

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

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Alfriston War Memorial Hall

Old School House

The Tye, Alfriston

East Sussex, BN26 5TL

Monday 28th April 2025

Draft

Minutes of The Annual Parish Assembly held in Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 14th April 2025 at 7.15pm.

Present: Cllr Diana Monteath-Wilson, Cllr Jen Watkins, Cllr Sylvia Daw, Cllr Rebecca Embry, Cllr Adrian Harris, Cllr Jon Spring.

Apologies: Cllr Neil Parkinson, Cllr David Greaves (WDC)

In Attendance:

Mrs Suzanna Dry – Clerk & RFO

Approximately 24 members of the public in attendance.

1. Welcome by the Chair, Cllr Diana Monteath-Wilson

Cllr Monteath-Wilson welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked them for attending the Annual Parish Assembly and pointed out that refreshments were available.

2. Minutes from the Annual Parish Assembly held on 22nd April 2024 and Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

3. Report from James MacCleary MP

James MacCleary was unable to attend the meeting and sent his apologies. The Clerk read out a summary of James MacCleary's report, which is attached as [Appendix A](#).

4. Report from Cllr Stephen Shing – East Sussex County Council

Cllr Shing presented his report to the meeting, a copy is attached to the minutes. [Appendix B.](#)

5. Report from Cllr David Greaves - Wealden District Council

Cllr Greaves was unable to attend the meeting, a summary of his report was read out and the full report is attached as [Appendix C.](#)

5.1 Report from WDC on Parking Regulations.

Wealden District Council's Director of Governance & Corporate Services sent a report on parking issues faced by Wealden residents. Copy of report attached. [Appendix D.](#)

WDC have no authority to enforce parking regulations. Parking in Wealden has not been decriminalised and therefore enforcement remains with the police. ESCC is the authority that would be responsible for decriminalising parking controls, however as ESCC is looking to change to a Unitary Authority it is unlikely any decisions will be taken until the Unitary Authority is set up.

6. Presentation from Sussex Police Neighbourhood Policing Team – Opportunity to discuss illegal parking.

PCSO's Sue & Leon took a Q&A session from the floor:

There are 3 teams of 6 PCSO's to cover the whole of the Wealden area. Alfriston will shortly be allocated a designated PCSO who will liaise with the Parish Council. There always used to be a dedicated PCSO but due to government cutbacks the PCSO service was severely cut back. New PCSO's have now been recruited.

PCSO's will attend reports of dangerously parked vehicles or vehicles blocking access for emergency services, but it may take some time to attend due to the whereabouts of PCSO's in Wealden.

Residents affected by parking issues should report them to Operation Crackdown on www.operationcrackdown.org or call 101. Residents need to report incidents so that they get logged and can be flagged up. At the moment there are no parking issues logged on the system for Alfriston. The PCSO's reiterated the importance of residents reporting incidents to Operation Crackdown or 101, so that a true picture of the situation is recorded. Then our allocated PCSO can pick this up.

7. Presentation from Cityfibre re Forthcoming work in the village

Adrian Smith and Tom Foy from Cityfibre gave a slide presentation to the meeting on the upcoming works Cityfibre are due to carry out in Alfriston. This is part of 'Project Gigabit' which is being funded by the Government to provide access to fast broadband in hard to reach areas in the UK. Cityfibre will use existing infrastructure where possible, although there will be some digging and temporary traffic lights \ road closures. Once installed Cityfibre hand over to individual companies to provide the broadband i.e.

Sky, Lightening Fibre etc. Cityfibre will remain in contact with APC and are happy to hold another presentation once works start. Works are due to start October at the earliest. Residents can go to www.cityfibre.com to see where they are providing broadband.

The presenters then answered Q&A's:

Road Closures – these will be organised by ESCC Highways.

Grass Verges – those that have been dug up will be repaired in batches.

Victorian Paviers – Cityfibre are liaising with ESCC about preserving these. Plan to dig in the road as opposed to pavements.

Shops\residences with Cellars - please do contact Cityfibre direct with details.

Telegraph Poles – will not be removed, as these will be used as part of the existing infrastructure.

Other Providers digging up road again - there is no guarantee this won't happen, but the government are funding this project as otherwise it would not be economically viable therefore unlikely another provider would take on the cost of the project.

New ducts will be installed in the High Street – these will be open access ducts i.e. any other provider can access these and therefore no need to dig new ones.

Complaints - any complaints about Cityfibre work should be sent to ESCC Highways Dept.

8. Public Questions

There were no further questions from the public.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and advised refreshments were available.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Appendices are either attached or can be found on the website

[Appendix A - Report from James MacCleary MP](#)

At long last the sun has ventured out as our county emerges from winter! Whilst the weather gives us reason to feel optimistic, it remains a deeply concerning time. The Chancellor's disastrous tax changes are taking effect as I write, and the world is starting to feel the impact of President Trump torpedoing the global economy.

Early Education and Childcare

As Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Early Education and Childcare, I was delighted to convene MPs from across the political spectrum last week for an important session on the future of childcare. We heard from the National Day Nurseries Association, leading experts and providers, discussing how to better support nurseries and early years settings across the country. It's more important than ever that we investigate how to support these services, as the increase in national insurance contributions puts more pressure than ever on small community childcare services.

One of the best parts about being the local MP, has been visiting all our fantastic local schools, in the last month going to Firle Primary, Harbour Primary in Newhaven and Western Road Primary in Lewes. Our teachers do a fantastic job in challenging circumstances at times. At Western Road, I joined parents campaigning against cuts to staffing. I'm pleased to say that these cuts have been avoided - for now. At every visit topics like SEN provision are discussed and I will continue to challenge the government to do better and support our schools to ensure children receive the education they deserve.

2. The Spring Statement

The Spring Statement showed that, while the Government inherited a dire economic situation from the Conservatives, it is now making things worse. The Chancellor says she has "no choice" – but slashing support for the poorest instead of ensuring multinational companies pay their taxes or securing a deal with the EU to boost economic growth *is* a choice. I spoke to ITV about my concerns after the statement.

With the NIC's rise coming into effect this month, every business, school, charity, care home, doctors' surgery... that I have met, is telling me that this is a disastrous policy. It was of no shock to learn that the estimated hit to people's wages locally will be of £2810 by the end of the decade as the jobs tax gets passed down to employees. I spoke about this recently in the chamber.

3. Rail Travel and Gatwick Concerns

Last week I took formal action on two key transport issues affecting our area. Following my Early Day Motion on the increased cost of rail fares, I wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport to raise my concerns and to press for measures to ensure rail travel remains affordable – particularly for young people, older passengers, and those on lower incomes.

I've also written to the Department regarding Gatwick Airport's proposed expansion, seeking clarity on how this will impact rail services in the South East as our routes into London are already heavily congested. I've requested assurances that steps will be taken to prevent disruption for passengers and protect our local rail infrastructure.

My team has also been working with Govia Thameslink seeking to restore a London Bridge train to the timetable as well as other changes such as improving late night journeys in the week.

Foreign Affairs and Europe

I recently contributed to a debate in the House on the UK's relationship with the European Union. I used the opportunity to set out the benefits of closer cooperation and the need for a more constructive, forward-looking approach especially now that we cannot rely on our American counterparts on trade.

I also spoke during an urgent statement in the Commons on the deteriorating situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, am keeping a keen eye on the democratic crisis in Georgia and Israel's war in Palestine.

Politics South East

I was invited on to BBC Politics South East last week, which was broadcast on Sunday. We discussed a range of topics from potholes to home education. I know that numerous parents around the constituency are extremely concerned by the government's plans for home education and potholes is an area that we all know too well.

Meeting with National Highways

I recently met with the National Highways Agency to discuss a range of topics, including litter on the A26 and A27. The issue of littering on these roads continues to blight our countryside and puts us to shame. Lewes District Council are unable to clear rubbish as it requires a road closure for them to do so safely, which would not be feasible given the importance of the route. They have agreed to proactively communicate with LDC any dates where they will be doing work or expecting any closures so that rubbish can be cleared at the same time, avoiding extra closures. We also discussed their plan to replace and repair bollards and signage on the A26 between Beddingham and Newhaven. I will be pressing them for a clear timetable on this.

Broadband and Fibre Optic rollout

High speed internet access is essential for many local businesses and residents in rural areas in the 21st Century, which is why I am appalled at the slow roll out across our patch of Sussex. I have written to Department for Innovation Science and Technology as well as Building Digital UK to seek reassurances that our villages will not be left behind when it comes to high speed internet.

[Appendix B - Report from Cllr David Greaves WDC](#)

Report –Alfriston PC - Monday 14th April 2025

1) Plan submitted for proposed local government re-org in E.Sussex

(Information as at 25th March'25) An Interim Plan for the proposed shake up of local government has been submitted on behalf of all the councils in East Sussex. The government wants unitary councils to replace two-tier government in areas which have both county and borough or district councils.

The Interim Plan drawn up by the six local authorities in East Sussex – East Sussex County Eastbourne Borough, Hastings Borough, Rother District, Lewes District and Wealden District councils - suggests a single unitary authority as a leading option but it makes clear council leaders remain open to presenting alternatives if the government changes its criteria, and if evidence and strong public support suggest other options.

If created, a new authority or authorities would replace ESCC and the five boroughs and districts in 2028. A consultation on the Interim Plan will be held for residents across East Sussex over the coming months.

All six councils have agreed the extra work to develop a new local government structure in East Sussex should be funded by the government as it cannot be met from existing council resources.

In a letter to the government minister Jim McMahon, the Wealden council leader said that all six council leaders have worked collaboratively to deliver an Interim Plan as requested and that government criteria limits the option to mean there is only one option – a single unitary authority for East Sussex.

Final detailed proposals for unitary government in East Sussex will be submitted to the government in September. Further information in the full report.

2) Wealden District Council launches WhatsApp channel

A WhatsApp Channel has been launched by Wealden District Council offering those who live, work, study or visit the district another convenient way to find out what's going on in the local area.

With WhatsApp being one of the world's most popular messaging platforms globally, residents can now receive updates about the latest news, events and services in their communities, directly on their smartphones.

WhatsApp channels offer users a secure and private way to follow what matters to them, subscribing for free to news from their favourite

organisations. The launch is part of ongoing efforts to improve the delivery of services to residents and create more meaningful, and efficient engagement with communities. Followers can set notifications to read messages in real time, and if they choose, respond with a simple emoji or vote in a poll.

Channel followers are also easily able to share WhatsApp channel posts to individual contacts and WhatsApp groups to help keep their friends, families and local communities informed. Don't forget to press the bell icon to be notified when a post goes out.

The WhatsApp channel admins and followers don't have access to information about individuals such as names, profile photos or numbers. The new WhatsApp Channel offers no change to getting in touch or sharing your views with the council.

Scan the QR code(in the full report) to head to the page.

3) One You East Sussex roadshow returns to Wealden

Wealden District Council is supporting 'One You East Sussex' to bring free NHS Health Checks back to towns across Wealden.

One You East Sussex provides a free holistic lifestyle service for residents of East Sussex, helping people make simple changes that can lead to a longer, healthier, and happier life. The service helps residents to lose weight, be smoke free, move more, eat well and drink less. The service also delivers NHS health checks.

COLIN, the service's mobile health check van, and practitioner team will be offering NHS health checks to residents who qualify. The dates, locations and eligibility criteria are below.

Residents are encouraged to book their NHS health check in advance as spaces may not be available on the day.

Dates and locations

- Wednesday 30 April – Heathfield, Station Road East car park
- Friday 2 May – Crowborough, Croft Road car park
- Wednesday 7 May – Uckfield, Luxford Field car park
- Friday 9 May – Hailsham, Vicarage Lane car park
- Wednesday 14 May – Crowborough, Croft Road car park
- Friday 16 May – Heathfield, Station Road East car park
- Wednesday 4 June – Hailsham, Vicarage Lane car park
- Friday 6 June – Uckfield, Luxford Field car park
- Wednesday 11 June – Heathfield, Station Road East car park

Residents wanting to book an NHS health check must meet the following criteria:

- Be aged between 40-74.

- Are not currently prescribed blood pressure or cholesterol medications.
- Do not suffer from diabetes OR heart/circulatory/kidney conditions or previously suffered from any cardiovascular events.
- Be an East Sussex resident.
- Have not previously had an NHS health check in the last five years.
-

If residents are unable to attend any of these dates, One You East Sussex will be returning in September and October. Further information including dates and how to book will be provided in the summer.

**East Sussex County Councillor
Report to Alfriston Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting 2025**



I would like to thank the Parish Council for inviting me to provide a County Report for the 2025 Annual Parish Council Meeting. I also extend my gratitude to residents who have contacted me with their concerns, and to our Parish Council Clerk for maintaining a strong and constructive working relationship.

Since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, the environment and priorities of the County Council have continued to evolve. Although the peak of the COVID-19 crisis is now several years behind us, many residents are still dealing with its long-term effects.

This has contributed to increased demand for the County Council's adult social care services. Issues such as parking, overgrown vegetation, potholes, traffic congestion, and flooding remain among the most frequent concerns raised by residents, and I receive messages about them on a daily basis.

I remain committed to addressing these concerns as part of my ongoing work in the community. This includes supporting local schools, improving road surfacing, kerbing, footways, and repairing potholes. Key infrastructure and traffic management projects currently underway include work in Alfriston, improvements to the Exceat Bridge, the Hailsham–Polegate–Eastbourne Movement and Access Corridor, the Dittons Road Roundabout, and upgrades along the A2270/A22 Eastbourne Road.

Here are some highlights

EXCEAT BRIDGE – CABINET DECISION

As I reported to you last month, The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport together with a verbal update. Who recommended that Cabinet defer the decision regarding Exceat Bridge so that new potential opportunities can be explored.

Defer consideration of this item in light of the developments and Ask officers to look into the issues and potential solution that has been raised and bring a report back to Cabinet. Since the publication of the report, one of the principal bus operators in East Sussex has indicated that Exceat Bridge is a higher priority for them than some of the proposals within the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). It is therefore possible to explore the opportunity to use some BSIP funding for the original Exceat Bridge replacement scheme, subject to further discussions and agreement from the Department for Transport. The Exceat Bridge on the A259, a vital route between Eastbourne and Brighton, is due for replacement due to structural issues and increasing traffic demand.

Here is the update from Cabinet report for next Tuesday. Originally budgeted at £10.6 million, the cost of the preferred option—a new offline two-lane bridge—has risen to £21.8 million. The bridge funding gap, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) secured approval to reallocate £11.128 million from existing Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funds, diverting them from projects in New Haven and Peace

Improvement Plan (BSIP) funds, diverting them from projects in New Haven and Peace Haven.

The two-lane bridge (Option A) offers major benefits including improved traffic flow, bus reliability, pedestrian access, and reduced congestion. Unlike alternative options, it requires minimal road closures (approx. 19 non-continuous days) and meets long-term transportation goals.

With the current international and national economic situation, I am very much doubted that the bridge will be build within the proposed budget of £22, which more than the Beddingham Flyover.

THE SUSSEX AND BRIGHTON DEVOLUTION CONSULTATION

Since the government's announcement on 5 February 2025, a major package of devolution has been introduced, with six new areas confirmed to join the government's Devolution Priority Programme. These areas are Cumbria, Cheshire & Warrington, Norfolk & Suffolk, Greater Essex, Sussex & Brighton, and Hampshire & Solent.

This represents one of the largest single packages of mayoral devolution in England.

The Sussex and Brighton Devolution Consultation is now open, and you can submit your views on the government's website until 13 April 2025.

This consultation seeks public feedback on a proposal to establish a Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas of East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, and Brighton & Hove City Council (referred to as Sussex and Brighton in this consultation).

Local council leaders from these three councils have formally expressed their interest in advancing devolution within their area through the creation of a Mayoral Combined County Authority, with the first mayoral election scheduled for May 2026.

Before making a final decision on the necessary legislation, the government is seeking views from interested parties, including residents and workers in the area.

On 20 March 2025, the East Sussex County Council Cabinet and an Extraordinary Full Council meeting will convene to approve the proposed joint submission for the establishment of a single unitary council in East Sussex, as requested by the government.

The interim plan is a high-level, indicative document. It does not represent a formal gateway or decision point for either the council or the government within the broader Local Government Reorganisation and English Devolution process. The plan aims to present a unified submission from all relevant councils. East Sussex councils have already collaborated to shape this proposal through the East Sussex Council Leaders' Group. The submission of the interim plan is scheduled for 21 March 2025.

COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET AMENDMENT

At the County Council meeting, an amendment was proposed by Councillors Tutt and Stephen Shing to revise the Cabinet's report by deleting paragraph 1.81 and replacing it with the following:

1. Approve, in principle, the draft Council Plan for 2025/26 (Appendix 1) and authorise the Chief Executive to finalise the plan in consultation with the relevant Lead Members.
2. Approve the net Revenue Budget estimates totalling £579.6 million for 2025/26, as outlined in Appendix 2 (Medium Term Financial Plan) and Appendix 3 (Budget Summary), and authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, Leader, and Deputy Leader, to make adjustments to the budget summary to reflect the final settlement and budget decisions, with the following amendments:

Proposed Reinstatement of Savings for Key Services

Older People Directly Provided Services: Milton Grange – £521,000 and Phoenix Centre – £191,000, Learning Disability Directly Provided Services: Linden Court – £327,000 and Hookstead – £124,000 and Adults with Mental Health Needs Supported Accommodation Services – £356,000. Total proposed revenue amendments: £1,519,000.

Proposed Funding Source, to use of available reserves arising from the deferral of the May 2025 County Council elections – £1,519,000.

Unfortunately, the amendments were rejected by just three votes, a disappointing outcome for those advocating for the protection of these essential services.

Key Changes in the Revised Proposal

- Day services at Hookstead (Crowborough) and Milton Grange (Eastbourne) would continue, but with reduced capacity and operating hours.
- Day services at Linden Court would stop, but a satellite service in Eastbourne would operate two days a week.
- The Phoenix Centre (Lewes) would close. If Cabinet agrees to continue day services at Milton Grange, individuals previously attending Phoenix Centre could be offered alternative services there or at other locations.
- Funding for on-site support services for adults with mental health needs in supported accommodation and adults at risk of homelessness would be withdrawn, but funding would be extended until December 31, 2025 to allow for transition.
- A new service—nearly identical to the Milton Grange Mental Health Community Outreach service—would be developed, delivered through the Council's Joint Community Regalement Service and Milton Grange Mental Health Intermediate Care beds.
- Four "Steps to Work" job coaches would be retained, working within Adult Social Care and Health's Learning Disability Directly Provided Services (LDDPS) day services.
- A new community outreach program would be introduced for people with learning disabilities who currently use the Community Support Service

- Drug and alcohol recovery services would be restructured and reduced, assuming additional external funding becomes available as expected.
Concerns Over Impact on Vulnerable Residents
Despite these revisions, these decisions will leave thousands of vulnerable residents without essential care and daytime services.
The Council could have accepted our amendment to use £1,519,000 in available reserves, arising from the deferral of the May 2025 County Council elections, to continue funding these critical services until the transition to a new unitary authority.

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING SITES CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Between 18 October and 22 December 2024, East Sussex County Council conducted a consultation on the proposal to introduce a booking system for Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRSs). The consultation received 5,992 responses—the highest number to date for a consultation run by the Council's Communities, Environment, and Transport department. Additionally, 78 representations were submitted via a dedicated email inbox, and 9 individuals wrote directly to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment or the Leader of the Council.

The consultation results show that 72.63% of respondents strongly opposed and 18.61% opposed the introduction of a booking system for HWRSs, totalling 91.24% against the proposal. It is very disappointing that the County Council still approved it, disregarding public opinion. This process seems to have been a waste of time and money.

MAJOR ROAD NETWORK (A22) – ACTIVE TRAVEL MEASURES CONSULTATION OUTCOME

The Lead Member for Transport and Environment approved the recommendations in the report on the outcomes of the recent consultation regarding the proposed A22 Major Road Network (MRN) Active Travel Measures. The report outlines each scheme within the sustainable transport measures package and recommends the next steps before incorporating these measures into the A22 MRN Package full business case for submission to the Government.

Polegate High Street to Stone Cross village centre walking and cycling improvements is part of the scheme.

Polegate, the Town Council raised concerns about losing bulb planting between segregated footways and cycle routes on Station Road. Originally, removing the planted area for a shared use facility was proposed for consistency. Following consideration of feedback, it is proposed to retain the segregated layout and existing bulbs and not progress the shared use facility.

budget to undertake minimal investment if ESCC wishes to remain at County Hall until 2032.

Premises occupancy figures for County Hall has been low in recent years. In 2019, its average occupancy level was 45%. Since the lockdown, County Hall is not well occupied compared to other offices and for 2023, the occupancy level decreased to 22% and in 2024, occupancy levels peaked to 29% in March. Through the week, occupancy levels are lowest on Mondays and Fridays at County Hall.

As the utilisation of the offices is below optimal levels, some initial work has been undertaken to look at the future space requirements, reflecting the civic accommodation, administration base and frontline service delivery. The suggested space requirements could equate to 3,500 sqm which is significantly lower than circa 15,000 sqm of the current County Hall.

ESCC owns the freehold but there are business rates, reactive maintenance, utility bills, insurance and other costs which are required to operate the facility. These costs equate to approximately £1 million per annum, and this does not include the staffing costs for Facilities Management staff who manage the building. If a new, more efficient building was considered, the estimated property running costs would be lower. As energy prices have increased over the last couple of years, the energy efficiency of the heating system is poor despite some windows being replaced and Solar PV panels being installed on the roof in two tranches.

As part of an asset value review, work has been undertaken to look at the opportunities to reduce property costs and free up assets for disposal to secure a capital receipt. The work undertaken by ICC is to consider if a new County Hall could be provided and partly funded by disposal of surplus land. The constraints of the actual site impact on the potential capital receipt, meaning that the cost of a new (or redeveloped) County Hall would be in excess of the capital receipt secured from the remaining of the site for residential development.

The following options were considered- Option 1 – Remain at County Hall.

Option 2 – Retain the County Hall structure but refurbish some of the existing space for a new office/civic accommodation with residential conversion for the remaining blocks and redevelop the remaining site for residential homes over the wider campus. Option 3 – Retain the County Hall structure but completely refurbish all of the accommodation for residential homes. A new County Hall would be located on the campus site and the remaining space would be redeveloped for housing development. Option 4 – Demolish County Hall structure and provide a new County Hall on the site with the remainder of the site being redeveloped for housing. Option 5 – Relocate to office accommodation in the Lewes area, if available, and redevelop all of County Hall campus, including primarily residential development. Option 6 – At a future date (circa 2030-32), relocate County Hall services and civic accommodation to Sackville House, owned by the Council, and then redevelop the whole County Hall campus site. Sackville House is currently let out to a number of tenants where the majority of leases end around 2030-32.

This topic will have been debated further at ESCC's Place Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 23rd September 2024.

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND 2025-26

East Sussex County Council has approved the extension of the Household Support Fund for 2025-26, as outlined below.

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health and the Director of Children's Services have been delegated the authority to implement the scheme, including making detailed allocation decisions. The final allocation for the delivery partner element is expected to be £3,217,555.

Families with children eligible for Free School Meals will continue to receive food vouchers during school holidays, helping to ease financial strain.

The distribution of Huggo vouchers will follow the same structure as in previous years, with allocations as follows:

- Spring holiday – 2 weeks at £15 per week per eligible family
- May half-term – 1 week at £15 per eligible family
- Summer holiday – £60 per eligible family
- October half-term – 1 week at £15 per eligible family
- Christmas holiday – £50 for the two-week period per eligible family
- February half-term – 1 week at £15 per eligible family

Overall, this proposal ensures that residents most in need continue to receive essential financial support in an efficient and effective manner.

COUNTY HALL SITE

County Hall which is East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) headquarters in Lewes was constructed in 1968 and its status is now being reviewed. Despite ongoing investment during the last 50 years, the investment needed to maintain business as usual within this premises for the next 10 years has been calculated to cost around £8.4 million.

The scale of investment could be reduced in the short term, but electrical systems, lifts and its water drainage systems now require extensive maintenance which could impact on the operational running of the building if not undertaken. At present, the ESCC's Capital Programme includes a non-schools planned maintenance budget for 2024/25 which it is fully committed to, but going forward some dedicated funds could be set aside within this

FOSTERING

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is encouraging and campaigning for more people to consider fostering. This was highlighted during the Full Council meeting on 6 February. The East Sussex Fostering Service is solely dedicated to supporting local children and young people who need their help and support.

As the local authority, ESCC are responsible for finding and matching a fostering placement for every single child in East Sussex who needs care, from newborn babies to teenagers.

The council always matches children's placements with its own foster carers first as this ensures better outcomes for the children, young people, and the foster carers. Sadly there are always children in need of care, and the council urges any residents who may have thought about fostering to contact the council direct to find out more about their in-house fostering service.

Support and advice is available to ESCC foster carers, day or night and every foster carer has a dedicated social worker who is locally based in East Sussex.

In addition, a 24-hour telephone helpline is available, seven days a week.

For more information on fostering with ESCC and to view the film: 'Any of Us', visit: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/children-families/children-in-care/fostering/become-foster-carer

LAUNCH OF EAST SUSSEX LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4 (LTP4)

County highways should already informed your parish council about current public consultation the draft East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), which began 27 November 2023. I invite you to contribute your views to this important statutory document that outlines the transport policy and strategy framework for the area.

The LTP4 Strategy, Implementation Plan, and supporting documents are available on the County Council's consultation hub <http://eastsussex.gov.uk/DraftLTP4> from November 27 November 2023, to 25 February 2024.

Thank you.

Appendix D - Report from WDC Director of Governance & Corporate Services

Wealden District Council is aware of various parking issues affecting residents across the district and continues to discuss each issue with the local ward members.

As a district council, Wealden has no authority to enforce parking regulations. The current position is that car parking within the Wealden district area has not been decriminalised. At present the enforcement for on street parking sits with the police and we understand that the police will take enforcement action in situations where parking is dangerous.

The issue of decriminalisation of car parking is a complex one - however ESCC is the authority which is ultimately responsible for decriminalising parking controls not Wealden District Council. The Alliance is open to working with ESCC and our communities to ensure that any approach taken is the right one, not just for the council, but critically for our residents and communities.

Following confirmation from the Government that East Sussex is in the priority programme for devolution and local government reorganisation, the focus for Wealden is to continue to work closely with our partners, including ESCC, to achieve the best outcomes for our residents as a whole.

On the issue of decriminalisation, it is important to note that once parking controls are decriminalised in an administrative area, it must apply to the whole area. It therefore follows that once these powers are vested on the new unitary authority, they will apply to the whole area, including where there is currently no decriminalisation.

Regards,

Kristina

Kristina Shaw-Hamilton | Director of Governance and Corporate Services | Wealden District Council