobbied Government on behalf of the horticulture sector (ornamental).
- Supported the re-opening of high streets and workplaces, mainly through highways and transport using the DfT's emergency active travel fund and support for bus operators.
- Used the Coastal West Sussex Partnership commissioned report on the economic impact of COVID-19 to inform the reset plan actions across the priority themes.

### **We will:**

- Refresh and continue to deliver the Growth Deals with the Districts and Boroughs to support town centre recovery and unlock housing and employment sites
- Work collaboratively to create the conditions for start-ups, micro entrepreneurs and creative digital businesses
- Use the County Council's levers to support investment and private sector confidence
- Work with partners to secure infrastructure investment for strategic transport, digital infrastructure and town centres to support economic reset and recovery
- Seek to ensure strategies and policies in Local Plans (prepared by the local planning authorities) support economic recovery
- Support collaboration with other public bodies to maximise our collective resources.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1	Jointly deliver the Growth Deal with Adur & Worthing Councils, resetting schemes as needed to maximise opportunities. We will work in partnership to progress the `Worthing Public Realm Improvements Programme` allied to key regeneration projects in the town centre,	Growth and OPE

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	with a focus on Railway Approach and Portland Road, and support Decoy and the expansion of Worthing employment sites. We will support the Adur Growth partnership's plans, including exploring options for Pond Road (a One Public Estate government funded initiative working with Adur DC and NHS partners), supporting delivery of Shoreham Harbour Developments including a new cycleway with highways, supporting airport improvements working with highways, and supporting economic growth, community benefits and facilities in town centres and around Shoreham airport.	
2	Jointly deliver the Growth Deal with Arun District Council, resetting schemes as needed to maximise opportunities. We will work with operators of The Track to maximise the benefits from the new creative and digital hub, support Bognor Regis Branding to raise the town's profile, progress options for cycleways to support sustainable commuting, leisure and wellbeing, linked to progress of major projects led by Highways supported by Growth & OPE serving and connecting new and growing communities.	Growth and OPE
3	Jointly deliver the Growth Deal with Chichester District Council, resetting schemes as needed to maximise opportunities. The County Council will seek to demolish the former Yr7 Block at Chichester High school as enabling development for the Southern Gateway Regeneration, complete a transport options study for West Street and consider options for long term regeneration of this area, complete a Transport Options study for Northern Gyratory and consider long term site options for a Northern Gateway and improved transport connectivity, and approve the Development Partner and complete land assembly for County Council land within the Chichester Southern Gateway Regeneration Scheme.	Growth and OPE
4	Explore opportunities for the One Public Estate programme to benefit economic recovery through better use of public assets to meet our current requirements, and focus feasibility funding on needs identified in the reset plan.	Growth and OPE
5	Progress activities to enable business start-ups, micro entrepreneurs and creative digital businesses to succeed, with an initial focus on launching <i>The Track</i> creative digital hub and co-working space in Bognor Regis with the operators Town Square Spaces.	Economic Growth
6	Deliver the identified priorities in the Council's Strategic Transport Investment Programme (STIP), and work with Government and partners to progress strategic transport improvements to support the economy and businesses in the south of the county, including improving capacity of the Brighton Main Line and enabling planned growth. We will also work with central Government, Highways England and local stakeholders to identify deliverable schemes to improve the A27 bottlenecks at Chichester, Arundel, Worthing & Lancing alongside public transport improvements.	Highways Transport & Planning
7	Maximise opportunities from the Department for Transport's (DfT) Emergency Active Travel Fund to enable sustainable travel choices on key commuting routes, including from the four schemes awarded DfT funding in summer 2020 whilst also developing further permanent sustainable transport infrastructure improvements to improve connectivity and support planned growth through future investment in Chichester, Arun, Worthing and Adur.	Highways, Transport & Planning
8	Set out and progress the County Council's commitments to supporting economic recovery in coastal West Sussex through the	Economic Growth

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	approach to the reset plan priority themes, including some short to medium term measures around the visitor economy and digital adoption for SMEs.	

### **How Government could help**

- Recognise that coastal communities are likely to be severely impacted by COVID-19.
- Support coastal communities and their key sectors such as tourism to revive, adapt and diversify.
- Ensure committed Local Growth Funding remains allocated to projects in the long term, recognising outputs may be delayed.

### ***Theme 3: Protect and Revive the Rural Economy***

#### **Current position and key challenges**

- The Rural West Sussex Partnership's economic profile (2019) highlighted that 28% of businesses in West Sussex are in rural areas. The impact of COVID-19 on rural areas will vary to reflect the diversity of the economy – which includes obvious sectors of horticulture, agriculture, forestry & fishing, and visitor economy including food and drink, to manufacturing (manufacturing makes up 5.32% of rural businesses compared to 3.54% of urban ones in the Coast to Capital area).
- Horticulture is one sector facing challenges, represented to the County Council by the West Sussex Growers Association and other rural partners. Those who grow and trade in the ornamental sector have been hard hit.
- Across many rural economy sectors there are issues with access to seasonal labour, largely as overseas workers are less able to travel to pick during the peak season. The national "Pick for Britain" campaign sought to help address these challenges in the horticulture sector.
- Diversification, where possible, has allowed some rural businesses to stay open. Across the county we have seen farm shops and local producers adapting their business operation to home deliveries and take-aways.

#### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- Lobbied Government on behalf of West Sussex growers and traders of perishable plants.
- Agreed to work collaboratively with the South Downs National Park Authority to respond to the impact of COVID-19.
- Supported rural bus services during the crisis.

#### **We will:**

- Work with partners to support sectors important to the rural economy, including tourism and horticulture
- Progress activities to secure and deliver investment to increase gigabit capable infrastructure coverage in rural areas
- Ensure business, employment and skills activities across the reset plan respond to recovery priorities in rural areas

- Seek to ensure strategies and policies in Local Plans (prepared by the local planning authorities) support economic recovery.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1	Deliver the final phase of the LEADER Rural Grants Programme to support jobs and business growth in the rural economy.	Economic Growth
2	Co-fund the West Sussex Growers Association's new 'Understanding the horticulture sector in West Sussex' study, to inform and aid alignment with the Council's energy and economy plans.	Energy and Economy
3	Support economic recovery in rural parts of the county through the visitor economy (theme 6), where opportunities include viticulture tourism and local food and drink working in partnerships with the SDNP.	Economic Growth / EWS Team
4	Seek to increase gigabit capable infrastructure coverage in rural areas, including through the West Sussex Gigabit Voucher Scheme, and from expected benefits from suppliers using the infrastructure created through the Converged Fibre Connectivity project.	Digital Team
5	Set out and progress the County Council's commitments to supporting economic recovery in rural West Sussex across the reset plan priority themes.	Economic Growth

### **How Government could help**

- Recognise and respond to the shortfall in funding for businesses and rural economies arising from our departure from the EU.
- Ensure the challenges and needs of rural communities are reflected in recovery plans and activities.
- Put in place measures to safeguard rural public transport services.

### ***Theme 4: Enable Business Start-ups, Business Survival and Business Adaptation***

#### **Current position and key challenges**

- The business landscape is multi-faceted and evolving. We are seeing businesses close, dormant and struggling to survive; workers being made redundant; businesses operating under 'new normal' conditions; and some thriving as demand for their products or services increase - the position varies considerably between sectors.
- The Government support packages to businesses and the self-employed amount to multi-billions of pounds and include the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, business grants and business rates holidays administered by the Districts and Boroughs, temporary sector-specific VAT reductions, and business advice from the Coast to Capital Growth Hub and other business groups.
- Despite the spend by Government many businesses, company directors and freelancers have not been eligible for support, with many not wanting to take loans. Rent payments are a pressure for many.
- Individual or groups of businesses (sometimes through federations or membership groups) have been articulating challenges ranging from financial issues and cashflow, supply chain disruption and synchronisation, and exporting challenges and costs.

- Those who run co-working spaces have highlighted the challenges faced by entrepreneurs and micro-businesses and the value of local supply chains, a theme that resonates more broadly across the economy.
- Government led ministerial taskforces to oversee how sectors closed during lockdown could reopen safely and have considered key themes including `green recovery`, `backing new businesses` and `the future of industry`.
- Despite the challenges, some businesses and sectors have reported an increase in turnover during the pandemic, including food retail, distributors of goods purchased on-line, and those with goods and products that play a role in responding to the pandemic. It will be important to maximise any opportunities as they arise.
- Strong themes are emerging for approaches to business and organisations' adaptation, including those that are technology led, prioritise the environment, and support wider public health. As a major employer in the county the County Council has a role to play in leading by example.
- For the County Council some markets are particularly vital, including the adult social care market, and early years providers.

### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- Convened the West Sussex economy officers' group to collaborate on economy matters including the Government Support package for businesses.
- Established advice and sign-posting information for businesses on the County Council web site and Business West Sussex.
- Sought to support local businesses where possible through the County Council's response to the crisis, particularly on the Community Hub's approach to the provision of food and supplies to vulnerable residents, and the PPE cell's approach to sourcing from local companies.
- Worked with the Districts and Boroughs on the approach to pavement licences for traders
- Tracked business intelligence and economic impact through a monthly `snapshot` report.
- Worked with the representatives of micro and small businesses to support a new approach to boost the use of local suppliers and services.

### **We will:**

- Work with partners to ensure local businesses have the support to boost business survival, recovery, innovation and growth
- Work collaboratively to support start-ups and micro entrepreneurs
- Seek to increase local spend within the West Sussex economy and local supply chains
- Progress opportunities to provide and collaborate with co-working spaces as hubs for enterprise and business support activities
- Work with partners to maximise benefits for West Sussex from the Government support packages for business

- Support the business community to 'Keep West Sussex Safe' through our role as the public health authority.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1	Respond to the increases in start-ups and 'micro entrepreneurs' due to COVID-19 impacts by ensuring the University of Chichester Business Hot House pre-start and start-up support is targeted effectively, and coordinate with other support activities e.g. through co-working hubs.	Economic Growth
2	Progress the Council's participation in the British Library and Arts Council funded 'Business & Intellectual Property Centres' programme, working with Brighton & Hove Library Business & IP Centre. We will pursue the creation of centre/s to support pre-start and start-up business growth and viability, through the provision of free access to dedicated space (events and workshops), specialist IP advice and data.	Library Service / Economic Growth
3	Work with the University of Chichester to agree a revised delivery programme for Business Hot House in response to COVID-19, linking with all the local authority funding partners.	Economic Growth
4	Implement the West Sussex focussed £1.2m EU funded RISE programme, as a strategic funding partner with the University of Brighton. It will accelerate business innovation and investment in research and development through 'networks of innovation' in coastal, rural and Gatwick area hubs, benefitting more than 500 West Sussex businesses (subject to final approval).	Economic Growth
5	Implement the £2m EU funded LoCASE work package for West Sussex, as a strategic funding partner with Kent County Council and the University of Brighton's Green Growth Platform. It will deliver support to the low carbon and environmental goods and services (LCEGS) sector, benefitting more than 150 West Sussex businesses.	Economic Growth
6	Work with the West Sussex economy group to consider how we can most effectively support businesses, including improving coordination and communication of business support programmes; maximising support from the Coast to Capital Growth Hub; and responding to gaps in provision through pooling resources (issues highlighted during partner consultation include future trading with the EU; agricultural and forestry diversification; and support for major businesses to survive and thrive).	Economic Growth
7	Progress 'buy local' initiatives to support local suppliers, including through promoting and supporting the new <i>Area in Action Portal</i> developed by the co-working community in the county, and the 'Shop Local' campaign for the festive season through Experience West Sussex.	Economic Growth
8	Ensure West Sussex businesses play their part in the public health response to COVID-19, providing guidance and support through our role as the public health authority, and through promoting well-being as advocated in the Annual Public Health Report.	Public Health
9	Progress the County Council's commitments to supporting start-ups and existing businesses through the approach to the other reset plan priority themes, with some focus on key sectors, digital adoption and skills, and embedding 'the green recovery'.	Economic Growth

## How Government could help

- Continue to adapt the Government's business support package to prevent further business failure among viable businesses.
- Invest in businesses and sectors to help them adapt and innovate for the long-term (recognising that EU funding for business support and innovation activity is generally concluding although there are opportunities to participate as a standard third country in certain programmes where it is in the UK's and the EU's mutual interest)
- Recognise and respond to the challenges some business face around the movement of goods and people due to restrictions on international connectivity.
- Use climate investments to support business recovery and jobs.
- Work to level-up taxation between high street shops and businesses, and digital retailers to help ease the pressure on `brick-and-mortar` businesses
- Respond proactively to the issues faced by sectors still badly affected including aviation, leisure, tourism, culture and the arts, retail and hospitality which are viable in the medium term.

### ***Theme 5: Enable Employment and Skills Recovery and Resilience***

#### **Current position and key challenges**

- The impact of COVID-19 on residents' work is increasingly evident.
- Unemployment levels are going up. In September there were 27,890 West Sussex residents claiming Universal Credit or Job Seekers Allowance for the main reason that they were out of work, or, if in work, working very few hours. The number of claimants went up by 174% between March and September, a higher percentage increase than the national and regional average.
- Crawley and Arun have the highest number of claimants and Adur the lowest, largely reflecting the numbers of jobs in sectors most vulnerable to covid including aviation, tourism and hospitality. Mid Sussex saw the highest % increase in claimants since March at 250% and Worthing the lowest at 141% increase.
- The highest percentage increase in numbers of claimants is among 18-24 year olds compared with the older age groups.
- Many who are finding themselves out of work or facing significant job insecurity are experienced, senior level professionals across a wide age profile.
- There has also been a considerable impact on the self-employed and freelancers, especially on the coastal strip
- The education, skills and employment landscape are severely impacted, affecting school leavers, apprenticeship provision, further and higher education settings, and graduate employment.
- Many learners who returned to school or college in September will have had little or no face to face tuition since March.
- History shows that school leavers who do not continue in training or education are usually hardest hit following a recession in terms of financial health. Many suffer longer spells of unemployment, and slower pay rises, than people with degrees.



- The first rung in the employment ladder for many young people are in the sectors most hit by COVID-19.
- In West Sussex, the Chichester College Group, the University of Chichester, Greater Brighton Metropolitan College and independent training providers are directly impacted, along with many young people transitioning into post-16 education and training, or already in these settings.
- The finances of these providers are negatively impacted by the loss of international students and the constraints/ costs of implementing social distancing across their sites.
- Funded pre-employment support is a key requirement for many in the NEET cohort and was in short supply even before COVID-19. Given the anticipated increase in NEETs, identifying appropriate support of this type will be important in any reset plan.
- Creative approaches, and a willingness and ability for collaboration between schools, further and higher education, providers and employers are likely to be key to the 'class of 2020' seeking to enter the labour market, with sectoral and geographic considerations likely to be needed.
- The Chancellor announced a new 'Plan for Jobs' as part of his Economic Statement on 8 July, focussing on apprenticeships, traineeships, investment in the National Careers Service, and a 'Kickstart Scheme'. It will be vital to ensure we make the most of these opportunities for the county's residents and employers.
- Government has also outlined plans for the expansion of post-18 education and training, including through a 'Lifetime Skills Guarantee' to give adults the chance to take free college courses valued by employers, and a new entitlement to flexible loans to allow courses up to Level 4 to be taken in segments, aimed at boosting opportunities to retrain and enhance skills in specific, high need areas.

### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- Education and Skills responded to the immediate situation regarding schools, providing regular support and communication across a wide range of Covid related concerns and highlighting key issues relating to post 16.
- Careers Advisers supported Year 11 students who did not have an offer of a place for September and were at risk of being NEET.
- The School Effectiveness Team established cross-functional COVID-19 Recovery working groups to support schools, including curriculum, leadership and governance and transitions and admissions.
- Work has started to develop the Adult Learning Curriculum to focus on Skills and Employability.
- Established an internal 'Skills Board' to enable a cross-service coordinated response to COVID-19 including engagement with partners. The Board will galvanise around the impact of Covid-19 and consider and respond to what is needed in terms of People; Place; Business Sectors; and the county council as an employer.
- Commissioned experts to report on the immediate impact of COVID-19 on skills, training and employment for the working age population in West

Sussex, and on the potential role of the Council in a strategic recovery response; and to propose targeted projects that could have most impact with limited resource.

- Engaged in strategic discussions across Sussex and the Coast to Capital area on the response to the impact of the pandemic on employment and skills.

**We will:**

- Progress skills and employment activities in response to the impact COVID-19 is having on the labour market, businesses and residents
- Strive for a coordinated and collaborative response to the skills and employment challenges and opportunities, in recognition there are many stakeholders who have a role to play
- Work with partners to maximise benefits for West Sussex from the Government Plan for Jobs and changes to post-18 education and training to support unemployed residents back to work.
- Give some focus to higher value, knowledge economy sectors and skills, responding to business needs and growth opportunities
- Understand and respond to the impacts on residents and workers with protected characteristics
- Maximise entrepreneurial potential among residents.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1	Devise a plan in response to the impact of COVID-19 on employment and skills for the working age population, which will set out where the County Council is best placed to act or intervene, and where we can work in partnership to address need and opportunities.	Economic Growth / Skills Board
2	Progress a pipeline of projects as part of the response plan, working in partnership and with some focus on the knowledge economy, including digital skills; `micro entrepreneurs` starting new ventures; and those with protected characteristics.	Economic Growth
3	Use our role as a major employer to support those whose employment prospects are impacted by COVID-19, initially through participating in the national Kickstart Scheme, and through use of our apprenticeship levy corporately and with business.	HR / Skills Board
4	Work with schools and Colleges to support those who become NEET or are at risk of becoming NEET with a focus on the transitions of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people.	Education and Skills
5	Re focus the adult learning curriculum to support employability and shape provision that provides opportunities for residents of all ages to upskill/retrain across the County	Education and Skills
5	Explore the potential for a strategic coalition of partners to develop joint initiatives and cooperation, to ensure alignment with the Coast to Capital Skills 360° Board, and to consider the potential for collaboration across Sussex.	Skills Board
6	Participate in the Full STEAM Ahead steering group to recommend the `reset` of the plan to Chief Executives, and support delivery as agreed.	Economic Growth

## **How Government could help**

- Work with Councils to enable them to play a key role in bringing employment and skills initiatives together, including those set out in the Government's 'Plan for Jobs'.
- Consider further initiatives to support re-training and re-skilling of adults who find themselves out of work due to COVID-19 such as greater flexibility in the use of the Adult Learning Budget and the Apprenticeship Levy.
- Provide greater incentives for those outside the levy to offer apprenticeships and increase flexibility in the use of the levy for larger companies and organisations.
- Support and enable local areas to have devolved responsibilities for skills and ensure national skills initiatives such as Digital Bootcamps are provided in all areas.

## ***Theme 6: Protect and Revive Tourism and the Visitor Economy***

### **Current position and key challenges**

- Visit Britain's forecasts for the UK in 2020<sup>2</sup> estimate a decline of 73% in visits for inbound tourism, with a decline of 79% in spending. This would represent a loss vs the pre-COVID forecast of 30.7 million visits and £24.0 billion spending.
- The domestic outlook forecasts a drop of 49% in spending for overnight and leisure day trips. This represents a loss of £44.9bn, £12.1bn from overnight stays and £32.8bn from day trips.
- In 2018 the value of the tourism sector in the county was estimated at 2.05bn supporting 37,000 jobs. The sector is one of the hardest hit with consequences for coastal and rural areas and from the impact on Gatwick airport.
- The wider hospitality and leisure sectors have been equally impacted, effectively shut down during lockdown bar some home-delivery and take-away services.
- The sector started to 're-open' in July in accordance with operational guidelines, and with support from the Government's package for businesses including VAT rate cuts in restaurants, hotels and cinemas. The national 'eat out to help out' scheme followed with the aim to help retain jobs.
- This situation has been exacerbated through the timing of the pandemic starting in Spring and enduring over Easter, the May bank holidays and the early part of the summer season, with many businesses facing a cash flow crisis over refunding of customer payments.
- Tourism and hospitality were facing a challenging winter even before the new national restrictions were introduced from 5 November. Time will tell on the extent to which Government's support package will help jobs and businesses survive. The sector remains vulnerable to restrictions which Government has signalled are likely to remain until at least March 2021.

---

<sup>2</sup> [Updated Inbound tourism forecasts](#) on 25.08.20 and domestic on 29.07.20.

- Major events make a significant economic contribution, and the county's event companies include some of those most at risk.
- Culture, arts and heritage venues have also been extensively impacted, and many are likely to remain closed for some time due to restrictions. The Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Secretary has provided a £1.57 billion package of emergency support to help arts, heritage and cultural institutions but it will not fill all the gaps, with freelancers particularly vulnerable.
- The county's strategy in the short to medium term will need to focus on local and domestic markets and consumers, with international markets likely to be much slower to recover.
- The sector is an important asset and contributor to the county's 'sense of place', drawing on the distinctive high quality natural environment, the character and distinctiveness of the county, and the attractiveness to businesses and employees, and so has a wider contribution than the immediate economic contribution and associated jobs.
- Sustainable and responsible tourism should underpin the approach to help secure for the longer term the environmental gains from the COVID-19 crisis, such as supporting natural capital projects, improvements in air quality, increased access to nature and increased use of sustainable active travel.

#### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- The Experience West Sussex Partnership (hosted by the County Council and made up of all the Districts and Boroughs) has taken a highly proactive approach to support the sector where possible and is working closely with Visit Britain.
- During the lockdown from March, EWS marketing activity switched to engaging consumers through virtual tours, on-line activities, and the #WestSussexWishlist. Post July marketing has been agile and flexible, mirroring Government advice.
- Business support and advice has been channelled across the sector, and high-profile webinars have been hosted with Sussex Chamber, the Coast to Capital Growth Hub and the South Downs National Park featuring major attractions and other industry organisations, and with high levels of engagement from local MPs with around 1,000 viewing across the three webinars.
- EWS and the County Council represented the West Sussex tourism sector to Government through roundtables with DCMS Secretary of State Oliver Dowden MP at Butlins, and with Nigel Huddleston, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Sport, Heritage and Tourism at Arundel Castle.
- Work has progressed with Gatwick Airport to strategically consider the next phase of the Gateway Gatwick partnership convened by the airport to re-engage with international visitor promotion when the time is right.

#### **We will:**

- Host and partner in Experience West Sussex with the Districts and Boroughs to prioritise destination and business resilience to safeguard jobs and the wider tourism sector

- Increase engagement with the tourism community, to ensure they have a strong voice in recovery plans and activities
- Progress a pan-Sussex approach to sector recovery where collaboration adds value, and to help ensure the area is positioned to benefit from national and regional tourism funds
- Seek to build capacity to respond to sector priorities and opportunities and develop a plan to sustain the Experience West Sussex partnership post Autumn 2022.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1	Work in partnership through Experience West Sussex to prioritise destination and business resilience over the winter and into next year through marketing activities, business support, and digital technology use.	EWS Team/ Economic Growth
2	Support the Experience West Sussex marketing campaigns, initially the August to November #RediscoverWestSussex campaign, the seasonal campaign to encourage London, South East and local markets to spend their festive shopping budgets with the West Sussex tourism community, and a campaign early in 2021 to promote staycations in West Sussex.	EWS Team
3	Support a new programme of sector support across Sussex, building on the Experience West Sussex led webinar series during the immediate crisis, and focussing on resilience, greener destinations, innovation and digital solutions.	EWS Team
4	Support EWS to provide strategic leadership for the sector as it cements its position as the recognised destination partnership and tourism voice with sector leaders including DCMS, Visit Britain / Visit England and Tourism South East, and through partnering in regional projects such as England's Coast Discover England Fund project.	EWS Team/ Economic Growth
5	Track and respond to the impact of COVID-19 on the sector in the county, including the impact of the aviation sector crisis on international visitors through Gatwick, the cancellation of multiple major events, and the challenges for multiple attractions, accommodation and hospitality businesses.	EWS Team
6	Work with Gatwick Airport to strategically consider the next phase of the Gateway Gatwick partnership to re-engage with international visitor promotion when the time is right.	EWS Team / Economic Growth
7	Progress a pan-Sussex approach to recovery to maximise opportunities from the Sussex brand, ensure Sussex is ready to respond to Government opportunities to bid for tourism development funds, and to share approaches and economies of scale around sector recovery activities. Tourism Zone creations, Visit Britain Discover England funding, and specific sector recovery funds	Economic Growth / EWS Team
8	Work as part of the Experience West Sussex Partnership with the Districts and Boroughs to seek ways to build capacity to work on priorities identified by the Board, increase private sector influence, and lead work on the sustainability of the partnership post Autumn 2022.	Economic Growth

## How Government could help

- Recognise the challenges the tourism and hospitality sectors are facing, and respond to these through Government support packages for those most in need e.g. events, live performance, night-time economy
- Consider continued VAT reductions through 2021 to boost the new season and get people back into venues
- Work with local destination partnerships as strategic leaders to support sector recovery and provide funding for destination resilience and recovery programmes.

### ***Theme 7: Enable a health and social care market for the future***

#### **Current position and key challenges:**

- The Social Care Market in West Sussex is made up of over 500 registered providers and over 25,000 people<sup>3</sup> are employed in social care in the county. Those headlines cover a mix that ranges from small, locally based providers to large national companies, several of which are publicly quoted. Within older people's care services, the market is highly dependent on self-financing customers who buy around 50% of the available residential beds, whereas in the disability sector the County Council is the dominant buyer.
- Even though it is a minority purchaser, the County Council has budgeted to spend over £270m in 2020/21 in supporting the care needs of people who been assessed as meeting the eligibility criteria in the Care Act. Based on an overall market share of 30% and taking into account the Competition and Market Authority's estimate that self-funders pay on average 41% more than local authorities for an equivalent placement, this suggests that the value of the sector to the economy in West Sussex is over £1bn.
- The impact that COVID-19 is having on the sector, and the County Council's response, is outlined below. Despite this, it is inevitable that there will be provider failure. In that context the loss of some suppliers will be more significant than others and so it will be essential that the County Council responds pro-actively to the opportunities that this will create, rather than aiming to retain the status quo. The fact that the Care Act gives it an overarching responsibility to ensure sufficiency of supply in the market as a whole adds further to that need.
- In 2019 the Council published its [Adult Social Care Vision and Strategy](#) which describes a vision based on strengths and assets, community led solutions, prevention and reablement, supporting independence, and with a focus on integration, co-production and support for carers. Largely this vision remains unchanged and if anything is even more critical in the current landscape as we consider the economic impacts and recovery from COVID-19. It also implies a need to influence the shape of the market so that the provision which is available shifts to a mix that consists of fewer traditional-style residential beds and a greater element of community-based care.

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/local-information/My-local-authority-area.aspx>

- A Commissioning Strategy and Market Position Statement for Older People is also in development, and whilst the economic landscape and the market position may change over time and as a result of the pandemic, the focus remains likely to be on prevention, community led support, alternative models of supporting people within their home and communities wherever possible, and for people at the highest level of vulnerability; appropriate nursing and dementia provision.
- Health and Social Care has been substantially and critically impacted by COVID-19, with unprecedented change required in legislation, practice, provision, and service delivery in order to maintain support to the most vulnerable people in West Sussex. The key challenge is now understanding the impacts, the evolving challenges and working towards a plan for recovery.
- Prior to COVID-19, health and social care in West Sussex had a series of economic considerations which presented key challenges and were recognised and considered in our strategic vision and approach to commissioning from the market. These remain part of our core focus and include the following;
  - West Sussex has a considerably older age profile compared to England with a higher proportion of over 65s and comparatively fewer residents aged 15-39. This is a challenge both in terms of demand for services and in sufficient workforce to meet the needs of the older population.
  - In addition, one of the challenges faced in working with the market in West Sussex is that the council purchase a relatively small proportion of the total numbers of residential and nursing home beds and domiciliary care provision.
- As a result of COVID-19 the immediate economic challenges on the health and social care market, in addition to those already identified include:
  - Staffing and Infection Control – A positive impact has been some ability in parts of the market to attract much needed recruitment into care from other industries. However, this is balanced by new challenges for providers on how they manage their workforce and keep their staff safe now and into the future, with a reduction of staff movement to reduce the potential spread of infection. A continued economic challenge will be ensuring sufficient workforce to support people safely in a range of support settings.
  - Provider Sustainability and loss of provision - Providers costs have increased during COVID-19 with significant increases for example in PPE costs, additional staffing costs to cover isolation periods, cancelled services and increased travel. A number of services have also had to restrict admissions during the pandemic. This has and will result in vacancies and therefore reduced income which will no doubt present a financial pressure to many businesses and a resulting loss of provision within the market.
- West Sussex has already experienced an unprecedented number of home closures in the last 18 months. Whilst the county has been relatively well served with residential provision, further losses, and particularly in specific

areas of the County and supporting more complex needs will no doubt have an impact. This impact is likely to be on support services for those people with most complex needs such as nursing and dementia who are unable to continue living in their own home.

### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- The health and social care system have a long history of partnership working including formal joint commissioning arrangements and associated governance structures. These have been built on and reinforced during this crisis and it is anticipated that the system-learning will be carried forward into sustainable and resilient longer-term integrated working.
- The system has worked robustly together to plan and implement a range of measures to respond to the challenges presented by COVID19. Those focused on supporting the economic challenges specifically have included:
  - Care Home Support – The full details of this support has been articulated in response to the request for Care Home Resilience plans, [submitted to the government on the 29 May 2020](#). Some of the [support identified includes](#) training programmes, strengthened clinical support, detailed communications through newsletters and forums, development of an integrated incident management system, and a multi-agency provider response team.
  - Recruitment - the Council's '[Proud to Care](#)' team are working alongside the Care and Business Support team to assist with workforce issues in the market including active support with recruitment, and social media messaging about working in care, adapting plans to focus on furloughed workers, distance recruiting and using agency staff safely. Going into the autumn and winter the focus is on promoting care as a career, a winter campaign and encouraging nurses to consider working in social care services.
  - Financial Support – for services supporting customers who the County Council funds, an initial [financial package of support to care providers](#) was agreed including, 20% uplift for domiciliary care, 10% uplift to other care providers over a 3-month period, upfront payments to day centres for people with learning disabilities and swifter payments to support cash flow. Since then, a [second provision of financial support](#) has been agreed and implemented, including a further 5% uplift awarded to commissioned care providers from July to September 2020.
  - The County Council's share of the £600m Infection Control Fund of £13.4m was distributed to services in accordance with the requirements of the fund, with 75% directed at care and nursing homes and 25% being directed to other services based on local decision. This was also available to providers with whom the County Council does not contract. On the 1<sup>st</sup> October the government announced 'round 2' of the Infection Control Grant and



the Council are preparing again to distribute payments to social care providers in line with the guidance and identified criteria.

- A significant early partnership development to meet our hospital discharge requirements and to consistently and efficiently source care from the market was seen in the development of multi-agency hospital discharge and placement finding teams, incorporating Council and NHS staff. There is significant learning on the benefits of working in this way that will no doubt inform and influence our working in the future.
- Development of a Strategic Provider Forum - The Council has worked with representatives of the market to set up a forum to focus on how we can work together strategically, build on the good work and learning from Covid, and provide an opportunity to listen to each other, hear current challenges and consider opportunities. The Council will now be exploring with the forum the potential to agree a concordat to support this partnership working going forward.
- Hospital Discharge Service Guidance - The Council and NHS partners have been working closely together to implement the Hospital Discharge Service Guidance published on the 21<sup>st</sup> August which set out how health and care systems should support people to discharge promptly and safely from hospital.
- Winter Plan - Working alongside our health partners the Council are developing a local winter plan (as required in the Adult Social Care: Our Covid-19 winter plan 2020 – 2021) which outlines the additional community provision the Council will look to commission and the associated funding for this.

**We will:**

- Progress the delivery of the Social Care Action Plan.
- Deliver on the requirements in the 'Adult Social Care: Our Covid19 winter plan 2020 – 2021.'
- Consider risk around potential provider failures, and manage their impacts including through commissioning approaches.
- Implement existing and future guidance from national government.
- Work with the Strategic Provider Forum.
- Focus on the strategic priorities to enable delivery of the vision and strategy.
- Continue to work with residents that are self-funders to understand the short and long-term financial implications of their care choices.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1.	Progress the Delivery of the Social Care Action Plan which highlights the next steps in detail and presents a plan to reflect on and learn from our immediate responses, considers retaining the initiatives and developments already in place and further actions to develop with partners as the position evolves. This includes but is not limited to support for providers, contingency planning, workforce support, and financial considerations.	Adults and Health

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
2.	Deliver on the requirements in the 'Adult Social Care: Our Covid19 winter plan 2020 – 2021', including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ distribution of the Infection Control Grant round 2,</li> <li>○ putting in place a local winter plan,</li> <li>○ Producing a self-assessment of the health of local market management and contingency planning.</li> </ul>	Adults and Health
3.	Work with partners on the risk around potential provider failures detailed in the plan to manage the impacts, and to respond accordingly to support sustainability of crucial provision and understand the changing landscape for demand and thus future development. Whilst the strategic priority remains to support people in their own home wherever possible, the potential collapse of residential provision, particularly for people with dementia and nursing needs may have a significant impact on our ability to support the most vulnerable people. Therefore the business will be exploring the potential for commissioning blocks within services to enable financial sustainability as well as provision of much needed capacity.	Adults and Health
4.	Implement existing and future guidance from national government, including the Infection Control Guidance, the Hospital Discharge Service Guidance, the 'Covid19: Our action plan for adult social care' and the 'Adult Social Care: Our Covid19 winter plan 2020 – 2021.'	Adults and Health
5.	Work with the newly established Strategic Provider forum including representatives from the care market to develop a concordat or agreement on how we can work together going forwards.	Adults and Health
6.	Ensure a renewed focus on the strategic priorities to enable delivery of the vision and strategy with partners, to manage the impacts on the market, and to enable alternative solutions to people who require care and support across the County. Including the production of the older persons commissioning strategy and market position statement.	Adults and Health
7.	Continue to work with residents that are self-funders to understand the true implications of their care choices in financial terms both to them and, should their funding run out, the implications for the Council in terms of cost and choice.	Adults and Health

### How Government could help

- Government can help by addressing the significant risk nationally on certain parts of the market collapsing under the financial strain of the impacts of COVID-19. Whilst financial support has been given to providers to cover initial costs, and for infection control, the impact of reduced income on an already fragile market could lead to the demise of a number of services. Left unmanaged, this will create financial risk for the County Council if a reduction in supply translates into an increase in price competition.
- With so much of the health and social care market reliant on a stable workforce, which has been under significant pressure as a result of the pandemic, the government could help by reflecting the value of the social care workforce both in relation to its profile and importance and in appropriate funding and practices to recognise value.
- Care home providers are telling us that they have real worries about risks of litigation and judicial review given that guidance is not always timely

and consistent. We are keen that government is aware of these concerns and seek its support in reassuring providers in this regard.

- A sustainable financial settlement for local authorities for adult social care. The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted yet again that it is a false economy to increase funding for the NHS without providing a matching level of additional resources for social care. Unless this is addressed as a priority action, the knock-on implications for the economy in West Sussex are certain to be significant.

## ***Theme 8: Capitalise on Digital Infrastructure and Technology***

### **Current position and challenges**

- Prior to COVID-19 UK digital infrastructure lagged internationally. The industry was, and still is working to “catch up” and central government is pushing this agenda.
- West Sussex’s position is typical within the UK in terms of speed and coverage for broadband and mobile technology. The County Council’s strategic focus is on full fibre infrastructure. This will encourage the market to invest in connectivity now, and to future-ready ourselves for new technologies. This focus remains highly relevant in the current climate.
- The pent-up demand has increased exponentially with COVID-19. As an example, homeworking saw daily Zoom video conferences soar from 10 million to 200 million in 3 months during lockdown. Throttling of speeds has been implemented to cope with demand - not such an issue on consumer apps, but a real issue if applied to the future delivery of critical public services and a risk consideration for any business. This has shown how critical the quality of our fibre network is and will be.
- The digital divide has been exacerbated. The most digitally excluded have been further impacted, relying on digital services (from on-line shopping to virtual school lessons) they can’t access through limited digital skills or access to devices, or poor infrastructure including in some rural areas. The county Gigabit programme is key to assisting rural connectivity, potentially as a 5G enabler.
- Despite any partial offsetting of demand due to a COVID-19 financial crisis, it is generally assumed that given our reliance on connectivity for societal resilience and business continuity, demand will continue to increase and that shifts in consumer and worker behaviour including more home-working are likely to stay.
- There has been an increase in anti 5G sentiment citing concerns for public health and the environment. Currently we have consistent countywide messaging recognising that councils have very limited influence on commercial deployments and cannot rely on planning to manage sites.
- COVID-19 significantly impacted the delivery of inflight digital infrastructure projects prior to, and in the early part of lockdown. Some lost time has been recovered and slippage was pulled back to between 1 and 4 months across projects.
- Now is the time to accelerate work to maximise the application of digital infrastructure to benefit the economy, business and skills, and support the priorities across the other reset themes.

### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- Continued to work closely with District and Borough partners and suppliers to deliver in flight projects. Where funding is external including Local Growth Funding, COVID-19 impact assessments were provided to funders.
- Continued to work with the Districts and Boroughs on the strategic direction of the County's digital agenda, including on assets, the application of technology and Open Market Review mapping activities.
- Welcomed the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee guidance on the building of network during lockdown and are well placed to influence via highways colleagues.
- Prepared proposals to kick start a programme of work to further stimulate the adoption of digital technologies and skills among non-digital businesses and residents, with some focus on supporting economic recovery and those who are out of work due to COVID-19.

### **We will:**

- Improve access to high quality digital infrastructure for businesses and residents, by encouraging investment in the county to build digital infrastructure and access networks.
- Work with the District and Boroughs to stimulate the adoption of digital technologies, services and skills to benefit the economy, businesses and residents.

	<b>Headline actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1	Increase commercial investment in urban areas, progressing the county's Gigabit Framework with build and investment announcements of around £100m by CityFibre to date. Leverage additional commercial coverage by suppliers by reducing barriers to investment and working with communities and businesses in partnership with the District and Borough Councils to facilitate demand aggregation and share information with suppliers. Examples of positive outcomes from this approach include Openreach and Virgin Media investment.	Digital
2	Increase commercial investment in rural areas for gigabit capable infrastructure, by supporting the DCMS' national rural voucher scheme by 'topping up' the value of each voucher to £4,000 for SMEs and residents. More than £1million of additional investment is planned to date, which is attracting commercial investment by suppliers.	Digital
3	Continue to gather data and intelligence to better understand where our 'final 20%' of rural areas are most likely to be left without access to gigabit-capable infrastructure as a result of not being commercially viable and therefore eligible for future public sector intervention. Work with DCMS to develop the delivery of a national programme of intervention in rural areas. Enhance this work through an Open Market Review to engage with suppliers on their commercial intentions, and by mapping mobile connectivity up to 4G.	Digital
4	Work in partnership to deliver the Converged Fibre Connectivity project, an innovative project building a new duct and fibre route. Once complete Crawley, Horsham, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill will have greater fibre resilience and be linked to the regional fibre network at Brighton Digital Exchange. Rural areas along the route are	Digital

	<b>Headline actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	also expected to benefit from additional commercial investment by suppliers using the new infrastructure.	
4	Continue to demonstrate to regulatory agencies, business partners and investors that West Sussex Councils are working proactively to enhance the digital offer, including through use of our assets such as the highways network, and through seeking to use local planning policy to ensure that all new residential and commercial development has gigabit-capable (and preferably full fibre) connectivity at the point of occupation.	Digital
6	Kick start a programme of work with the District and Boroughs and Coast to Capital to stimulate the adoption of digital technologies and skills by businesses, initially for sectors and settings most impacted by COVID-19. Pilot a `persuasion to adoption` model, and the deployment of `Digital Champions`.	Economic Growth
7	Progress plans for digital skills activities, including upskilling the economic development workforce on the digital agenda, ensuring start-ups and micro-entrepreneurs are supported to maximise opportunities from digital technology and services, and collaborating with colleges and universities on digital skills training.	Economic Growth

### **How Government can help**

- Recent changes to the Electronic Communications Code have simplified the planning process for telecommunications companies to deliver 5G services. Local Authorities would welcome Government addressing communities' questions in relation to 5G technology and provide clarity on the role of Councils in this activity and highlight this to the public.
- Given the accelerated demand for resilient digital infrastructure, local authorities would welcome any early sight on anticipated changes and be clear about local authorities' role in working with telecoms stakeholders e.g. an anticipated extension of business relates relief on digital infrastructure.
- From the COVID-19 lessons learnt, local authorities would welcome early guidelines that apply to digital infrastructure build should a similar scenario develop in the future (e.g. from local lockdowns) e.g. deployment of smaller gangs, safe surveying, access to unmanned exchanges or end user premises.
- Ensure committed Local Growth Funding remains allocated to projects important to helping to stimulate economic recovery.

## ***Theme 9 – Embed Climate Change and the Environment into the Reset***

### **Current position and challenges**

- The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and the UK's commitment to achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 underpin the national strategic position on the environment.
- Environmental benefits arising from the COVID-19 lockdown including improvements to air quality, greater appreciation of nature and an increased ability to cycle and walk locally have been highlighted by many.

Much attention is being given to ensuring the UK's 'recovery pathways' protect the environment and reduce the impact on climate change.

- The Committee on Climate Change (CCC), who act as independent advisors to government, have advocated for the importance of delivering a stronger, cleaner and more resilient economy, including through using climate investments to support economic recovery and jobs.
- More than 200 top UK firms and investors have called on the government to deliver a COVID-19 recovery plan that prioritises the environment. They advocate for investment in low carbon innovation, infrastructure and industries, which should focus on sectors that can best support the environment, increase job creation and foster recovery, whilst also decarbonising the economy.
- The Chancellor announced on 8 July a £3 billion green investment package projected to support around 140,000 green jobs and to upgrade homes and public buildings to reduce emissions.
- The low carbon economy and demand for green jobs are forecast to grow faster than traditional industries as the nation transitions to a net zero economy.<sup>4</sup>
- The County Council has adopted a Climate Change Strategy, confirming an ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2030 and with a commitment to support and grow our local green economy.
- The Council is already progressing a range of green energy and sustainability initiatives which support the environment and the low carbon sector, and opportunities will be explored to do more as they arise.
- The County Council is a key partner with the Sussex Local Nature Partnership (LNP). The LNP has called upon partners to embed 5 principles they would like to see as part of an integrated approach to recovery: Place making, health and well-being, restoration economy, build back better, and leadership.

### **The County Council's response to date working with partners**

- Accelerated the timeline for approval of the Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030 to ensure the commitments can be aligned with and integrated into COVID-19 recovery planning.
- Engaged with partners on the Climate Change Strategy to understand opportunities to align ambition and resource on climate change across West Sussex, regionally and nationally.
- Provided immediate support for the re-opening of high streets and workplaces through encouraging and enabling walking and cycling.

### **We will:**

- Position West Sussex as a place for innovation in green energy and develop the commercial provision of energy-related services in the county to support the growth of the sector.

---

<sup>4</sup> 700,000 direct jobs could be created in England's low-carbon and renewable energy economy by 2030, rising to 1.18 million by 2050; with nearly 450,000 in London and the South. Source: LGA report 'Local Green Jobs' (2020)

- Seek to increase the number of people walking, cycling and using public transport for school, work and leisure journeys.
- Progress activities across the reset plan themes in support of the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

	<b>Headline Actions to March 2022</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1	Implement the £2m EU funded LoCASE work package for West Sussex, to support and grow the low carbon and environmental goods and services (LCEGS) sector.	Economic Growth
2	Work with the national SmartHubs consortium and local partners to deliver a £25m pioneering smart local energy system demonstrator in the county, <sup>5</sup> leading to trailblazing energy projects including smart solar panel and battery systems delivering low-carbon energy; and a marine source heat pump transferring heat from seawater in Shoreham Harbour to adjacent commercial buildings of the Shoreham Port Authority using a district heating system.	Energy
3	Support the development of low carbon technologies and markets by building on the BISEPS project through the Interreg 2 Seas funded LECSEA project, which will progress collaborative Local Energy Communities (LECs) for business parks, drive investment in technologies, and promote best practice in the creation of LECs.	Energy
4	Increase the public provision of solar PV and battery storage across Sussex through the 'Solar Together' project, working with Districts and Boroughs across the county, East Sussex & Brighton & Hove.	Energy
5	Increase the public provision of electric vehicle charging points to support the transition to low carbon transport through a joint procurement with Districts and Boroughs across the county.	Sustainability
6	Benefitting from a grant from Local Partnerships and working with all Districts and Boroughs across West Sussex, we will explore new ways of engaging with our residents to better enable businesses to adapt post-Covid.	Sustainability
7	Progress economy reset activities in support of the Climate Change Strategy, initially focussing on 'green skills and jobs' as part of the employment and skills theme, and growing the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector through LoCASE (No. 1)	Economic Growth
8	Continue engagement with Gatwick Airport Limited on climate change through the Council's solar, renewable heat and hydrogen economy activities, as the airport extends its sustainability activities in support of a pledge to reach Net Zero carbon emissions for ground operations before 2050.	Sustainability and Energy
9	Maximise opportunities from the Department for Transport's (DfT) Emergency Active Travel Fund to better enable sustainable travel on key commuting routes, and progress key cycling, walking and connectivity projects.	Local Transport Improvements
10	Progress strategic partnerships and potential projects in support of the economy reset, including with the Sussex Local Nature Partnership based on its 'Clean Growth Principles', and with the Coast to Capital and the South2East Local Energy Strategy.	Economic Growth and Sustainability

<sup>5</sup> SmartHubs aims to deliver a replicable, scalable, Distributed Energy Resource Management System (DERMS), to transform the way energy is generated, stored, shared and consumed.

### **How Government can help**

- Provide leadership to ensure the UK's 'recovery pathways' protect the environment and reduce the impact on climate change, and to ensure the low carbon economy and green jobs are integral to economic recovery as we strive to achieve Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- Ensure that any recovery package includes nature. The current crisis reminds us that our economy and the health of society are dependent on a flourishing natural world.
- Use climate investments to support economic recovery and jobs. The Committee on Climate Change previously identified a detailed set of investments to reduce emissions and manage the social, environmental and economic impacts of climate change.

### **Performance framework**

The Economy Reset Plan contributes to the achievement of the emerging corporate plan priority outcomes:

- a sustainable, prosperous economy (*especially local economic recovery and resilience and climate change*)
- helping people and communities fulfil their potential (*especially a skilled local workforce, and communities, high streets and civic pride*)
- keeping vulnerable people safe (*especially adults and health*)
- making the best use of resources (*especially strong partnerships*)

Corporate performance indicators will be agreed as part of the next iteration of the Council's Reset Plan, which will be in February 2021 alongside the budget. Performance indicators will include contextual economic indicators in support of the corporate priority outcomes and project specific indicators arising from the Economy Reset Plan actions.



**Key decision: Yes**  
**Unrestricted**  
**Ref: CAB12 (20/21)**

---

## **Report to Cabinet**

**November 2020**

### **WSSC Reset Plan**

#### **Report by Chief Executive**

**Electoral division(s): All**

---

#### **Summary**

This report sets out the process that is being taken to develop West Sussex County Council's Reset Plan – the corporate plan for the organisation. It presents the first iteration of the plan following a process of engagement with staff, elected Members, partners and residents from across the county.

The first draft of the plan takes the priority outcomes agreed by Full Council in July 2020 and develops the more specific outcomes we want to achieve and the activities that the Council will lead, deliver, enable or facilitate to do so. This work is set in the backdrop of a significant financial challenge over the next four years, in which we will need to save more than £100m. The Reset Plan is being developed alongside the budget and medium term financial strategy, meaning the outcomes and activities in the plan will be delivered within the available resources.

#### **Recommendations**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the first iteration of the Reset Plan for further consideration by the County Council at its December meeting (attached at Appendix A)
  - (2) Approve the timeline for ongoing development of the Reset Plan, (attached at Appendix B)
  - (3) Invite each of the scrutiny committees to consider in January 2021 how the Reset Plan's measures and performance information can be set and used to enable effective scrutiny of the Council's aims and agreed outcomes relevant to their areas of business; and to invite Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee to provide guidance to the scrutiny committees in terms of principles and methods for effective scrutiny of performance to assist them in that task.
-

## **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 Our experience of supporting communities through Covid-19 has helped the County Council consolidate and strengthen the progress that had already started. In the first wave of the pandemic, staff were redeployed, partnership working was accelerated, and we have transformed our digital capability, supporting a predominantly remote workforce. As we continue to deal with the ongoing pandemic, we are building on what have done in 2020 and reflecting it in the Reset Plan.
- 1.2 Although we have made significant progress in key service areas like Children's Services, Fire & Rescue as well as with our corporate governance, we must not forget where we were before the pandemic. We know we needed to change and the good governance project identified key areas for us to focus on, including a commitment to put residents at the heart of everything we do; to create strong and visible collective member and officer leadership; to work closely with partners; to invest in and value our staff; and to make the way we work as straightforward as possible.
- 1.3 We have demonstrated to ourselves and to others during Covid-19 what we are capable of and the uncompromising commitment of members and our workforce to the residents of West Sussex. We have shown through the cooperation across the health and social care sector and the formation of the community hubs, that we can work well with partners. Things are different already, but we need to keep changing to build on the progress we have made.
- 1.4 It is vital that the County Council develops an integrated business and financial planning cycle that is based on a good understanding of the local evidence base, the national and local policy context, a comprehensive understanding of the financial position (revenue and capital) and the service challenges in meeting the needs of residents, businesses and communities.
- 1.5 The Reset process brings together our policy, business, financial planning and risk management processes. It will be the vehicle for the County Council's decision making and planning to ensure we are making the very best use of the resources available, understanding the value for money we deliver and focussed on our priority outcomes. It will also ensure we understand the implications of the tough choices that will need to be made in the face of huge resource and demand challenges and also uncertainty.

## **2 Principles**

- 2.1 Given the financial challenge we face and the changing nature of demand on our services, we know we have to reset our priorities now, but we must do it in a way that is collaborative and inclusive. As such, we are developing the plan with staff, partners and members to ensure we go on the journey together and make the plan real and focused on the most important things we all need to do in West Sussex. We must do all of this by making the best use of the funding we have.
- 2.2 We have been working to a set of principles agreed at Full Council in July, which underpin the approach we are taking.

Table 1 – Principles

<b>Principle</b>	<b>What we are aiming for</b>
1. Led and made in West Sussex reflecting residents, communities and businesses needs and building on our strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan with a sense of identity for West Sussex</li> <li>• A plan that is developed and owned by our staff, partners and elected Members</li> </ul>
2. Strong learning from our own and others' experiences including COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pausing, listening and reflecting great work we know about</li> <li>• Reflecting what our communities need most from us</li> </ul>
3. Based in realistic optimism and a sustainable business plan (performance, resources and risks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a sense of direction and are clear on what we are doing and how we will know we've been successful</li> <li>• We prioritise what we do and deliver within the smaller budget envelope we now have</li> </ul>
4. Held together consistently with a focus on agreed priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan that focuses on the outcomes we want to see for West Sussex and we can say which priority we deliver on and the role WSCC staff play to achieve them</li> </ul>
5. Providing clarity about what successful outcomes look like in 12 months' time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a clear set of measures that everyone understands and will tell us if we've been successful</li> </ul>

### **3 Developing the Reset Plan**

- 3.1 Our approach to developing this first iteration of the Reset Plan has been to involve staff, partners and elected members in the process, and use the research we have already done with residents (including during Covid-19) to reflect what we should focus on and why, and use our learning from the Good Governance Project and improvement activity already taking place across the organisation. This has meant that we have a plan that is being 'led and made in West Sussex' and can be built upon further. The following activities have been part of the process:

- Workshops with WSCC staff and external partners – workshops involving the top 100 senior managers in WSCC and more than 50 partners from across West Sussex have provided an opportunity to build a plan that is both reflective of what WSCC will do on its own and in partnership with others
- Webchat with WSCC staff – Becky Shaw hosted an online conversation with WSCC staff where staff were able to ask questions and suggest what they thought should be reflected in the plan
- The Big Exchange – WSCC staff were able to post ideas and suggestions on what they wanted to see in the plan using on an online platform available to all staff
- Community conversations – led by the WSCC Communities team, 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted with voluntary and community sector organisations and other local public bodies
- Covid-19 resident research – we have used the survey conducted after the first wave of the pandemic to gauge what is important to residents and what needs to be prioritised in the plan
- Elected member engagement – an all-Member session was hosted on 12 November 2020 sharing the first draft of the plan and capturing views on the content of the plan. This will be reported to the Cabinet at its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November and further for the report to the County Council in December.
- Scrutiny – the invitation to Performance and Finance Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> December is to help set some principles and methods for the scrutiny of the Plan once it has been approved and this will be built upon by the other Scrutiny Committees in January by reference to the sections of the plan relevant to their business.

#### **4 Reset Plan priorities and delivery outcomes**

- 4.1 The process we have taken has enabled us to iterate the four priority outcomes underpinned by the theme of climate change agreed by Full Council in July 2020. Through the engagement we have been able to shape the outcomes we want to see. These are set out in Table 2 below alongside the specific outcomes we want to achieve.

Table 2 – Reset Plan priorities and outcomes

Priority	Outcomes we want to achieve
1. Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early help to prevent needs escalating</li> <li>• Support to people when they need it</li> <li>• Independence in later life</li> <li>• Working in partnership</li> </ul>
2. A sustainable and prosperous economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resetting and rebooting the local economy</li> <li>• Achieving social value in West Sussex</li> <li>• Sustainable growth by developing modern infrastructure</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting people to develop the skills they need for the future</li> <li>• A sustainable economy that tackles climate change</li> <li>• Working in partnership</li> </ul>
3. Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to excellent education and learning</li> <li>• Tackling inequality</li> <li>• Promoting and enabling independence</li> <li>• Safe, connected and cohesive communities</li> </ul>
4. Making the best use of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working together as 'one council'</li> <li>• Getting the best from our people</li> <li>• Maximising our income and the productivity of our assets</li> <li>• Value for money</li> <li>• Working in partnership</li> </ul>

- 4.2 The draft of the plan in Appendix A sets out activities we will undertake to achieve these outcomes and deliver on the priorities.

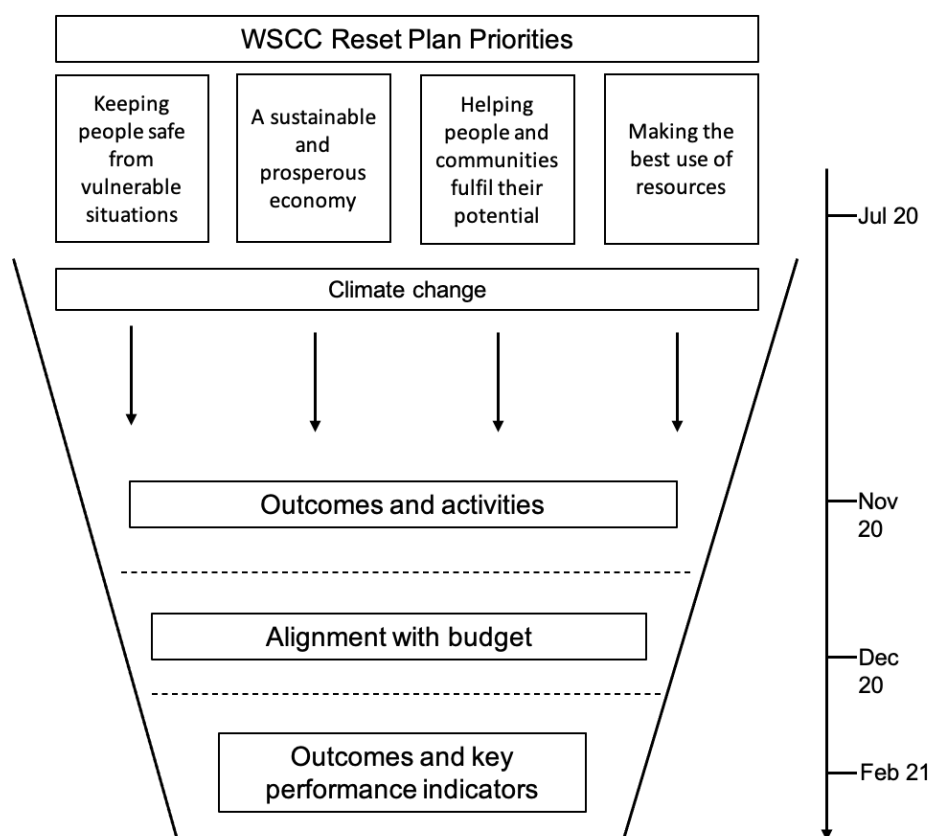
## 5 Iterating the Reset Plan

- 5.1 Over the next two months we will continue iterating the plan. The next set of activities include:

- All-member engagement – using the feedback from the all-member workshop on 12 November to update the plan
- Delivery planning – planning the activities we are going to undertake in more detail, with timescales and alignment to outcomes and budget
- Key performance indicators – development of key performance indicators that sit alongside the outcomes and priorities and will act as measures of success
- Equality impact assessment – an assessment of the impact of the overall plan on residents and communities in West Sussex
- Scrutiny of the reset plan – working with the performance and finance scrutiny committee to provide guidance to all scrutiny committees on principles and methods for effective scrutiny of the reset plan

- 5.2 Figure 1 below sets out the process we are taking alongside the high level timescales.

Figure 1 – the iterative approach to developing the plan



## 6 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 6.1 We have taken a collaborative approach to developing the first draft of the plan, using existing research with residents and engaging WSCC staff, partners and elected members in the process.

## 7 Finance

- 7.1 The approach set out above is in alignment with the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for West Sussex County Council and supports the delivery of a balanced budget for 2021/22 in accordance with the Council's statutory duty.
- 7.2 In the next phase of developing the plan, we will be continuing to align the budget planning and Reset Plan processes.

## 8 Risk implications and mitigations

- 8.1 It is critical that the council has a corporate plan in place, as it articulates the purpose of the organisation, its areas of focus and priorities, the core outcomes it wants to achieve for residents and how it will measure success. Crucially, it also determines where the organisation will spend its money and therefore must be aligned to the budget and medium term financial strategy. The following risks and mitigations are in place:

Table 3

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating Action (in place or planned)</b>
Not having a corporate plan	The first iteration of the Reset Plan is now complete and the ongoing input from Members, staff, partners and residents will be used to update the plan, which will go to Full Council in February 2021.
The budget is not aligned to the Reset Plan	The budget process has run alongside the Reset Plan process throughout its development and will continue to do so as the budget proposals are developed through to Full Council in February 2021.
It is not clear what success looks like	We are now developing the key performance indicators that will sit alongside the priorities, outcomes and activities published in the draft plan. These will be used to measure the success of the plan.

## 9 Policy alignment and compliance

- 9.1 The Reset Plan will become WSCC's corporate plan and will therefore be the foundation for policy development, governance and compliance.
- 9.2 We will be undertaking a high-level equality impact assessment as part of the next stage of work to iterate the Reset Plan.
- 9.3 Climate change is an underpinning theme in the Reset Plan and has been considered at every stage of the plan's development. The Council's Climate Change Strategy is a core part of the draft plan.
- 9.4 The Council's Social Value Framework (2019) is referenced in the draft plan and will be a core part of how we get the most for local people from the £600m that the Council spends each year.

**Contact Officer:** Becky Shaw, Chief Executive,  
[becky.shaw@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:becky.shaw@westsussex.gov.uk), 0330 222 2620

### Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Reset Plan

Appendix B – Timeline

### Background Documents:

None

This page is intentionally left blank



## WSSC Reset Plan – Summary of Priorities, Outcomes and Activities

### Introduction

West Sussex needs to operate in a different context to that prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Like the rest of the country the effects have already been significant and are far from over. Almost 700 people have died from Covid-19 across the county since January 2020. At the peak of the first wave, more than 133,000 people were furloughed from their jobs. Big employers like Gatwick Airport have seen a 61.3% drop in revenues and have already made 600 staff redundant. The rate of claims for Universal Credit tripled in some parts of the county between March and August 2020.

The longer term physical health, mental health, social and economic impacts are yet to be fully seen. With this new context comes revised action and West Sussex County Council (WSSC) has risen to the challenge.

We have worked alongside partners to put in place the support needed to our communities, including:

- Healthcare,
- Social care,
- Housing and emergency accommodation,
- 'Community hubs' across the county to ensure people had access to food, prescriptions and other essentials when they needed it most.

We have also seen unexpected benefits including cleaner air, less noise, neighbourliness, and an appreciation of the environment our residents live in.

This new context means WSSC needs to build a new model of priorities for the next four years and beyond – one that focuses everything we are able to do on achieving good health and wellbeing for our residents.

In order to be fit for the future we must do two things.

**First**, we need to build on the improvement journey we had already started before the pandemic, in key services like Children's Services and Fire and Rescue. We must:

- Put residents at the heart of everything we do;
- Create strong and visible leadership;
- Work closely with partners;
- Invest in and value the staff that work for WSCC;
- Make the way we work as a Council as straightforward as possible for the communities we serve.

**Second**, we must strengthen our support to those who need it most but do so with less money. **WSCC will need to save more than £100m over the next four years**, of which almost half of this will need to be saved from April 2021. This means we will need to:

- Prioritise the most important things to do,
- Manage the demand on our services better,
- Make some tough choices so that our resources go to where they are needed most.

The new uncertain world that we are still getting used to living in requires a plan that takes all of the learning and progress we have made and focuses on the **most important things that our communities need**.

This reset plan acts a **framework for WSCC to operate** in a way that means we are clear on what we want to achieve and what we will do to achieve the priorities, but we are flexible to respond to whatever comes our way.

This plan and the way we have put it together **reflects the changing nature of our role** – a deliverer, convenor or enabler of whatever is needed to serve our communities.

We have spoken to community groups, undertaken research with residents to understand the effects of Covid-19 and what they need going forward, and involved WSCC staff and almost 50 of our local partners in the process to shape **four key priorities and outcomes**, underpinned by responding to the challenges of climate change.

## Priorities, outcomes and what we will do to achieve these

Priority	Outcome	What WSCC will do to achieve the outcome	KPIs
<b>1. Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations</b>	Early help to prevent needs escalating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's early help service – we will continue to take a 'whole family' approach to ensuring children are safe, with families supported by multi-agency 'early help hubs' to provide coordinated early support</li> <li>Fire and Rescue Service – through the Integrated Risk Management Plan, we will prevent fire wherever possible, through fire safety checks targeted at those who need it most and wider public awareness campaigns</li> </ul>	To be added once budget has been finalised
	Support to people when they need it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children first improvement plan – we will keep children with their families wherever possible, to ensure quality of family life and reduce reliance on costly short term placements. Where this isn't possible, we will ensure we find a safe and supportive environment for children to live and thrive, for example through adoption, foster care and special guardianships</li> <li>West Sussex Local Offer – we will continue to deliver information, advice and guidance for children, families and young people with SEND up to 25 years old</li> <li>Adults and older people – we will provide early support in the community and close to home, including support to carers.</li> <li>Fire and Rescue – we will continue to conduct 'safe and well' visits for people who need it most, including fitting smoke alarms and fire detection equipment free of charge</li> <li>Information sharing – we will build on and retain the improved data and information sharing arrangements seen during the Covid-19 pandemic, to identify and provide support to people as early as possible</li> </ul>	
	Independence in later life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential and nursing care – we will use these settings for short term care (e.g. reablement) and less for longer term care, in order to reduce cost and provide better quality of life</li> <li>Supported accommodation – we will use schemes like extra care sheltered accommodation for longer term care</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day services – we will develop and deliver a new model that uses fewer day centres but ensures the right day activities are provided</li> <li>• Shared Lives scheme – we will increase number of people living in this family-based accommodation model</li> <li>• Reablement – we will increase capacity and deliver a more efficient service to ensure people return home safely with the support they need after crisis (e.g. a hospital stay)</li> <li>• Dementia – in partnership with West Sussex CCG, districts and boroughs and the VCS, we will combine efforts to enable the right accommodation and support to live independently, including support to carers</li> <li>• Digital technology – using the latest assistive technology we will keep people safe in their own home for longer</li> </ul>	
<b>2. A sustainable and prosperous economy</b>	Resetting and rebooting the local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economy Reset Plan (2020) – we will lobby, lead, enable, partner, support and/or deliver what we can to get the local economy back on its feet. In particular we will focus on supporting existing and new business start-ups; getting people back into employment from hard-hit sectors such as Aviation, Horticulture, Tourism and Health and Social Care; opportunities for better digital infrastructure and technology; while embedding a zero-carbon approach throughout.</li> </ul>	
	Achieving social value in West Sussex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social value framework 2019 – we will ensure our procurement processes that enabled £600m of WSCC to be spent each year are accessible to local suppliers, maximise the use of local providers in our supply chains and secure added economic, social and environmental benefits. For example, jobs and opportunities for local people and access education, training and support.</li> </ul>	
	Sustainable growth by developing modern infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Sussex Transport Plan (2011-26) – through this strategy for highways and transport infrastructure we will ensure people can move safely quickly to access education, training and employment opportunities, while encouraging people to walk, cycle and use public transport to lower the carbon footprint</li> <li>• Digital infrastructure – we will lobby for investment in the county to build digital infrastructure and access networks; and work with District and Borough Councils to adopt digital technologies, services and skills to benefit the economy, businesses and residents.</li> </ul>	

	Supporting people to develop the skills they need for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work with education providers and local businesses to support them in running appropriate and accessible learning and development opportunities to support the local economy in the medium and longer term, with a particular focus on post-18 education and training</li> </ul>	
	A sustainable economy that adapts to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will deliver on the Green Economy commitment in our Climate change strategy – in particular promoting green tourism, taking advantage of natural capital investment funding when available, encouraging and enabling sustainable business growth and supporting green innovation amongst business</li> <li>We will position the county as a place for innovation in green energy</li> </ul>	
	Working in partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Sussex growth deals – we will continue to deliver on existing deals with Districts and Borough Councils, which aim to support town centre growth, unlock housing and employment sites and attract investment. We will seek to refresh deals that are due to expire after their 5-year term.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential</b>	Access to excellent education and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School effectiveness strategy – we will continue to support our schools on their improvement journeys and build on the success of having 248 of 288 West Sussex schools currently rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding</li> <li>Careers advice – we will continue to support the 500 young people not in education, employment or training and provide apprenticeships with WSCC where possible encourage others to do the same</li> <li>Lifelong learning – we will work with education providers like Chichester College to support them in running accessible learning and development opportunities</li> </ul>	
	Tackling inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will support the formation of ‘local community networks’ in parts of the county where health and socio-economic inequality exists in order to reduce reliance on costly acute health and social care services</li> </ul>	

	Promoting and enabling independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Health Wellbeing Programme – through our partnership with all seven district and borough councils, we will ensure people have a safe home, that public transport is accessible (linked to our Bus Strategy), affordable and efficient, and that walking and cycling are viable options for local journeys. We will support more social prescribing in line with our approach to prevention.</li> <li>Disabled facilities grant – we will continue working with district and borough councils to provide funding to people who need additional support to maintain their independence</li> <li>Libraries – we will continue to deliver activities to support literacy and learning for children, families and older people, preventing isolation. We will work with local communities on how we can deliver these services innovatively.</li> </ul>	
	Safe, connected and cohesive communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan – at the heart of the plan is a prevention of fire and ensuring community safety. We will continue to deliver on this core commitment</li> <li>Voluntary and Community Sector – we will review current commissioned arrangements to ensure the limited funding WSCC can provide goes to where it is needed most in the sector to support safe and cohesive communities</li> <li>Tackling crime – we will work with partners such as the Police to reduce criminality and raise awareness amongst the public to prevent crime and keep our communities safe</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Making the best use of resources</b>	Working together as 'one council'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good governance review – we will act on the findings of the review to remove silos and work across team boundaries and deliver the best for our residents, ensuring governance and the way we make decisions is fit for purpose.</li> </ul>	
	Getting the best from our people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People framework – we will focus on developing our staff in four areas – leadership and management; performance and development; wellbeing values and ways of working; talent and resources. We will underpin staff development with themes of equality, diversity and inclusion.</li> </ul>	
	Maximising our income and the productivity of our assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will maximise the use of our assets by disposing of surplus assets and looking creatively and how we might use our assets to support economic growth (e.g. sharing space in our buildings with start-ups). For retained assets, we will reduce our overall energy consumption to meet our ambition of being a net carbon zero organisation by 2030.</li> </ul>	

	Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will continue to benchmark the unit costs of our services and maximise every pound spent through our commissioned contracts, including achieving social value using our 2019 framework</li> </ul>	
	Working in partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will look to combine or share approaches and services to achieve greater efficiency, as we are already doing in, for example, our improvement partnership with Hampshire County Council in Children's Services and Surrey County Council in Fire and Rescue Services</li> </ul>	

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank



## Timeline for developing the Reset Plan

Date	Item	Details
<b>October 20</b>		
12/10/20	Workshop – Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations	Workshop with CMT and partners
14/10/20	Workshop – A sustainable and prosperous economy	Workshop with CMT and partners
15/10/20	Online webchat with Becky Shaw	Staff Webchat with Becky to contribute to the Reset Plan
19/10/20	Workshop – Helping people and communities fulfil their potential	Workshop with CMT and partners
21/10/20	Workshop – Making best use of resources	Workshop with CMT on how WSCC resources should be used
October	Big Exchange Wall	Online noticeboard to WSCC staff to post their thoughts on the plan
<b>November 20</b>		
12/11/20	All member briefing day	Workshop to further iterate the priority outcomes and activities
13/11/20	West Sussex MPs meeting	First draft of the plan shared for comment and input together with budget update
19/11/20	West Sussex Leaders Meeting (D&Bs)	First draft of the plan shared for comment and input together with budget update
24/11/20	Public Cabinet Meeting	Draft plan agreed by Cabinet alongside budget update
<b>December 20</b>		
03/12/20	Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee	Scrutiny of budget proposals and discussion/agreement on principles and methods for future scrutiny of Reset Plan by all Scrutiny Committees
11/12/20	Full Council	First full draft considered by Full Council
December	Delivery planning	Planning activities in more detail, alignment with budget, KPIs, equality impact assessment
December	Staff and partner engagement	Further engagement on latest version of the plan and input into delivery planning process
<b>January 21</b>		
January	Delivery planning	Continuation of delivery planning from December
27/01/21	Public Cabinet Meeting	Final draft of Reset Plan and Budget agreed by Cabinet
<b>February 21</b>		
12/02/21	Full Council	Final draft of Reset Plan and Budget agreed

This page is intentionally left blank

---

**Report to Cabinet****November 2020****Update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy****Report by Director of Finance and Support Services****Electoral division(s): All**

---

**Summary**

This report provides an update on the progress to updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy and to developing a balanced budget proposal ahead of the Council's budget setting meeting in February 2021.

This update is presented in recognition that the Comprehensive Spending Review for 2021/22 will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020, which will clarify material matters regarding the funding of local government for the next financial year. The implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review and the subsequent publication of the Local Government Settlement will be key to determining how the remaining budget gap for 2021/22 can be addressed.

The ability of the county to encourage growth in the economy, the number of businesses operating from within the county and the level of employment within the county directly impact upon the finances of West Sussex County Council. The amount of council tax and business rates income collected directly contributes to the funding of services provided by West Sussex County Council. The latest developments in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic have the potential to add to the financial risks facing West Sussex County Council, depending upon how long the restrictions are required and their consequent impact upon the economy and employment within the county. In a similar manner, the end of the Brexit transition period in January 2021 and the uncertainty as to whether the UK can agree a trade deal with the European Union, also have the potential to affect the financial outlook of West Sussex County Council.

West Sussex County Council is required to set a balanced budget for each financial year by statute. The current budget gap for 2021/22 is £23.4 million. This gap represents the difference between the level of anticipated funding available to the Council, versus the anticipated levels of expenditure after taking account all identified savings and budget pressures.

This report sets out the savings proposals that require a Member decision, in recognition that the impact of the proposal will have a direct impact upon the service offer to the public. The report is seeking Cabinet endorsement to progress the development of the proposed savings proposals. Details of those proposals are set out in Table 3, with further detail provided within Appendix A.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended Cabinet

- (1) agree to progress the proposed savings set out in Table 3.
- (2) note that the Comprehensive Spending Review for 2021/22 will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020 followed by the Finance Settlement, which will directly impact the final decisions required of Members in setting a balanced budget for 2021/22.

---

## **Proposal**

### **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has been under review since the summer of 2020, culminating in the second Members Budget Workshop held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020. This is an annual process, which has been delayed this year as a consequence of the impact of the Covid-19 response during the national lockdown earlier in the year and the on-going uncertainty about future funding levels for local government nationally.
- 1.2 West Sussex County Council faces a particularly challenging set of circumstances this year, not least of which is the financial impact arising from the pandemic, both in 2020/21 and in terms of any on-going impact in future years, but also in terms of the scale of the pressures for growth in the budget and the continued uncertainty about the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review, the Fair Funding Review, the Review of Business Rates and the future funding of adult social care.
- 1.3 One of the responses to the impact of the pandemic has been to develop a Reset Plan, in conjunction with partners, details of which are contained within a separate item on this agenda, however it is important to recognise the key priorities that form part of that plan and which inform the development of the MTFS.

There are four distinct priorities that will be focused upon, underpinned by climate change. These priorities provide a framework for West Sussex County Council to focus on the most important things for our communities and within each sit a set of clear outcomes. Use of resources is the fourth priority and addresses the importance of ensuring the available resources, including finances, are structured to enable deliver of the council's priorities.

- 1.4 The principles underpinning the approach to setting the budget over the medium term are as follows:
  - The budget will be sustainable in future years
  - There will not be an on-going reliance of reserves
  - Any use of reserves to balance the budget will be repaid
  - The budget will support the priorities of the developing West Sussex reset plan and reflect the need for comprehensive service improvement and redesign over the medium term
  - The council's financial planning will cover a period of at least four years

- Estimates will be used for pay and price inflation and additional costs to provide services due to demographic changes
- Any future loss of specific government grant will result in the stopping of expenditure on outcomes previously financed by the grant
- The budget process will seek to ensure the council is providing value for money increased productivity and is clear about return on investment

#### National Context and MTFS Assumptions

- 1.5 Delays in national decisions about the future of local government financing have continued, primarily because of the dramatically changing circumstances arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, requiring the Government to respond in a more agile and reactive manner, which has been reflected in the various funding streams made available to local authorities at different times since March 2020.
- 1.6 The changing circumstances arising from the pandemic have longer term impacts upon the fiscal outlook nationally and consequently the Comprehensive Spending Review, originally planned to provide certainty about public sector expenditure and funding for the medium term, will now only cover 2021/22. The economic impact of leaving the European Union in January 2021, following the transition period, has also yet to be factored into the Comprehensive Spending Review, reflecting the on-going uncertainty about whether a trade deal will be struck, which will also have a material impact upon public finances.
- 1.7 The Government has announced the one year Comprehensive Spending Review will be on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November, with the intention of providing a focus on the following areas;
  - *providing departments with the certainty they need to tackle Covid-19 and deliver our Plan for Jobs to support employment*
  - *giving our vital public services enhanced support to continue to fight against the virus alongside delivering first class frontline services*
  - *investing in infrastructure to deliver our ambitious plans to unite and level up the country, drive our economic recovery and Build Back Better."*

This will underpin the publication of the Local Government Settlement that will provide the detail of the funding of local government in 2021/22, including whether the existing grant funding, for example for social care, will be maintained in 2021/22 and whether local authorities will be provided with any further flexibility in relation to increasing council tax.

- 1.8 In addition the Fair Funding Review, which will determine how central funding should be distributed amongst local authorities to ensure equity, and the Business Rates Review, which will determine the level of funding that will be raised and how this will be distributed amongst local authorities, have also been pushed back until the fiscal outlook is clearer.
- 1.9 In addition to the delays in these broad policy areas, there is continued uncertainty about the future funding of adult social care, pending the publication of a national policy and plan to address this issue for the longer term. Currently, there are significant funding streams that are not currently guaranteed to be available in 2021/22.

- 1.10 Unfortunately, the continued uncertainty about the funding of local government makes the task of reviewing the MTFS more challenging and means that the announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement, scheduled for early December 2020, has become an even more critical element in developing a balanced budget for 2021/22 and updating the MTFS for the following three financial years.

- 1.11 The County Council Network (CCN) published its analysis of the CCN Autumn Budget Survey in November 2020. It reflected that in 2021/22,

“CCN member councils face a pre-Covid underlying funding gap of £1.4bn. As a result of potential losses in unrecoverable council tax and business rates, this gap could increase to £2.2bn next year. A separate survey of County Treasurers shows councils have identified £485m of savings so far to fill this gap.”

The report went on to state that,

“Only one in five CCN member councils are ‘confident’ they can deliver a balanced budget next year without ‘dramatic’ reductions to services.”

These findings, along with the recent issuing of a s114 notice by the London Borough of Croydon, emphasise the scale of the financial challenges currently facing local authorities and the importance of longer term clarity about local government funding arrangements.

- 1.12 What is clear is that there has been a significant adverse impact upon businesses and employment within West Sussex as a consequence of the pandemic. As the national furlough scheme and other national support approaches come to an end and evolve, there is the possibility that the economic outlook will continue to deteriorate, at least for the short-term, which could result in lower levels of both council tax and business rates being collected, which directly impact upon the financial resilience of West Sussex County Council.
- 1.13 Throughout the review of the MTFS assumptions have been made about the outcome of these and other issues that impact upon the financial outlook for the MTFS. These assumptions are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Assumptions Underpinning the Review of the MTFS

<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>
Government funding will be the same as in 2020/21	That the funding gap will not worsen as a consequence of reduced funding streams.
Covid-19	Any service costs relating to the pandemic will be met by the Government.
Council Tax	That the current cap on increases in Council Tax (1.99%) will be maintained.
Taxbase	That there will be no growth in the taxbase, i.e. that the level of income derived from council tax will not increase as a consequence of an increase in households.

Business Rates	That there will be no growth in the level of business rates income in 2021/22.
Inflation	Pay will increase by approximately 2.5%, offset by a reduced employer pension contribution. Goods & Services costs will increase in line with September 2020 inflation indexes.
Social Care Funding	That this will be maintained at the same level as in 2020/21.

### Budget Gap

- 1.14 The MTFS has been refreshed to reflect the assumptions outlined above but also to reflect updated information in relation to anticipated levels of growth, for example increased demand arising from demographic or other changes, income, for example as a consequence of revised charges for services, and savings, including updated estimated savings that had already been included within the MTFS and the addition of new proposals for inclusion.
- 1.15 All local authorities are required by statute to set a balanced budget each financial year, consequently any budget gap between the available funding and the proposed level of expenditure needs to be bridged.
- 1.16 The current budget gap for 2021/22 is set out within Table 2. below.

Table 2. Budget Gap for 2021/22 to 2024/25

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Opening funding	593.9	588.5	584.6	607.2
Changes:				
Council tax increase	9.7	14.9	15.4	15.8
Settlement Funding Assessment	1.6	-17.2	7.2	7.4
Business rates	-5.9	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	-2.1	-1.6	0	0
Collection fund	-8.7	0	0	6.7
<b>Revised funding</b>	<b>588.5</b>	<b>584.6</b>	<b>607.2</b>	<b>637.0</b>
Opening expenditure	593.9	588.5	584.6	607.2
Inflation	9.7	12.2	14.0	14.0
Reserves	-3.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Corporate/budget adjustments	-5.9	3.2	1.2	1.2
<b>Revised expenditure</b>	<b>594.7</b>	<b>611.8</b>	<b>607.8</b>	<b>630.3</b>
<b>Budget Gap</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>-6.7</b>
Additional pressures	37.4	16.6	16.6	12.6
	43.6	43.9	17.2	5.9
Estimate of savings being offered	-20.2	-8.3		
<b>Budget Gap net of savings</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>5.9</b>

- 1.17 Table 2 highlights that changes to funding streams and existing expenditure plans left a budget gap of £6.2 million however, despite £20.2 million of savings proposals being identified, the additional pressures identified of £37.4 million means that the budget gap has increased to and remains at **£23.4** million at this point in time.
- 1.18 The impact arising from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will materially affect the council tax and business rates funding streams, the assumptions applied are that there will be no growth in the income received from these sources in 2021/22, which reflects the adverse economic impact upon business generation and employment within the county.
- 1.19 In February 2020, when the MTFS was updated as part of setting the budget for 2020/21, the assumption was that increases in council tax would add £52.6 million to the level of funding available to WSCC across the period 2021/22 to 2023/24, currently it is estimated that, over the same period, council tax income will only rise by £40 million, a reduction of £12.6 million. This reduction reflects the loss of growth in the tax base and the potential increase in the number of people applying for council tax relief because they are now experiencing financial hardship.
- 1.20 Events are clearly still evolving in relation to the pandemic, but it is anticipated that there will be an adverse impact upon business rates collection arising from the recession, particularly in relation to the Gatwick Diamond but also in relation to the hospitality economy along the coastal region of the county. Currently it has been assumed that the baseline of Business Rates will be maintained, , however this would mean a reduction in funding available to WSCC in 2021/22 of £5.9 million relative to the MTFS forecast funding levels at the time the 2020/21 budget was set in February 2020.
- 1.21 The pandemic has also adversely affected the collection fund. The collection fund is the repository for the income derived from both council tax and business rates. If the level of income collected falls below the assumed collection rate, the collection fund incurs a deficit which has to be repaid. It has been estimated that the collection fund will incur a deficit in 2020/21 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The government has recognised this and consequently decided for local authorities to repay this deficit across three years rather than as a single sum in the following financial year. This arrangement eases the burden, but the total value of the burden continues to require funding through the budget process. The total deficit to be funded across the three years 2021/22 to 2023/24 is estimated to be £20 million, resulting in reduced funding of £6.7 million in each of the three years.
- 1.22 Combined, the reduction in funding arising from the impact of Covid-19 upon council tax, business rates and the collection fund in 2021/22 is estimated to be £25.2 million (council tax £12.6 million, business rates £5.9 million and collection fund £6.7 million).
- 1.23 The Government has provided additional funding to support the loss of income experienced by local authorities in 2020/21 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, announcing in July 2020 that;



*"Where losses are more than 5% of a council's planned income from sales, fees and charges, the government will cover them for 75p in every pound lost."*

The Council currently estimates that it will lose £9.6 million in 2020/21, which would be in addition to any loss incurred on the Collection Fund, referred to previously in paragraph 1.21. The government announced a proposed sharing of business rates and council tax losses when announcing the support of income losses, but the details have not yet been announced.

- 1.24 Looking ahead beyond 2021/22, the estimated budget gap in 2022/23 increases to £35.6 million and across the whole of the MTFS represents a gap of £82.1 million. This reflects a growing risk to the financial resilience of WSCC across the MTFS period and the need to make material changes to the way in which the statutory responsibilities of the Council are delivered.

## 2 Proposal details

- 2.1 The options for savings presented to Members for decision as part of the Budget Workshop held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October amount to £4.593 million in 2021/22 and a further £2.553 million in 2022/23. If these options are not approved, the budget gap will widen to £28.0 million for 2021/22. For reference these options are summarised in Table 3. below, with more detail provided within Appendix A.

Table 3. Savings Proposals Requiring Member Approval

<b>Savings Proposals</b>	<b>2021/22 £000</b>	<b>2022/23 £000</b>
<b>Cabinet Member for Adults and Health</b>		
1. Review of in-house residential services	640	-
2. Review of Shaw day services	250	-
3. Review of Lifelong services day services	1,120	1,120
4. Public Health Grant	370	88
Sub-total	2,380	1,208
<b>Cabinet Member for Children and Young People</b>		
5. National House Project		1,000
6. Increase in Council's top slice of Early Years DSG to compensate for lost Central DSG grant funding used for wider benefit of children and young people	450	-
7. Delaying work on management layers in the children's services department	-	tbc
Sub-total	450	1,000
<b>Cabinet Member for Economy and Corporate Resources</b>		
8. IT service redesign	500	-
Sub-total	500	0
<b>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</b>		
9. Not reopening the Public Cafe (removal of budget pressure)	-	-
Sub-total	0	0
<b>Cabinet Member for Environment</b>		
10. Introduce measures to reduce the amount of DIY waste presented at Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRS)	250	250
11. Review of the HWRS network	95	95
Sub-total	345	345
<b>Cabinet Member for Fire &amp; Rescue and Communities</b>		

12. Working with parish councils in specific areas to review the library service offer available in communities	70	-
13. Removal of Community Initiative Fund (CIF) and amendments to CLC arrangements	248	-
Sub-total	318	0
<b>Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure</b>		
14. Reduction in discretionary bus passes	200	-
15. Ending community highways schemes	50	-
16. Review highway and transport fees and charges	200	-
17. Reduce public transport support	150	-
Sub-total	600	0
<b>Cabinet Member for Finance</b>		
18. Review of the Property Estate	tbc	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,593</b>	<b>2,553</b>

- 2.2 The remaining savings options identified to date total £15.5 million (Appendix B) and comprise of second year savings of options already decided and efficiency savings that do not lead to a reduction in service deliver.
- 2.3 Due to where we are in the calendar, it is imperative that officers can begin the process of developing these proposals as soon as possible, in order to avoid the possibility that the saving identified cannot be fully delivered in 2021/22, since this would potentially mean that the Council's budget would be out of balance and prompt consideration of the need for a s.114 notice.
- 2.4 The purpose of the s.114 notice is to make it clear to members of the council it faces a serious financial situation and all expenditure beyond the statutory minimum level of service for vulnerable residents will stop. In line with the revised guidelines issued by CIPFA following the commencement of the pandemic, prior to issuing the s.114 the Director of Finance and Support Services will first have a dialogue with the MHCLG to try to find a solution.
- 2.5 The continuation of the existing grant funding has been assumed within the MTFS budget gap, meaning that if this is not confirmed there will be an additional budget pressure of approximately £17 million.
- 2.6 If additional flexibility is provided in relation to the potential increase in council tax, this could provide a material benefit to the MTFS, recognising that each 1% increase in council tax represents approximately £4.9 million in additional income. To raise council tax levels above the cap set by government would require a referendum. It would not possible to hold a referendum in the time available before agreeing the budget and therefore if a referendum is agreed by residents, adjusted bills would need to be issued to residents or the increase would not take place until 2022/23. There are considerable costs associated with holding a referendum.
- 2.7 It is also possible that the Government could consider introducing a degree of public sector pay restraint, which could have the effect of reducing the budget pressures, recognising that currently the budget gap includes an assumption that pay will increase by 2.5% in 2021/22, each 0.5% reduction in this assumption would reduce the budget gap by approximately £1 million.

- 2.8 Any remaining budget gap can be bridged by a combination of a number of factors, albeit some of them are dependent upon the outcome of the Local Government Settlement;
- a) Use of reserves – which by definition would be a one-off option, meaning that the budget gap for 2022/23 would widen, as the reserves would need to be replenished, but that there would also be less flexibility available in a financial year when the budget gap is estimated to be even wider.
  - b) Revising down pressures – re-examining the basis for the estimated growth and/or taking a different approach to the level of risk that should be managed within the budget. If a higher degree of risk is accepted in order to support approval of a balanced budget, there would need to be an explicit recognition that officers and Members would need to accept responsibility for managing within the budget agreed.
  - c) Identifying further savings – at this stage of the process any savings identified would probably only provide a part-year effect, since there would be little opportunity to develop a costed proposal and implement it ahead of April 2021. There is a potential advantage nonetheless in exploring this further as a precursor to the exercise to bridge the budget gap for 2022/23 onwards.
  - d) It is possible, but difficult to predict with any confidence, that the Local Government Settlement may provide additional flexibility, whether via additional direct funding, via grants, or by relaxing the council tax cap or removing it altogether. Every 1% increase in Council Tax would potentially deliver £4.9 million in additional income.
- 2.9 A combination of all of these options would be ideal, providing a balance between effective risk management and maintenance of financial resilience and sustainability. In the longer term, options are being explored and considered that would reflect the learning derived from the enforced working from home arrangements arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. This will include a review of working arrangements and the consequent impact upon the Council's accommodation requirements, as well as the potential income generating opportunities for investment.
- 2.10 Lobbying government is critical to ensure the financial challenges facing the council are clear. Communication is undertaken through multiple channels including:
- The Leader is engaging regularly with West Sussex MPs to seek their support in raising matters of concern with Government, including the significant financial challenge the County Council is facing, with an in-depth conversation taking place on 13 November.
  - The Leader has written to Cabinet Ministers, most recently on 20<sup>th</sup> October, highlighting the specific financial challenge faced by West Sussex County Council – and the impact COVID-19 is having.
  - The Chief Executives is one of 9 regional CEOs who represent Local Government and have a direct route to Ministers and Senior Officials in the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government.

- As part of the South East 7, the Leader is working with other Leaders to make the case for the South East as Government develops recovery thinking.
- Through the County Councils Network we are seeking to make the case for additional funding for authorities who are facing particular challenges with demand-led services such as adults social care and children's social care.
- Officers are working through their professional representative organisations (the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services, the Association of Directors of Children's Services, the Society of County Treasurers, etc) to lobby on service-specific issues.

2.11 The following steps will be undertaken to progress the budget:

3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2020	Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee (PFSC)
Mid December 2020	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government Finance Settlement
January 2021	Scrutiny Committees to review proposals as developed
14 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Member Day on the budget proposals including the capital programme
20 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	PFSC review of the budget proposals including the capital programme
27 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Public Cabinet presentation of the budget proposals including the capital programme
12 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	County Council to agree the revenue budget and capital programme

### **3 Consultation, engagement and advice**

- 3.1 Plans for formal public consultation will be formulated in relation to those options confirmed for further consideration which trigger a requirement for such consultation. The Forward Plan will set out which proposals will lead to formal consultation arrangements. Stakeholder and specific customer engagement may also be considered important to provide the fullest information base for future decisions in specific areas and those proposals will also be suitably identified within the Forward Plan.
- 3.2 All proposals will be available for further Member scrutiny in line with the usual arrangements prior to the final consideration by the Cabinet Member.

### **4 Finance**

- 4.1 As this is a Budget Report the financial consequences are covered within the body of the report.

### **5 Policy alignment and compliance**

- 5.1 The approach set out above is in alignment with the Reset Plan for West Sussex County Council and supports the delivery of a balanced budget for 2021/22 in accordance with statutory duty.

**Katharine Eberhart**  
**Director of Finance & Support Services**

**Contact Officer:** Alistair Rush, Interim Deputy Director of Finance, 0330 222 7116, alistair.rush@westsussex.gov.uk

**Appendices:**

Appendix A - Strategic Decisions supporting information  
Appendix B - List of Business as usual savings

**Background papers**

None

This page is intentionally left blank

**1. Review of in-house residential services £640,000****Proposal:**

- In 2018 'Choices for the Future' transformation programme for in-house services was approved by the Adults Cabinet Member. Within the programme there was a commitment to review the in-house residential services. The County Council is developing an accommodation strategy, and this will be an ideal opportunity for the in-house to be part of this piece of work. There are significantly fewer referrals being made to residential services due to initiatives like Home First. It is anticipated there could be opportunities to redevelop some sites into extra care housing or release for a capital receipt.

**Key Risks:**

- Public opposition to changes to services, which might include decommissioning residential establishments.
- The need to promote the County Council's independence priorities and to achieve public acceptance of the diminishing role of buildings-based facilities

**2. Review of Shaw day services - £250,000****Proposal:**

Shaw day services are provided at six of the 12 care homes that are operated by Shaw Healthcare as part of a block contract on behalf the County Council. Before Covid-19 pandemic closed the services on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 92 people were registered to attend the six services which were operating at an average of 45% attendance against capacity. This meant that the County Council was paying for places that were not being used. Since March operational staff report that now only 50 people are either able to or want to return to the same day service provision meaning that demand has significantly reduced further.

A review of the services was already in train as part of a previous savings plan relating to a Cabinet Member decision taken in May 2018 (AH02 18/19). It is proposed to extend this to assess whether all the Shaw Healthcare day services are required, whether they provide the best use of public money, and if not, what should change in order to deliver better outcomes for people.

**Key Risks:**

- Need to ensure appropriate support available for customers to make choices around their individual outcomes
- Public opposition to perceived loss of services

**3. Review of Lifelong services day services - £2,240,000 (£1,120,000 in 21/22)****Proposal:**

The County Council has a clear strategic intent to reduce dependence on building based day services for people with learning disabilities and to ensure that people, wherever possible, are able to access local community provision. There is a renewed focus on enabling independence and increasing employment opportunities. There is therefore an intention to significantly reduce the spend on building based services to create the savings above. This

will be phased, in part due to the reduced use of day provision during Covid and the emergence of new ways of offering support; the opportunities afforded by the re-procurement of services at the end of the current contract in March 2022; and continued development of the Council provided day services. The new models of support are being worked up collaboratively with current providers and wider stakeholders including customers and families.

**Key Risks:**

- Public opposition to changes in provision
- The need to promote the County Council's independence priorities and to achieve public acceptance of the diminishing role of buildings-based facilities
- The need to make alternative arrangements for some customers, which will be dependent on commissioning activity and the availability of supply in the community. Elements of it are likely to require market and/or community development and implementation of the Supporting Lives Connecting People model.

**4. Public Health Grant - £508,000 (£370,000 in 2021/22)**

The proposed savings from the repurposed public health grant will be repurposed to help fund other services provided by the county for public health outcomes.

**a.) Social Care Support Contracts - £408,000 (£270,000 in 2021/22) for all social support contracts**

**Help at Home proposal:**

The Help at Home contract has provided a subsidised home support service to people since 2013. It provides help to vulnerable older people who do not meet the Care Act threshold with basic household tasks, i.e. cleaning, shopping etc. Customers are provided with up to a maximum of 1-2 hours per week at a subsidised hourly rate. The current overall contract delivers to a customer base of approximately 677. The existing customer base is static in nature meaning that many customers have remained in the service on a long-term basis.

The model is not aligned with the current model of community led support for adults and as part of the current WSCC Social Support recommissioning programme, this service is being decommissioned. The current proposed plans for decommissioning aim to minimise risk to service users, minimise additional demand for adult social care and minimise any potential reputation damage. It involves a tapered withdrawal of the service with delivery actually ceasing in April 2022 and will be accompanied by ongoing assessment of service user needs and integration with community support.

It would be possible to speed up the decommissioning process so that the service ceases to deliver in July 2021 when the new contract period commences, resulting in 9 month savings in 2021/22 of £0.22m.

**Key Risks:**

In order to mitigate the risks of ceasing service delivery in July 2021 work will need to be carried out with the providers to assess and support service users.



Additional social support contract savings have been identified including through reducing variation in unit costs. This has resulted in an additional £50k savings resulting in overall social support contract savings of £0.27m in 2021/22.

**b.) Reduction in Wellbeing Programme - £100,000 (total budget £2,116,000)**

**Proposal:**

The West Sussex Wellbeing Programme is the flagship partnership between public health in West Sussex County Council and District and Borough Councils. With a total budget of £2,116,000, it is the main, large scale prevention programme in the county and the contact point for adults to access a wide range of support via self-referral or following signposting from a front line professional. It takes forward a number of commitments set out in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Most of the activity within the programme is concentrated on tackling overweight and obesity in adults of all ages. A Cabinet Member decision (effective from 12/11/18) endorsed the three-year partnership agreement which is now in its second year. That report stated that the budget would be set annually. The Cabinet Member wrote to District and Boroughs (April 2019) committing to maintaining the funding levels for three years. At a later date additional resources were allocated to wellbeing to support service developments (smoking cessation and NHS health checks) the savings, referred to here, impact on the latter sum so the commitment in the letter remains unaffected.

The programme has been significantly disrupted during COVID and will take time to recover, it is expected to underspend this financial year. There are aspects of the business plans which have ceased or not started due to COVID which would be halted permanently to achieve the savings. For example, NHS health checks have not been taking place during the pandemic so additional resource for them is underspent. Public health intend to develop proposals with the partners regarding where to take this money from (both geographically and across the interventions offered) in order to minimise the adverse impacts on the health of local population, on reducing inequalities and on the strength of the partnership.

**Key Risks:**

The savings risk damaging the established partnerships, impacting the rate of recovery of the service (which was severely disrupted by community hub workload in some areas). This reduces investment in interventions which prevent or reduce the serious consequences of Covid for those with lifestyle risk factors (linked to deprivation and BAME). It should be noted that the national obesity strategy launched in July makes reference to these services and pathways.

**5. National House Project – £1,000,000 (2022/23)**

**Proposal:**

The National House Project is a social enterprise built with young people leaving care, providing sustainable homes and a community of support that enables young people to have confidence in themselves and their future. Although all attempts are currently made to register young people's local

connection (housing register) where there is duty from a District/Borough, the response and success has historically (and to date) been inconsistent and very rarely provides Care Leavers with the offer of accommodation when they need it, therefore, the Council largely relies on the private rental sector to provide Care Leavers with independent accommodation. The private rental market is buoyant, and landlords will often choose other applicants over and above Care Leavers leaving little or no appropriate option for West Sussex young people. The cost of accommodation for young people represents one of the highest challenges to local authority budgets. National House Projects deliver improved outcomes for young people at lower costs and reduces demand on wider local authority and partner agency budgets with fewer tenancy breakdowns, improved emotional, physical and mental health and less contact with criminal justice services.

Savings of up to £0.2m per annum could be achieved for every residential placement avoided, meaning maximum savings potential of £2m per annum based on a cohort of 10 young people. However, in reality not all young people will be stepped down from residential placements, but potentially foster placements which cost significantly less, therefore savings are more likely to be in the region of £1m to reflect this mix.

#### **Key Risks:**

Partner agencies do not agree or commit to the project, resulting in the Council being unable to offer this to Care Leavers. Dependency on care planning to deliver the savings linked to this project. Social Work practice will need to change to encourage planning for adulthood and independence.

### **6. Increase in Council's top slice of Early Years DSG to compensate for lost Central DSG grant funding used for wider benefit of children and young people - £450,000**

#### **Proposal:**

To compensate for the continued reduction of DSG grant for the Central Services Schools block used to fund support to the MASH, Early Help services and Education Area Inclusion and Improvement Boards the council could increase the total funds to be topsliced from the DSG Early Years block. Under the Early Years funding regulations 95% of the Early Years funding for 3 and 4 year olds must be passed through to Early Years providers, but the remaining 5% can be topsliced by the County Council towards the overheads incurred in running the service. Since we are currently only topslicing 4% of this budget, we can under the national regulations look to increase our share by a further 1% (£0.450m).

In order for the County Council to increase its topslice a reduction in the level of payments currently paid to Early Years providers will be required. Following the introduction of the new Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) in 2017/18, the DSG funding rates paid to the Council remained frozen until the current year when they were increased by 8p per pupil. This increase was passed on in full to providers last year. It is estimated this proposal would effectively mean that the hourly rate being paid to providers would be 5p per pupil lower than that paid during 2020/21 prior to considering any increase in funding for 2021/22.

**Key Risks:**

The impact on the financial resilience of nursery schools will need to be evaluated.

Schools Forum will need to be consulted and likely to be critical of the proposals.

### **7. Delaying work on management layers in the children's services department - £tbc (2022/23)**

**Proposal:**

In response to the Commissioner's report and recommendations made in 2019 we continue to improve our services to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people. Their needs are at the heart of all our decisions.

An important part of this work is to make our management structures clearer and in line with industry standard to ensure we have streamlined reporting lines and responsibility levels. Some savings may be possible though it is unclear how much until the modelling work is complete

### **8. IT service redesign - £500,000**

**Proposal:**

The current contract for IT services concludes at the end of September 2022 and work on options demonstrate the benefits to the council by moving to a new provision model at an earlier date and the council and Capita have mutually agreed to seek an earlier date. The proposed approach will better support the delivery of council services and the ability to transform its services to provide a modern, responsive and flexible digital, data and technology service.

**Key Risks:**

- Migration to multi supplier model results in fragmentation of service model with reduction in quality due to lack of end to end accountability
- Delays to overall programme result in an extension of the Capita contract with inflated costs/risk transfer
- Technical ICT constraints over the transition period leads to either a reduction in service quality or a cost overrun in terms of implementation

### **9. Not reopening the Public Cafe (removal of budget pressure) - £Nil**

**Proposal:**

The use of the Martlets has been in decline and last year the restaurant had a £60k budget deficit. This decline has been due to a number of factors, but in particular:

- A thriving high street that features a high number of modern eateries and café venues, including mainstream chains and local businesses.
- The Martlets is old and has tired décor and equipment. To modernise the facility would take considerable funds, without a guarantee of increasing profitability as well as a long pay-back period on the investment.

If we keep things as they are then forecasts show that the budget deficit will continue to increase, and trade continue to decrease.

Currently with the majority of county hall staff working from home, the restaurant is closed and the staff are not at work. The restaurant is therefore costing the Council £2.7k per week in wages.

Future use of the building will be decided under a separate project that will be led by the Corporate Landlord. The building could continue to be used as meeting space /developed as meeting space, car park, additional office accommodation, etc.

**Key Risks:**

If this decision is taken there will need to be further more detailed work undertaken to identify the local provision of catering for meetings.

Not having a staff restaurant on campus will allow for staff to support the Chichester high street café and restaurant scene, adding additional trade value to those businesses, and encouraging staff to be healthy by taking a break from their work station and having a regular daily walk.

The campus is also well stocked with kitchenettes that allow staff to bring their own lunches, re-heating and storage facilities, and access to making their own hot and cold drinks.

**10. Introduce measures to reduce the amount of DIY waste presented at Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRS) - £500,000 (£250,000 in 2021/22)**

**Proposal:**

Only certain types of waste are legally defined as 'household waste'. The Council must provide facilities with reasonable access for residents to dispose of this type of waste on a free of charge basis. Other types of waste such as soil, hard-core, plasterboard, and car/van tyres are legally defined as 'non-household waste' for which a collection or disposal charge can be applied. Currently the Council charges for tyre disposals but not the other defined chargeable waste.

The County Council did approve the charging of non-household waste in the changes to the services, opening hours and charges at Household Waste and Recycling Sites and the introduction of two enforcement officers to tackle fly-tipping report in 2016/17 - Key Decision RS08 (16/17); however following a statement by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the Spring of 2017 that the government was going to review its guidance with regards to the charges that can be made at local civic amenity sites and with specific reference to the disposal of DIY materials, the disposal charges were suspended. Currently, other local authorities charge for this type of waste disposal including Hampshire, Dorset, Surrey and East Sussex.

**Key Risks:**

Further discussions with the contractor would need to take place to fully understand the impact on the contract and therefore the level of savings available.

**11. Review of the HWRS network - £190,000 (£95,000 in 2021/22)****Proposal:**

To reduce the Household Waste Recycling Site (HWRS) network in West Sussex by the closure of two permanent sites. It is anticipated that these closures would save around £0.190m per year, with £95k deliverable in 21/22. The saving anticipates that these closures take effect from 1st October 2021.

**Key Risks:**

Further discussions would need to take place with the contractor before firm figures could be agreed. There is a change process within the Recycling and Waste Handling Contract (RWHC) that would need to be adhered to. This process will allow more accurate calculation of the savings that could be made by closing certain HWRSs, taking into account any fixed costs that would still need to be paid, the impact on the contractor and any associated financial adjustments, and the displacement of the waste to other sites.

As a PFI, the County Council must also discuss these proposed changes with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The County Council must not, without DEFRA's prior written approval, agree or make any material changes to the terms of the PFI contract the consequence of any relevant change may, in certain circumstances, result in suspension, reduction or removal of revenue support. Any plan for any such changes must be raised in advance and confirmed either by submission of a Variation Business Case or confirmed as non-material by DEFRA (and, where appropriate, HM Treasury) before the changes are agreed with the PFI contractor or implemented. Early engagement with DEFRA on this proposal will therefore be required.

The timing of the closures would impact the saving profile.

**12. Working with parish councils in specific areas to review the library service offer available in communities - £70,000****Proposal:**

Certain Parishes have expressed an interest in using the library buildings as a Parish Hub. The opportunity exists to discuss Parishes potentially taking over the building and maintaining a small library self-service offer which they oversee. The way in which this might work would be dependent on discussions with the individual Parish. Depending on those discussions, savings could also be made on stock, deliveries, IT and supervision.

**Key Risks:**

Communities preferred model is that Parish-run libraries remain part of a network of libraries and therefore there could be resistance to this change.

**13. Removal of Community Initiative Fund (CIF) and amendments to CLC arrangements - £248,000****Proposal:**

- a. To abolish CIF and the crowdfunding platform and remove supporting post.
- b. To remove CLCs and to delete the posts and resources (e.g. venue hire, member/staff travel and subsistence) required to support them. The loss of a

three per year forum for community engagement by local members to be replaced with more flexible and responsive arrangements to maintain local democratic links to communities:

Community Forums:

- Meeting twice per year, as a forum for the public to ask questions and debate local issues or enable consultation.
- Resources available between meetings to facilitate ad hoc community links, feedback and consultation.

Seven District based forums:

Coterminous with district/borough councils, each meeting 3 times per year.

**Key Risks:**

a. None, community support to local causes and projects and promotion by local members can be achieved through other arrangements without the need for additional or pump priming grants from County Council resources.

b. None, local member community engagement can be achieved, and decisions can be processed in a more cost effective but equally transparent way.

**14. Reduction in discretionary bus passes - £200,000**

**Proposal:**

WSCC is an outlier in that it provides additional free travel options for disabled users and their carer on buses.

This change would result in concessionary travel no longer being provided for disabled people outside of the core hours of the scheme (off peak during the week and all weekend) and ceasing to provide passes to carers/companions who are not of an age to qualify for an older persons bus pass. Removing this benefit would have an impact upon those people who fall into the criteria for passes and choose or need to travel outside of the core hours.

**Key Risks:**

Risks are primarily around the ability of certain groups to travel for employment and education.

There is a risk that the removal of the bus passes will lead to additional costs within Adult and Children Services which would need to be explored before implementation. For example, within Adults additional costs for travelling to employment or education would need to be considered when calculating means tested income, potentially reducing the amount due to the County Council.

**15. Ending community highways schemes - £50,000**

**Proposal:**

The County Council currently promotes community highway schemes (CHS) and community traffic regulation orders (CTROs) as a way for local communities to access funding to provide changes to the highway network that they feel will enhance their locality. This is a discretionary function of the highway authority.

CHS and CTROs are primarily capital funded but the initial assessment of bids has to be carried out with the local highway teams as a revenue cost. This will result in reducing the total resource available across the local highway teams.

**Key Risks:**

Likely to have an impact on the reputation of the authority and generate poor public reaction to the change.

**16. Review highway and transport fees and charges - £200,000****Proposal:**

In addition to existing fees and charges a number of areas have been identified where there is opportunity to charge. These include:

- Charging for S59 agreements (excess traffic on highway) - helping us protect our asset
- Charge for licences – various
- Non-refundable fee for assessment of vehicle cross overs
- Pre S278 access to development sites
- Increase inspection and enforcement of compliance of utilities activities with legislation

**Key Risks:**

- Reputational
- Impact on levels of activity

**17. Reduce public transport support - £150,000****Proposal:**

Reducing supported bus services will have an impact particularly in rural communities. Whilst usage is low for many services this is also the only mode of transport for many and would be difficult to fully back fill with community transport universally. Contracts are held with operators and these would be terminated to implement the saving.

**Key Risks:**

- Risks include
- Public perception for some elements
- Impact on levels of activity
- Willingness to proceed to prosecution for failure to comply

**18. Review of the Property Estate - tbc****Proposal:**

The impact of Covid 19 has demonstrated that we do not need all of the corporate assets that we currently hold in order to deliver frontline and administrative services. Whilst this forms part of a bigger piece of work there is scope to significantly reduce property holdings with the corresponding costs.

**Key Risks:**

Failure to get agreement to relocate staff to either working from home or other sites. Failure to reduce office based working at other assets to free up space. As yet unquantified costs of alternative accommodation and relocation pending decisions by Services on their post Covid office dependency.

This page is intentionally left blank



	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>
1. Non-residential customers to remain at home with reduced package	890	2,610
2. Redirecting residential customers to home-based care		2,020
3. Increase supply and use of shared lives carers	448	
4. Supported Living - transfer of customers from residential provision	1,059	
5. Increase number of customers supported by live-in care	106	
6. Reduce use of single person services for customers where shared services may be suitable	114	
7. Public Health – use of uncommitted Public Health Grant/other changes within existing contracts	840	
8. Absorption of demand growth for adult social care from older people through demand management	4,361	
9. In-house residential programme – reduced independent placement costs	200	100
10. Reduce the number of solo placements and retainers	100	95
11. Improved commissioning for children’s social care service	1,800	750
12. Early help restructure ( <i>year 2 savings</i> )	950	
13. Lease of vacant properties to reduce intentionally homeless costs	100	
14. Savings following investment in foster carers allowances		tbc
15. Reduction in professional fees to support One Public Estate delivery	50	
16. Review of Economy project budgets	100	
17. Digital Infrastructure - 1 FTE Vacancy Freeze	45	-45
18. Facilities Management - associated services	40	
19. Reshaping communications offer	200	
20. Reduction in print facilities	tbc	
21. Reduction in corporate stationary requirements	100	
22. Licencing savings following reprocurement of ERP Solution	400	
23. Reduction in legal costs required for child protection cases	200	
24. HR service redesign	300	
25. Review of agency, mileage allowances & apprenticeship levy	500	

26. Home to school transport – increased internal fleet and greater taxi competition	500	
27. Improve school trading offer ( <i>year 2 savings</i> )	150	
28. Review Countryside Fees and Charges	20	
29. Community support for the mobile Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRS)	50	
30. Restructure of waste budgets	128	
31. Restructure of Electricity Budget	190	
32. Development of battery storage site	100	
33. Charge for monitoring travel plans	50	
34. Finance service redesign following implementation of ERP		250
35. Asset & Estates holding of staffing changes	96	-66
36. Reduction in business rates payable on corporate estate	100	
37. Increased income from copy certificates for registrars services	150	
38. Review of Partnerships & Communities Team	70	
39. Use of one off funding to support highways and transport priorities	500	
40. Concessionary fares (buses, ENCTS) – reduced demand	400	
41. Reduce graffiti contributions to Town and Parish Councils	50	
42. On street parking ( <i>year 2 from earlier decision</i> )	76	75
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>15,533</b>	<b>5,789</b>

**Key decision: No  
Unrestricted  
Ref: n/a**

---

## **Report to Cabinet**

**November 2020**

### **Notice of Motion on the Provision of Free School Meals in School Holidays**

#### **Report by Director of Law and Assurance**

---

#### **Summary**

Cllr Michael Jones submitted a notice of motion to the Council on 6 November 2020, calling on the Cabinet to provide free meals for children entitled to free school meals during future school holidays during the current pandemic. The motion was referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

#### **Recommendation**

The Cabinet is asked to consider the motion and to agree a response to be submitted to the Council, indicating the Cabinet's view on how to deal with it.

---

#### **Proposal**

##### **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 Cllr Michael Jones submitted a notice of motion to the Council on 6 November 2020, calling on the Cabinet to provide free meals for children entitled to free school meals during future school holidays during the current pandemic. The wording of the motion is set out below.

'This Council expresses disappointment that the Government has voted against providing free meals for children entitled to free school meals in the October 2020 half term and during future school holidays. This Council also expresses disappointment that none of the West Sussex Members of Parliament who took part in the Parliamentary vote supported the proposal to provide meals during future school holidays, with seven of the eight actively voting against.

This Council recognises that the on-going pandemic is causing hardship and poverty for many families within West Sussex and calls on the Cabinet to follow the example of other councils around the country to step in and provide free meals for children entitled to free school meals during future school holidays during the current pandemic.'

## Agenda Item 9

1.2 The Council briefing note by the Director of Education and Skills and the Director of Communities containing factual background information to the motion is attached at Appendix A.

1.3 The motion was referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

### **2 Proposal details**

2.1 The Cabinet is asked to consider its response to the motion on free school meals during school holidays for submission to the next meeting of the County Council. The Government recently announced a Covid Winter Fund scheme, and the County Council is currently working through the implications of the grant for West Sussex.

### **3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)**

3.1 As Cabinet as asked to give a view to Council on how to deal with this motion, this implication and those as laid out below are not applicable as no decision is being taken.

### **4 Consultation, engagement and advice**

4.1 Not applicable.

### **5 Finance**

5.1 Not applicable.

### **6 Risk implications and mitigations**

6.1 Not applicable.

### **7 Policy alignment and compliance**

7.1 Not applicable.

Tony Kershaw

**Director of Law and Assurance**

**Contact Officer:** Natalie Jones-Punch, Democratic Services Officer, 033 022 25098, [natalie.jones-punch@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:natalie.jones-punch@westsussex.gov.uk)

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Briefing note – Provision of Free School Meals in School Holidays

### **Background papers**

None

## **County Council – 6 November 2020**

### **Item 9(g) - Notice of Motion by Cllr Michael Jones**

#### **Provision of Free School Meals in School Holidays – Briefing Note**

##### **Background and Overview**

At the January 2020 schools census, there were 11,469 free school meal eligible children in West Sussex who qualify for free school meals (FSM), around 10% of the total school roll. Whilst we are awaiting the Department for Education to verify the October 2020 schools census, we do know that we have processed around 6,000 FSM applications since January, with approximately an additional 3,500 children qualifying for FSM. It is therefore likely that the FSM number in West Sussex is currently around 15,000.

As well as COVID-19, a contributing factor to the rise of FSM eligibility is that, since 2018 we are no longer allowed to check FSM eligible children for on-going eligibility under the Government's Universal Credit Transitional Protection scheme. Councils used to check every three months for eligibility. Therefore currently we are adding FSM eligible children to the FSM roll but not taking any away. Pupils cannot be removed from FSM when their circumstances change until the end of their current phase of Education after 31 March 2022.

School meals are provided for 190 term time days and are not provided during school holiday periods. During the Easter and May school breaks, the Government provided supermarket food vouchers at a value of £15 per week during the school holiday periods. Although initially deciding not to extend this through the summer holiday period, the Government altered its position and food vouchers were provided through the Government's own voucher system organised by Edenred over the six-week summer school holidays.

Schools are currently funded for schools meals during term time through their school budget, which is calculated through an agreed formula as part of the Dedicated Schools Grant. FSM funding is included within the additional needs section within the formula and, for 2020/21, is calculated at £540 per eligible pupil. The data set used to calculate the percentage of pupils eligible for FSM is based on parents' receipt of specified benefits, and this information was taken from the October 2019 schools census.

The funding for universal infant free school meals for pupils in reception year, year 1 and year 2 is not included as part of the school budget but is funded through a separate grant.

##### **Support via the Community Hub**

The Community Hub, which was set up in March 2020 to give practical support and assistance to anyone adversely affected by COVID-19, has provided access to food and essential household supplies since its launch as well as information, advice and guidance.

The Community Hub telephone lines are open from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week supported by the County Council's [Community Hub website](#) and a series of e-forms to provide digital access.

The Community hub can be contacted directly by residents, their friends or families or via a referral from an agency such as borough and district councils or Citizens Advice where they have identified a support requirement, including the provision of food/household essentials.

Staff are trained to ask the right questions in order to assess the needs of the resident or caller. Incoming calls will be triaged to assess the level of need and an order for a food delivery placed with the relevant supply organisation as appropriate.

The Community Hub has received over 54,000 inbound calls and online support request forms, undertaken over 37,000 outbound calls and delivered in excess of 3,000 food parcels across the county. The food and support provided has reached across all the communities of West Sussex and ensured that support needed has been, and will continue to be, provided to anyone in need.

Prior to receiving the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' hardship grant the County Council had spent £140,000 on providing essential food and supplies to support vulnerable people. Since receiving the grant of £737,319 a further £383,000 has been spent on essential food and supplies £160,000 has been provided to Citizens Advice and local food networks to ensure access to essential supplies and food is available locally.

### **October Half Term Demand**

Children and families who needed support over the school holidays were reminded to contact the Community Hub set up to provide help during the COVID pandemic. Contact volumes into the Community Hub were very low during the October half term period. Two contacts were received in respect of FSM, one seeking information and the other requesting non urgent food support, which was provided.

### **Paul Wagstaff**

Director of Education and Skills

### **Emily King**

Director of Community Services