

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date and Time - **Monday 14 March 2022 – 6:30pm**

Venue - **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea**

Councillors appointed to the Committee:

P.N. Osborne (Chairman), Mrs V. Cook (Vice-Chairman), J. Barnes, J.J. Carroll, C.A. Clark, S.J. Coleman, B.J. Drayson (ex-officio), Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams, S.J. Errington, P.J. Gray, C.A. Madeley, C.R. Maynard and M. Mooney.

Substitute Members: L.M. Langlands, G.F. Stevens and R.B. Thomas.

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 January 2022 as a correct record of proceedings.

2. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES

The Chairman to ask if any Member present is substituting for another Member and, if so, to declare his/her name as substitute Member and the name of the absent Member.

3. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

To consider such other items as the Chairman decides are urgent and due notice of which has been given to the Head of Paid Service by 12 Noon on the day of the meeting.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

To receive any disclosure by Members of personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the personal interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct. Members are reminded of the need to repeat their declaration immediately prior to the commencement of the item in question.

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**Rother District Council's aspiring to deliver
an Efficient, Flexible and Effective Council; Sustainable Economic Prosperity;
Stronger, Safer Communities; and a Quality Physical Environment.**

5. **ROTHER COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP** (Pages 1 - 24)
6. **PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2021/22**
(Pages 25 - 40)
7. **REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING
QUARTER 3 - 2021/22** (Pages 41 - 48)
8. **DRAFT ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY** (Pages 49 - 74)
9. **WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 75 - 76)

Malcolm Johnston
Chief Executive

Agenda Despatch Date: 4 March 2022

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**Rother District Council's aspiring to deliver
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Rother District Council

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 14 March 2022

Title: Rother Community Safety Partnership

Report of: Head of Service Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety - Richard Parker-Harding

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To provide an annual report on the work of the Safer Rother Partnership to address issues of Anti-Social Behaviour, crime and Community Safety across Rother

Officer

Recommendation(s): It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee make any recommendations arising from the report to the Chair of the Safer Rother Partnership for consideration;
 - 2) the Council's work in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour, crime reduction and Community Safety be noted; and
 - 3) the possible impact of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 be noted.
-

Introduction

1. The purpose of this annual statutory report is to provide information on the work of the Rother Community Safety Partnership [known as the Safer Rother Partnership (SRP)]. The Committee is required to review, scrutinise and make reports or recommendations to the responsible authorities of the SRP in-line with the Council's responsibilities, under sections 19-21 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.
2. The report also includes information about the Council's own responsibilities and actions with regard to community safety and anti-social behaviour (ASB).
3. The Community Safety Partnership's responsible authorities are; Rother District Council (RDC), Sussex Police, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, East Sussex County Council (ESCC), Probation Service and Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group.
4. Councillor Brian Drayson is the Council's nominated representative, Chair of the SRP, Co-Chair of the Joint Community Safety Partnership Board with Hastings and the Council's representative on the Board of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Performance of the Safer Rother Partnership 2021/22

5. During 2021/2022, the Safer Hastings and Rother Partnership Board were the same as in 2020/21. The joint partnership agreed to continue with these priorities as COVID-19 had taken a considerable amount of resources from key agencies and partners and the Board wished to refocus on its priorities in 2021/22.
 - a) Street and community related anti-social behaviour – these issues impact on the quality of life of residents across Rother’s rural and urban areas. All Medium and High Risk victims continue to be supported through the multi-agency Hate ASB Risk Assessment Conference (HASBRAC) process. This delivers an efficient and effective way for partner agencies to reduce the risk to victims and the community.
 - b) Violent Crime (especially Domestic Abuse) – violence, either in public or at home is unacceptable. The Safer Hastings and Rother Partnership has a joint specific Domestic Abuse Group which delivers the White Ribbon Campaign each year, a range of initiatives and strategic oversight of issues in Rother. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 brings changes to the definition, law and responsibilities of agencies including the Council (see summary in Appendix A). The Act also makes provision for further measures for perpetrators. There is also a pan East Sussex Violence reduction Partnership which the Council is represented on.
 - c) Youth Crime and vulnerable young people – by working in partnership to reduce the occurrence and impact of young people involved in crime and ASB and as victims. This has included partnership work to address behaviour and support young people involved in and victims of Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation and violence reduction.
 - d) Road Safety - the Safer Hastings & Rother Roads Partnership (SHARRP) group, delivers a range of campaigns and actions needed to reduce injury and make road use safer. In addition, SHARRP delivers a multi-agency communications strategy which ties in with that of the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership and national campaigns.
 - e) Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking – this hidden issue can be found in a variety of circumstances from caring and domestic services, farming, hand car washes to nail bars and take-aways and also the trafficking of UK residents across the country. The Council also works as part of Project Discovery with police, immigration and a wide range of other agencies to identify and disrupt modern slavery activities and deliver the Council’s legal requirements under Modern Slavery Legislation. The Council has identified Council officers who lead on Modern slavery cases and is also represented on the Sussex anti-Slavery Group.
6. The joint Board meets quarterly to identify changes in crime and ASB of strategic significance to both areas, wider trends and review the work delivered against these priorities. The Board is co-chaired by Councillor Brian Drayson and his Hasting Borough Council counterpart.
7. The **Rother Joint Action Group** (JAG) (an officer operational group) meets monthly to oversee the delivery of the local priorities for Rother, which in 2020/21 were:
 - **ASB and Youth Crime** - by working in partnership to reduce the occurrence and impact of young people involved in crime and ASB and as victims.

- **Rural Crime** - including specific types of crime e.g. theft of farm and large plant machinery and cross border crime.
 - **Drug Related Harm including drug supply** - (both local and county lines) and the impact on the local community, including partnership work with drug treatment and support agencies and cuckooing.
 - **Acquisitive crime within retail** - which was stalled because of the closure of businesses under the COVID-19 restrictions and the associated reductions in this type of crime (20.4% reduction in business crime and a 25.4% reduction in theft from a shop with the largest reduction in March 2021 of 54.6% on the previous year).
 - The Rother JAG also supports and delivers work to address issues that come about through the work of partnership agencies and are priorities e.g. Operation Radcott (Camber), Herbrand Walk, Serious and Organised Crime, Safeguarding, Multiple and Complex Needs, Fly Tipping, Fire setting.
8. Certain areas of work are covered under 'business as usual' but remain priorities e.g. there are joint partnership meetings which Council officers facilitate, organise and participate in to deliver work on:
- Domestic Abuse including the White Ribbon Campaign
 - Road Safety
 - Modern Slavery – Discovery
 - High and Medium Risk Anti-Social Behaviour and all Hate crime
 - Cuckooing
9. There has also been a push to discuss Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) because of national issues, campaigns and work to look at specific issues across Sussex. This work is still being developed at a pan Sussex and local level.

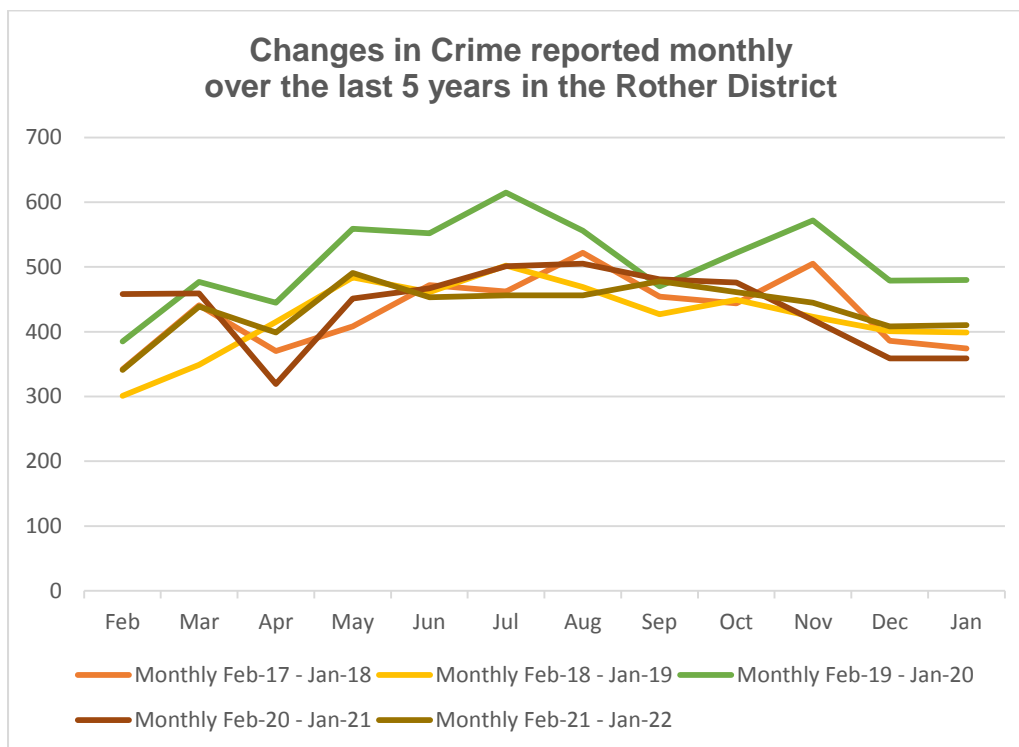
Crimes Reported

10. There were 5,237 crimes in Rother reported to Sussex Police during the 12 months to the end of January 2022, which is 12 fewer than in the previous year.

| TOTAL CRIME ACROSS EAST SUSSEX | % Increase or decrease |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Eastbourne | 2.7 |
| Hastings | 9.8 |
| Lewes | 5.2 |
| Rother | 0.2 |
| Wealden | 0.6 |
| East Sussex | 4.1 |
| Force | 5.2 |

The Rother crime data reported to Sussex Police during 2021 saw the highest percentage reductions on the previous year in March 2021 with a 17.1% reduction 1,058 fewer reports. This mirrors the pattern of reports in Wealden, albeit a month later in Rother. Hastings has seen percentage increases in November, December 2021 and January 2022, East Sussex and the Force (Sussex wide) have only seen increases in December 2021 and January 2022.

11. Over the last five years, we have seen changes to the levels of total crime reported to Sussex Police. As a result of the impact of COVID-19, we need to look at crime patterns over the last five years. The chart shows monthly crime reports for the five years from the beginning of February 2017 to end of January 2022. The highest levels of crime were reported in 2019 followed by 2021 and 2018 and then 2020. Total crime reports in 2021/22 mirror the pattern of those in other years.



12. Most crime types have seen decreases in the 12 months to the end of January 2022 compared to the previous 12 months. However, the following have seen increases of note:

- Theft from a vehicle (only started to increase in December 2021) an additional 28 reports to 165.
- Racially aggravated crime – numbers are small, however an increase of seven making 53 reports in a year. However, there were higher increases in February, March and April with a 72% increase in March. The figures have been dropping since then.
- Domestic Abuse reports classified as crimes have increased by 60 cases to 999 (6.4% rise), whereas reports of incidents not classified as crimes have reduced. Agencies providing services and support to victims of domestic abuse report increases in cases of coercion and control and end of relationship violence and suicide. Higher risk cases are discussed at the Hastings and Rother Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) who have seen a significant increase in the number of Rother cases in the latest three quarters.

| | Quarter 1 April to June | Quarter 2 July - August | Quarter 3 Sept -Dec |
|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Rother | 33 | 36 | 68 |

There were 165 referrals to CGL Domestic Abuse Service in the same time period.

- Violent Crime – violence against a person rose by 237 report to 2,758, however this level of increased reporting has only been seen in the last three months. The overall category of violent crime has seen a rise of 292 cases to 3,045 and Violent Crime in a Public Place has seen rises since August 2021 by 217 cases to 1,318. These figures cannot be added together as individual cases so will be counted in a number of ways (and there will be double counting to reflect different types of crimes) depending on the classification used by the police.
 - Harassment - an increase of 92 reports to 274. Increases in reports of harassment have been seen in all districts and boroughs across East Sussex.
13. Reports of **anti-social behaviour** to the Council, police and housing providers increased during COVID-19 as more people were at home, noticed more behaviour and whose tolerance reduced as they experienced more incidents. We are still seeing an increase in the number of complex cases reported, but reductions in overall reports. These complex cases require significantly more work by the Council and all partners and often include safeguarding, mental health, substance misuse and domestic abuse.
14. Rother continues to have excellent working relationships with the key agencies and resilient and resourceful staff and structures e.g. the monthly multi-agency Hate and ASB and risk assessment group and case reviews have enabled complex cases to continue to be dealt with effectively. We are seen as an example of good practice in the way we work in Rother and our use of ECINs (a secure cloud-based case management system funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and managed by Sussex Police) across Sussex. This has not been the case across all Community Safety Partnerships. However, the following ASB cases were reported to police during the year to the end of January 2022:
- ASB Personal – 215 (-22)
 - ASB Nuisance – 1,632 (-530)
 - ASB Environmental – 65 (-39)

Projects funded

15. In 2021/22 the SRP funded a range of projects to address priorities in Rother:
- Youth intervention - creation of films made by young people to create two promotional videos and a new brand for youth work at The Pelham in order to design the youth basement project at The Pelham, which is based in the most deprived ward in Rother (top 5% in the country) and one of the most in East Sussex.
 - Sidley Recreation Projects – provide funding towards CCTV to promote confidence for families to use the facilities and discourage criminal activities and damage.
 - Our Time 2 Talk project supports vulnerable children and young people aged 8 to 18 to improve family relationships. This is the only service in our area offering this type of support to young people and their families.
 - To enable easy sharing of the Black Cat Radar Box (speed recording of vehicles in rural areas) by Parish Councils to have one shared laptop with the required software that will be solely for use with the Black Cat Radar scheme (funded by the SRP 2020).

- In January 2021, we funded Up Grade training who provide opportunities for young offenders, at-risk and fixed exclusion students to experience positive outcomes and achieve real results via martial art, therapeutic and educational activity programme.
- Statutory Safeguarding and Exploitation Training for Taxi Drivers in Rother, which enables their licensing authorities to comply with the required standards set out by the Department of Transport's Statutory Standards July 2020. Taxi drivers have been identified as having an important role in identifying children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, drug supply and cuckooing, safeguarding, scams and domestic abuse.
- See [Community Safety Partnership Grant Funding – Rother District Council](#)

Rother District Council activities

16. Environmental Services and Licensing and Community Safety staff, the police and other agencies continue to carry out successful operational and education initiatives across Rother and Wealden to address, e.g.:
 - ASB, neighbour disputes and High and Medium risk cases are managed through the monthly Hate and ASB Case Review meeting.
 - Community safety issues arising at beaches across Rother including illegal immigration, protest groups, sleeping in vehicles, noise nuisance, ASB and specific summer operations in Camber and at Herbrand Walk.
 - Crime, safety and risk for events managed with partner agencies through Safety Advisory Groups.
 - Licensing and ASB issues in both public houses and businesses.
 - Modern Slavery through Project Discovery.
 - Safeguarding of both adults and children through case reviews and multi-agency work and fulfil the Council's duty and responsibilities.
17. The Community Safety Team also work with other council services, such as Housing (e.g. Domestic Abuse cases, offenders, victims of Hate crimes and ASB and Rough sleeping and Homelessness), and Customer Services (e.g. Safeguarding concerns).

Rother Priorities for 2022/23

18. The Safer Rother Partnership Joint Action Group (JAG) agreed the priorities for 2022/23 at its February meeting and will be using an analytical product provided by the police to focus resources on those crimes and victims that have the highest risk or behaviours that have the biggest impact on the community of Rother. In addition, the JAG will also review:
 - Crime and ASB data.
 - Consultation from the Public Spaces Protection Orders process.
 - Rother Reputation Tracker Survey Report, which came from an ESCC survey of residents across East Sussex.
 - Priorities of the Office of The Police and Crime Commissioner.
 - Local and East Sussex Policing priorities.
19. The Safer Rother Partnership JAG has agreed the following three priorities for 2022/23:
 - ASB and Youth Crime

- Rural Crime
- Drug Related Harm

It was agreed that Domestic Abuse and Road Safety would be included for specific focused work.

20. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires a review of Council and partner agencies' responsibilities under this legislation. This work has started and will be a focus for the multi-agency Domestic Abuse Group. The documents in Appendix A have been shared and discussed with partner agencies and the JAG.
21. Further work is required to develop Council duties and practices for safeguarding adults and children in line with legislation and good practice. Working within a two tier local authority structure, this is carried out through continued engagement with Adult Social Care (ESCC) structures, Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and partners to delineate between East Sussex, pan Sussex work and that required at a local level on a number of crime and safeguarding related issues, e.g. child criminal and sexual exploitation, safeguarding, counter terrorism and prevention of violent extremism, violence against women and girls.
22. Further training for Council staff and partners on a wide range of issues such as Prevent, Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation, Modern Slavery, Domestic Abuse and changes in legislation should be considered a priority for 2022/23.

Conclusion

23. The SRP continues to deliver a wide range of interventions to deal effectively and efficiently with crime and ASB, that impact on the quality of life for those living, working and visiting Rother. In addition, victims and survivors of crime and ASB have been supported and the risk to them minimised by the commitment by Council officers in many departments e.g. Environmental Health, Licensing and Community Safety, Housing, Planning Enforcement and Customer Services.
24. The strength of the SRP, working relationships, knowledge and commitment has enabled a Rother response by all partners to both "business as usual", changes in behaviour and criminality related to COVID-19 and responses carried out in a timely manner to new threats during 2021/22. The work practices of the SRP and individual officers will enable work to continue to address these and new threats and risks during 2022/23.
25. Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
 - (a) make any recommendations arising from the report to the Chair of the Safer Rother Partnership for consideration;
 - (b) the Council's work in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime Reduction and Community Safety be noted; and
 - (c) the possible impact of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 be noted.

Crime and Disorder

26. Under s17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, local authorities, amongst others, have a duty to exercise their functions with 'due regard' to the need to prevent crime and disorder in their area.
27. Within this work there are duties and roles for the Council and partners under other legislation, including that for anti-social behaviour, safeguarding adults and children, domestic abuse, licensing, modern slavery, domestic abuse and reflect the work of many Council departments e.g. Environmental Health and Licensing, Housing, Customer Services, Planning Enforcement.
28. "Crime and disorder scrutiny functions", in relation to a council, means functions that are, or, but would be, exercisable by the crime and disorder committee of the Council under sections 19, 20 and schedule 8 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.
29. The report highlights the work of the SRP and Council officers to prevent crime and disorder, reduce the impact of antisocial behaviour and crimes and mitigate the negative impact on the quality of life of local residents, businesses, and visitors.

Environmental Implications

30. It is well documented that crime and anti-social behaviour have a negative impact on the quality of life and residents' perceptions of the area they live in. There are also environmental implications in connection to e.g. fly tipping, graffiti, misuse of land under planning regulations, drug supply, cultivation or manufacture and paraphernalia, derelict and dangerous buildings.

Equalities and Diversity

31. Ensure that we are fair to all, and the needs of people with protected characteristics are considered. The protected characteristics (as defined by the Equalities Act 2010) are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
32. Ensure that the voice of all communities is heard and taken into account when decisions are being made.
33. The SRP's actions have taken into account the needs of people with protected characteristics within our community, particularly with regard to preventing aggravated offences associated with hate crimes, for example, for reasons of age, disability, gender and race.

| Other Implications | Applies? | Other Implications | Applies? |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Human Rights | No | Equalities and Diversity | Yes |
| Crime and Disorder | Yes | External Consultation | No |
| Environmental | Yes | Access to Information | No |
| Risk Management | No | Exempt from publication | No |

Chief Executive: Malcolm Johnston

Report Contact: Carol Studley – Community Safety Partnership Coordinator

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Officer: | |
| e-mail address: | carol.studley@rother.gov.uk |
| Appendix: | A - Domestic Abuse Act 2021 B – Crime and ASB Overview 2021 C – East Sussex Fraud Report - October to December 2021 |
| Relevant previous Minutes: | OSC20/46 |
| Background Papers: | None |
| Reference Documents: | Ministry of Justice - Statutory Partnerships and Responsibilities - November 2013 (publishing.service.gov.uk) |

THE DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT 2021

- creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, coercive or controlling, and economic abuse. As part of this definition, children will be explicitly recognised as victims if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of abuse;
- creates a new offence of non-fatal strangulation;
- extends the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse;
- extends the ‘revenge porn’ offence to cover the threat to disclose intimate images with the intention to cause distress;
- clarifies the law to further deter claims of “rough sex gone wrong” in cases involving death or serious injury;
- creates a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link);
- establishes in law the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, to stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of local authorities, the justice system and other statutory agencies and hold them to account in tackling domestic abuse;
- places a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation;
- provides that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance;
- places the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing;
- ensures that when local authorities rehouse victims of domestic abuse, they do not lose a secure lifetime or assured tenancy;
- stop vexatious family proceedings that can further traumatise victims by clarifying the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989;
- prohibit GPs and other health professionals from charging a victim of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid.

New statutory definition of Domestic Abuse

Two criteria governing the relationship between the abuser and the abused:

- both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over; and
- both persons must be “personally connected” (will include ex-partners and family members).

It will also:

- include broad categories which capture a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse;
- recognise that the majority of victims of abuse are female; and
- recognises that domestic abuse can impact on a child and treat such children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right where they are related to either the abuser or the abused.



Rother District Crime & ASB Overview Time Period: 2021

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Requested by | Insp Olivia Carroll |
| Author(s) | Keri Summers Neighbourhood Intelligence Analyst |
| Department | East Sussex Neighbourhood Support Team |
| Reference | 47N-2022-006390 |
| Date | 21 st February 2022 |
| Version | 1.0 |

Scope Note

Basic overview of crime and ASB levels in Rother district for 2021.

Analysis

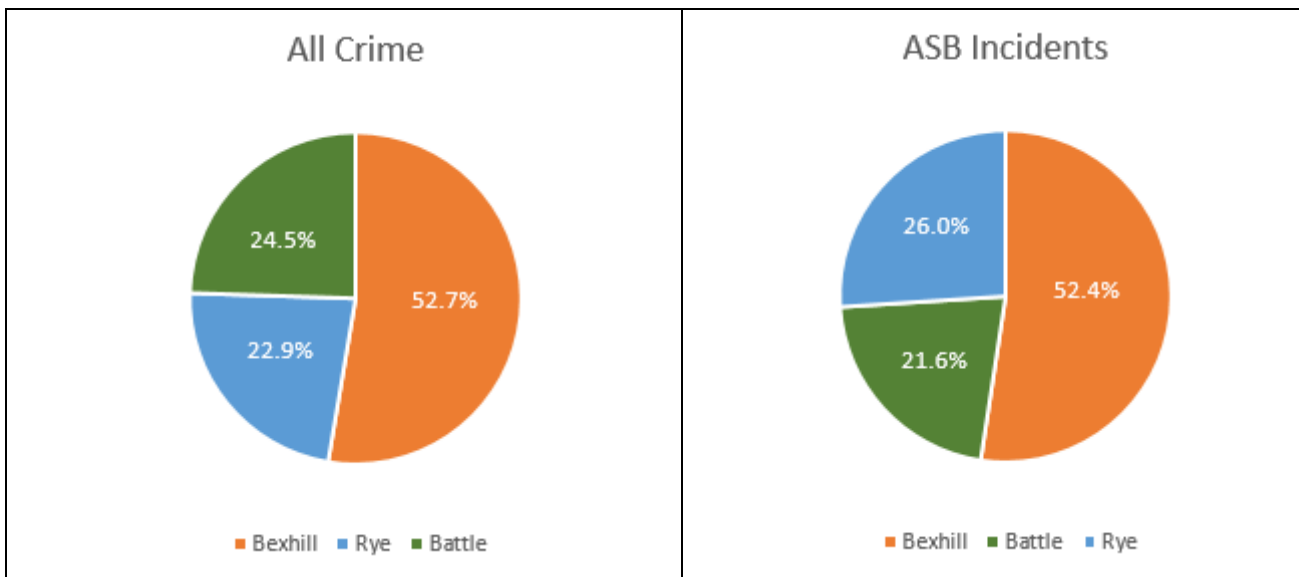
The table below shows that overall crime has reduced by nearly 9% across the district when compared with 2020 which was a similar reduction comparing 2020 with 2019 (-10%). Anti-social behaviour incidents have also reduced after a sharp increase in 2020.

| Crime Type | Rolling Year to 31/12/21 | Previous Rolling Year | Difference | % Change |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Burglary | 180 | 422 | -242 | -57.3% |
| Arson/Criminal Damage | 688 | 708 | -20 | -2.8% |
| Drug Offences | 154 | 161 | -7 | -4.3% |
| Possession of Weapon | 50 | 66 | -16 | -24.2% |
| Public Order | 561 | 541 | +20 | +3.7% |
| Robbery | 21 | 18 | +3 | +16.7% |
| Sexual Offences | 181 | 228 | -47 | -20.6% |
| Theft | 604 | 774 | -170 | -22.0% |
| Vehicle Offences | 283 | 307 | -24 | -7.8% |
| Violence against the Person | 2059 | 2012 | +47 | +2.3% |
| Other crimes | 131 | 140 | -9 | -6.4% |
| All Crime | 4912 | 5377 | -465 | -8.6% |
| Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents | 2021 | 2329 | -308 | -13.2% |

Crimes that increased were public order (includes Sections 1 to 5 riots, violent disorder, affray and causing harassment and miscellaneous crimes against society), robbery and violence against the person. The largest increases in violence against the person offences were malicious communications and assault without injury. Public order increases were in relation to S4/S4a and S5 Public Order Act offences including fear and harassment type offences.

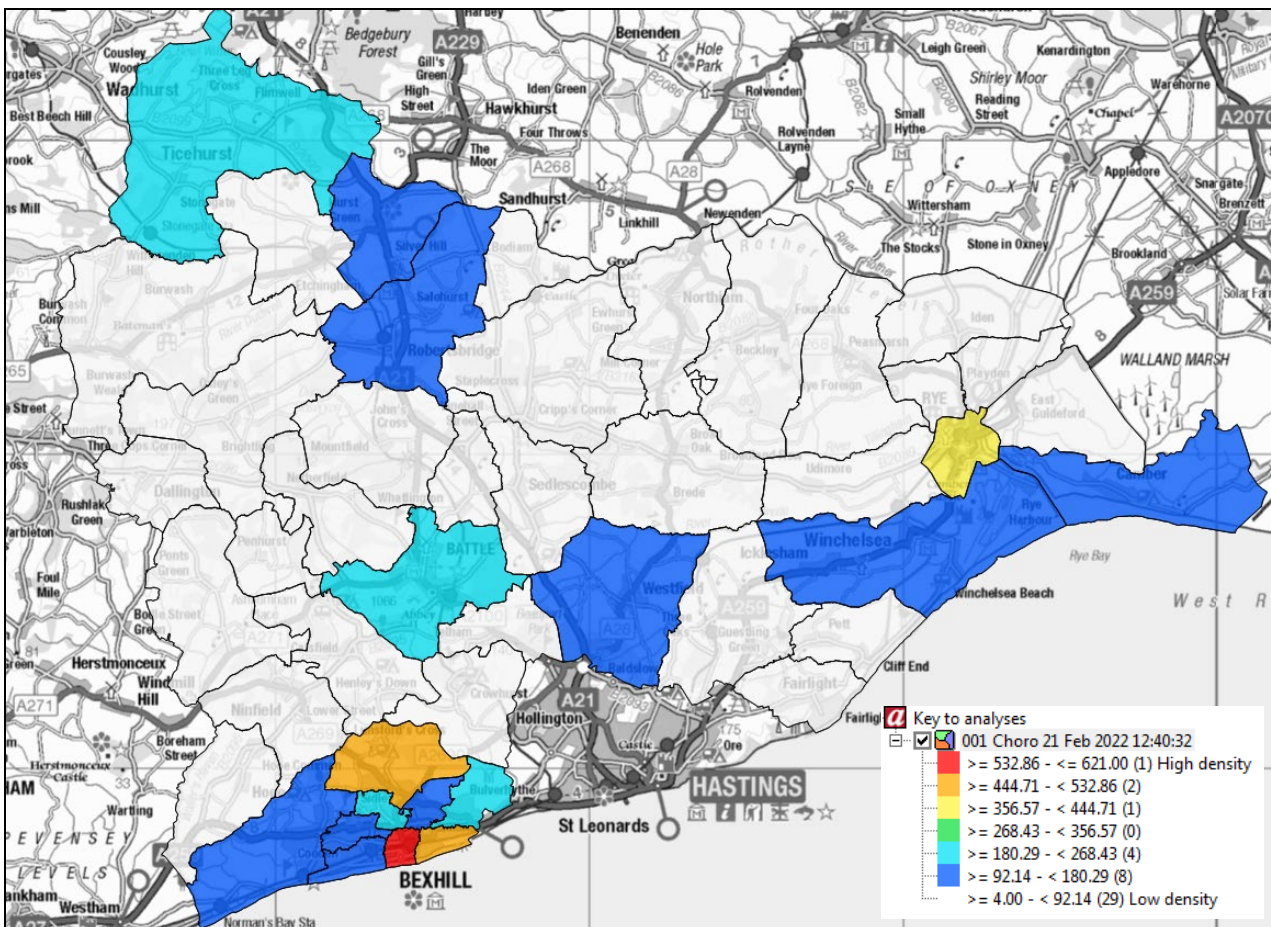
Anti-social behaviour incidents have reduced after the sharp increase in 2020 which was almost certainly due to the pandemic.

Overall Bexhill recorded the most offences. The pie charts below indicates the proportion of offences and incidents for each NPT area in Rother district.

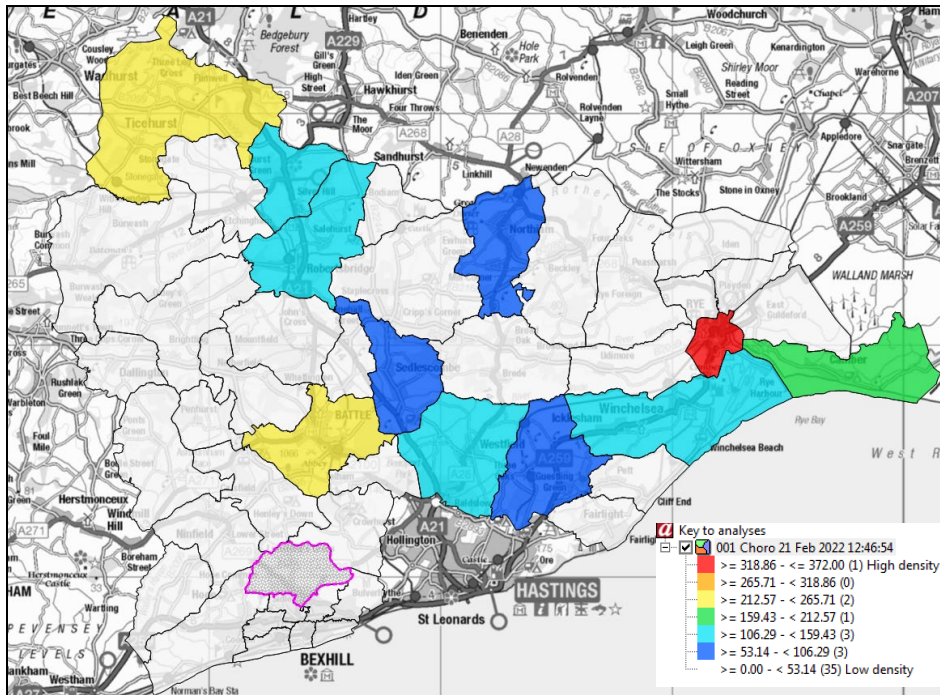


All mapping below of crime and anti-social behaviour incidents have been analysed using choropleth mapping which uses differences in shading within the predefined beat areas to indicate the average values of a particular quantity in those areas

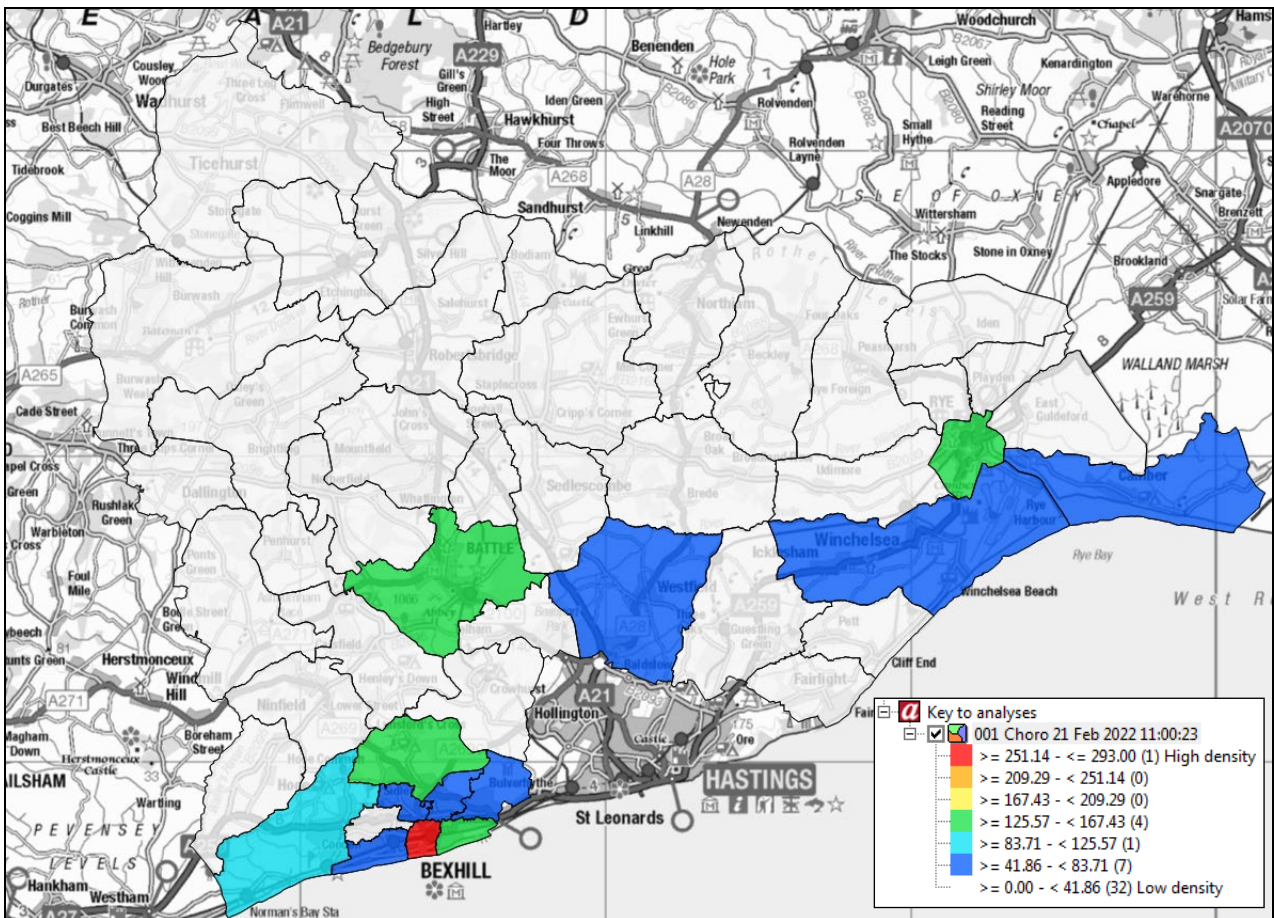
Below is the mapping of all crime across the district for the year 2021. Not surprisingly, Central Bexhill was the hotspot beat area followed by Sackville, Sidley and Rye.



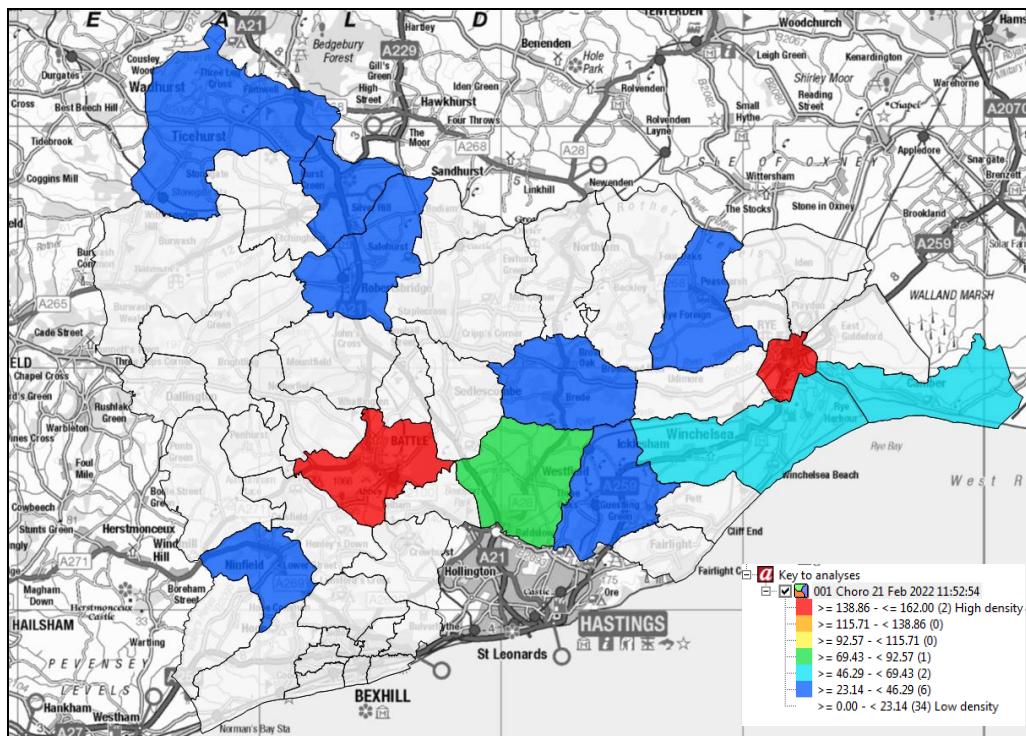
The map below is the same analysis with Bexhill crimes removed indicating a secondary hotspot beat area of Rye followed by Battle, Ticehurst and Camber.



Below is the mapping of all ASB incidents across the district for the year 2021.



The key beat area recording the most offences was Central in Bexhill followed by Sackville. The map below is the same analysis with Bexhill incidents removed indicating that other key areas were Battle, Rye and Westfield.



Below is a key word search across the 12 months which highlights the type of incidents that were reported. Please note that there might be double counting if an incident included more than one of the key words, for example noisy neighbour would be accounted for twice.

| Key Word | Count | Key Word | Count |
|----------------------|-------|----------------------------|--------|
| Neighbour | 836 | Dog | 173 |
| Youth/Teen/Child/Kid | 682 | Drunk/Drink | 135 |
| Threat | 494 | Parking | 113 |
| Ongoing (issues) | 400 | Speed | 81 |
| Noise | 358 | Op Crackdown (ASB driving) | 72 |
| Group | 354 | Abandoned (vehicle) | 48 |
| Covid | 319 | Alarm | 48 |
| Drug | 310 | Traveller | 47 |
| Party/Rave | 278 | Scooter (electric) | 40 (8) |
| Bike/Moped | 246 | No (Crash) Helmet | 30 |
| Cannabis/Weed | 202 | Sheep Worrying | 16 |



East Sussex Fraud Report

October - December 2021

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|---------|-----|
| Date | 28/01/2022 | Reference | RAD-5832-2022 | Version | 1.0 |
| Requesting Officer | PC Bernadette Lawrie DL148 | | | | |
| Author(s) | Rachel Goddard 03440, Neighbourhood Intelligence Researcher | | | | |
| Department | East Sussex Neighbourhood Support Team | | | | |

Scope Note

Action Fraud is the national recording place for all fraud. They do not investigate fraud but where a suspect is identified the report is sent to the local UK force for allocation. Operation Signature ensures that all vulnerable fraud victims receive a visit from a uniformed officer or PCSO, who provides reassurance, advice and support, and makes referrals to, or signposts, other agencies who can help.

The data used in this report is taken from the Sussex Police Fraud Power BI dashboard. This uses data taken from Action Fraud reports and SCARFs (single combined assessment of risk forms) as part of Op Signature. In order to focus on vulnerable victims, this report uses Op Signature data unless stated otherwise. In addition, 'None of the above' has not been included within the fraud category sections of the report.

The data in this report covers the period 01/10/2021– 31/12/2021. All sections include data for individual fraud only except Force Overview.

Force Overview¹

Individual

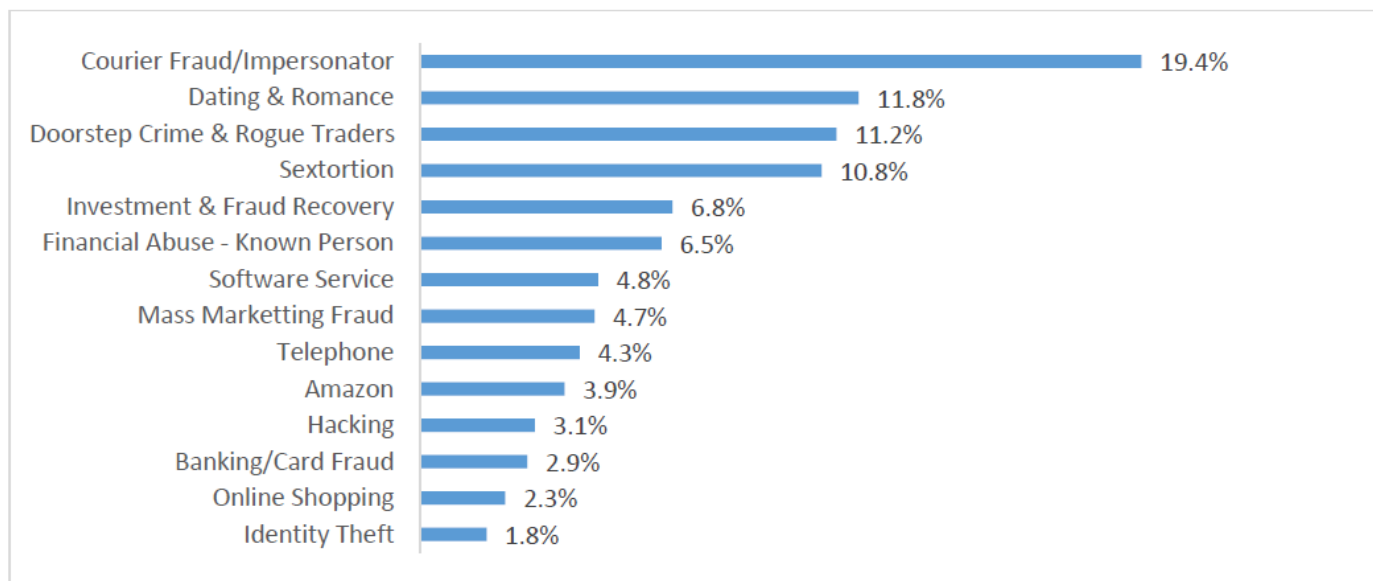
There have been 2,214 individual Action Fraud reports in Sussex between October 2021 – December 2021. This is a decrease of 21% (586 actual) compared to the same 3 month period the previous year. All divisions saw a decrease. The ratio of Action Fraud reports to Op Signature SCARFs was 3:1. West Sussex reported the highest number of Action Fraud reports (1,125) and Brighton & Hove reported the lowest (387).

| | Action Fraud | | | | Op Signature | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|------------|----------|--------------|--------------|------------|----------|
| | Oct - Dec 21 | Oct - Dec 20 | Diff (+/-) | % Change | Oct - Dec 21 | Oct - Dec 20 | Diff (+/-) | % Change |
| Brighton & Hove | 387 | 556 | -169 | -30% | 113 | 120 | -7 | -6% |
| East Sussex | 702 | 900 | -198 | -22% | 259 | 316 | -57 | -18% |
| West Sussex | 1125 | 1344 | -219 | -16% | 397 | 400 | -3 | -1% |
| Force | 2214 | 2800 | -586 | -21% | 769 | 836 | -67 | -8% |

¹ Extracted from the West Sussex Fraud Report October-December 2021, produced by Olivia Meadows 37986.

Op Signature SCARFs

- A total of £6.58 million was lost. West Sussex had the highest amount lost (£3.51 million) and Brighton & Hove had the lowest (£547,780).
- The most common reported loss amount was between £1,000-£9,999² and the most common payment method was bank transfer (37%).
- The majority of victims were aged 75+ (45%) and most victims lived alone (51%). More females than males were victims of fraud.
- The highest reported type of fraud across Sussex was Courier Fraud/Impersonator (19.4%) followed by Dating & Romance fraud (11.8%) and Doorstep Crime and Rogue Traders (11.2%).



Business

There have been 114 business Action Fraud reports in Sussex between 01/10/2021 – 31/12/2021.

- This is a reduction of 21 reports (16%) when compared to the previous three months (July to September 2021) which recorded 135 reports.
- A reduction of 42 reports (27%) when compared to the same three-month period the previous year (October to December 2020) which recorded 156 reports.

| Division | No. of Reports 01/10/2020 – 31/12/2020 | No. of Reports 01/07/2021 – 30/09/2021 | No. of Reports 01/10/2021 – 31/12/2021 |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Brighton & Hove | 20 | 18 | 16 |
| East Sussex | 46 | 42 | 44 |
| West Sussex | 90 | 75 | 54 |
| Total | 156 | 135 | 114 |

- West Sussex reported the highest number of Action Fraud reports (54) across Sussex, this is also reflected in the figures for the preceding three-month period and for the same three-month period in 2020.
- Brighton and Hove reported the lowest volume of reports (16).
- Two of the divisions have seen a reduction in reports when compared to the prior three months (Brighton & Hove and West Sussex), whereas East Sussex has seen a slight increase.
- A total of £1.94 million was lost, East Sussex had the highest amount lost (£955,222) and Brighton & Hove had the lowest (£28,054). The median amount lost between October 2021 and December 2021 was £3,490.

² Not including reports where there was no loss (applicable to all overviews)

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- The most common reported loss amount was between £1,000 - £9,999 (31%)
- The highest reported type of fraud across Sussex that contributed over 5% was other consumer non-investment fraud (18.3%), followed by cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts (13.19%), social media and email (11.91%), retail fraud (10.21%), online shopping and auctions (9.36%) and mandate fraud (8.94%).

East Sussex Overview

East Sussex recorded 702 Action Fraud reports between October and December 2021. This is a decrease of -22% (198 actual) compared to the same three month period the previous year. All districts recorded a reduction.

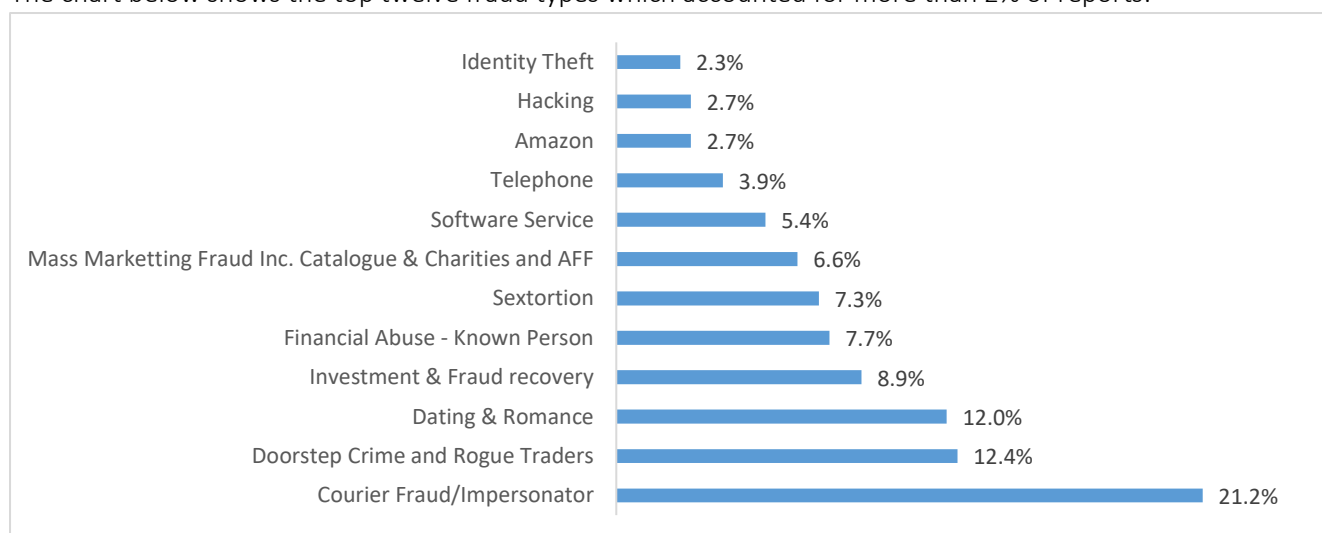
Wealden district saw the highest volume of Action Fraud reports and the lowest reduction in offences compared to the same time period in 2020. This is also reflected in the Op Signature reports where Wealden recorded the highest volume of reports but also the lowest reduction in comparison to the same three month period during 2020, apart from Rother district where the volume of Op Signature offences remained static. Rother district saw the lowest number of Action Fraud reports and Lewes the largest reduction in Action Fraud reports. Hastings district recorded the lowest number of Op Signature reports and also the highest reduction in reports compared to 2020 along with Lewes district with these two areas both recording a reduction of 20 (actual) reports.

| | Action Fraud | | | | Op Signature | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|----------|--------------|--------------|------------|----------|
| | Oct - Dec 21 | Oct - Dec 20 | Diff (+/-) | % Change | Oct - Dec 21 | Oct - Dec 20 | Diff (+/-) | % Change |
| Eastbourne | 143 | 182 | -39 | -21.4% | 50 | 65 | -15 | -23.1% |
| Lewes | 111 | 165 | -54 | -32.7% | 49 | 69 | -20 | -29% |
| Wealden | 216 | 233 | -17 | -7.3% | 73 | 75 | -2 | -2.7% |
| Hastings | 130 | 177 | -47 | -26.6% | 41 | 61 | -20 | -32.8% |
| Rother | 102 | 143 | -41 | -28.7% | 46 | 46 | - | - |
| Total | 702 | 900 | -198 | -22% | 259 | 316 | -57 | -18% |

Op Signature SCARFs

- A total of £2.08 million was lost. Eastbourne district saw the highest amount lost (£822,440) and Hastings the lowest (£72,980).
- The most common reported loss amount was between £100-£999 (15.1%) closely followed by £1,000-£9,999 (14%) and the most common payment method was bank transfer (33.3%), followed by bank card (28%).
- The highest reported type of fraud was Courier Fraud/Impersonator (21.2%) followed by Doorstep Crime & Rogue Traders (12.4%) and Dating & Romance fraud (12%).

The chart below shows the top twelve fraud types which accounted for more than 2% of reports:



- The majority of victims were aged 75+ (55.21%) and a slighter higher proportion of victims lived alone (54%). More females (53.28%) than males (46.72%) were victims of fraud.
- In relation to the top four fraud categories depicted in the above chart Wealden district recorded the highest volume of reports for the courier/impersonator, doorstep/rogue trader and investment/recovery fraud reports. Hastings and Lewes districts recorded the highest number of reports in relation to dating/romance fraud reports.

| Type Of Fraud | This Year | Last Year | %age change | Amount Lost Total - This Year | Difference from Last Year |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Courier Fraud/Impersonator | 192 | 228 | -15.8% | £702,428.0 | ↓ -£57,741.0 |
| Dating & Romance | 130 | 85 | 52.9% | £1,619,680.0 | ↑ £500,931.0 |
| Doorstep Crime and Rogue Traders | 120 | 154 | -22.1% | £230,555.0 | ↓ -£17,481.0 |
| Investment & Fraud recovery | 105 | 60 | 75.0% | £4,376,575.0 | ↑ £1,870,229.0 |
| Telephone | 83 | 163 | -49.1% | £8,540.0 | ↓ -£63,488.0 |
| Mass Marketing Fraud Inc. Catalogue & Charities and AFF | 74 | 54 | 37.0% | £32,820.0 | ↑ £5,990.0 |
| Software Service | 73 | 64 | 14.1% | £149,246.0 | ↑ £54,041.0 |
| Amazon | 68 | 13 | 423.1% | £122,705.0 | ↑ £115,091.0 |
| Financial Abuse - Known Person | 62 | 43 | 44.2% | £1,544,717.0 | ↑ £1,371,011.0 |
| Sextortion | 58 | 13 | 346.2% | £10,293.0 | ↑ £9,643.0 |
| HMRC | 55 | 56 | -1.8% | £23,583.0 | ↓ -£3,085.0 |
| Banking/Card Fraud | 25 | 1 | 2400.0% | £39,605.0 | ↑ £39,605.0 |
| Hacking | 23 | 3 | 666.7% | £28,756.0 | ↑ £28,667.0 |
| On-line Shopping | 23 | 25 | -8.0% | £20,747.0 | ↑ £12,889.0 |
| Identity Theft | 16 | 21 | -23.8% | £17,790.0 | ↑ £17,376.0 |

East Sussex fraud categories; year on year comparison.

National Crime Trends³

The following emerging threats have been observed from November 2021 data; Pyramid/Ponzi schemes (increase of 44%), Other Consumer Retail Fraud (increase of 13%), Hacking – Social Media (increase of 24%), Application Fraud (increase of 6%) and Telecom Industry Fraud (increase of 25%) all show increases from the previous month, and all apart from online shopping remain higher than the overall baseline average for the fraud type. Telecom Industry Fraud shows the highest level of reporting since February 2019.

Other Advance Fee Fraud reports have increased for the second month in a row after seeing a drop in reporting since July. Reporting is still below the year average. Online Shopping and Auction fraud has begun increasing again after a drop in reporting over the past few months. It is expected reporting will continue to increase. The increase in reporting for Cybercrime is mainly due to a 24% increase in Hacking – Social Media reporting which is the highest volume for this fraud type since June 2020.

Courier Fraud/Impersonator Fraud Overview

Courier fraud occurs when a fraudster contacts victims by telephone purporting to be a police officer or bank official. To substantiate this claim, the caller might be able to confirm some easily obtainable basic details about the victim such as their full name and address.

³ Monthly Threat Update – MTU Law Enforcement – December 2021, City of London Police which was included in the West Sussex Fraud Report October-December 2021, produced by Olivia Meadows 37986.

There were 55 Op Signature reports under the courier fraud/impersonator category across East Sussex between October and December 2021, recording a decrease of 39 reports (-41.5%) compared to the same three month period during 2020 which saw 94 reports. A total of £322,400 was lost and the median amount lost (where a loss was recorded) was £7,350. The most common payment method was bank transfer (44.4%), followed by bank card (27.78%) and the most common contact method was by telephone (83.64%).

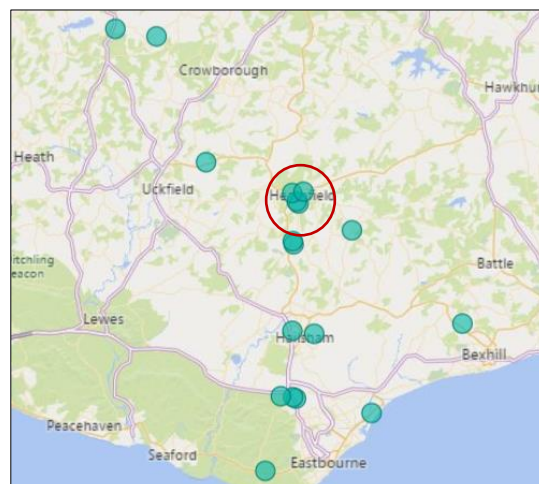
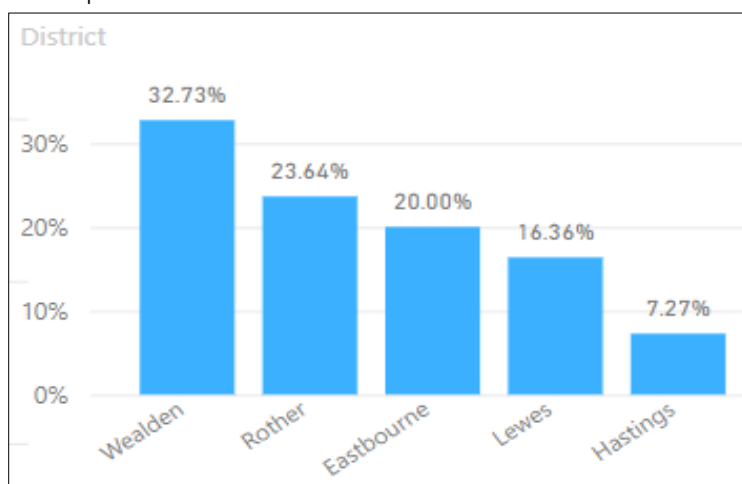
Nationally there have been reports of victims being told by fraudsters on the phone to call the number on the bank of their bank cards. Unbeknown to the victim the call has not ended and the suspect then pretended to be from the bank. Action Fraud have also received a report stating that the caller had a man attend their address who claimed to be a police officer but was not in uniform. The suspect asked the caller for information regarding the previous phone call reported to Action Fraud. The suspect knew the details of the report/phone call previously reported⁴.

Demographics

- Age: 63.64% of victims were aged 75+, 23.64% were 60-74, 10.91% were 30-59 and 1.82% were 0-29.
- Gender: 65.45% of victims were female and 34.55% were male.
- Lives Alone: 54.55% of victims lived alone and 45.45% did not.

Locations

Wealden district saw the largest volume of reports accounting for 32.7% (18 actual). Hastings district recorded the smallest volume of reports, accounting for 7.3% (4 actual). The hotspot in Wealden district was Heathfield, which saw four reports.



Doorstep Crime and Rogue Trader Fraud Overview

Bogus tradesmen, door-to-door sales or doorstep fraud involves fraudsters trying to scam victims after knocking at their door. Such frauds involve promoting goods or services that are either never delivered or are of a very poor quality. Fraudsters may also bill for work that was not agreed to. Bogus salespeople will provide false identity or contact information, making it impossible to identify or contact them.

There have been 32 Op Signature reports related to doorstep crime and rogue traders in East Sussex between October and December 2021. This is an increase of 33.3% (8 actual) reports when compared to the same three month period in 2020. A total of £55,300 was lost and the median amount lost (where a loss was recorded) was £895. The most common payment method was cash (41.18%), followed by bank card (35.29%).

⁴ Extracted from the West Sussex Fraud Report October-December 2021, produced by Olivia Meadows 37986.

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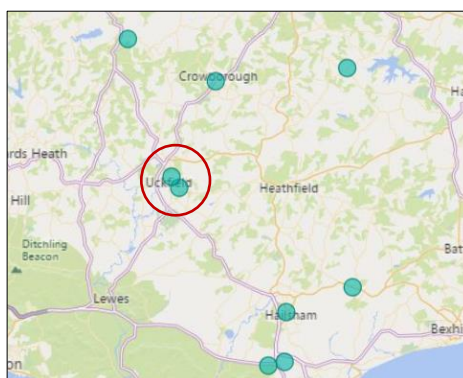
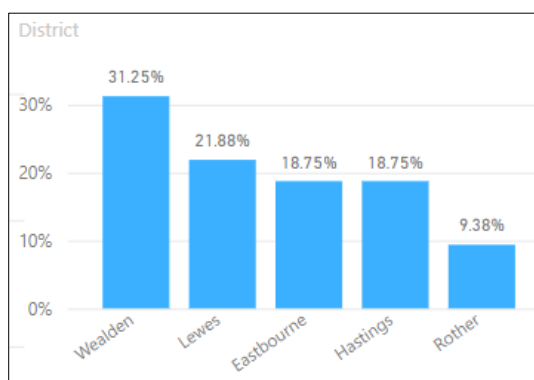
Fraudsters have been using the fact more people are staying at home as an opportunity to exploit the vulnerable by operating doorstep scams including rogue traders and impersonators⁵.

Demographics

- Age: 78.13% of victims were aged 75+, 15.63% were aged 60-74 years and 6.25% were aged 30-59 years.
- Gender: 56.25% of victims were female and 43.75% were male.
- Lives Alone: 40.63% of victims lived alone and 59.38% did not.

Locations

Wealden district recorded the highest volume (10 actual) of doorstep crime and rogue trader (31.25%) reports whilst Rother district recorded the lowest (3 actual) accounting for 9.38%. Lewes, Eastbourne and Hastings districts accounted for similar proportions of reports (ranging between 18.75% and 21.88%). Uckfield saw two of the ten reports in Wealden district.



Dating & Romance Fraud Overview

Romance scams involve people being duped into sending money to criminals who go to great lengths to gain their trust and convince them that they are in a genuine relationship. They use language to manipulate, persuade and exploit so that requests for money do not raise alarm bells.

There were 31 Op Signature reports relating to dating & romance fraud in East Sussex between October and December 2021. This is an increase of five reports (+19.2%) in comparison to the same three month period in 2020. A total of £401,780 was lost and the median amount lost (where a loss was recorded) was £4,500. Bank transfer was the most common payment method type (38.46%) and the most common contact method was made via WhatsApp (29.03%), followed by telephone (19.35%).

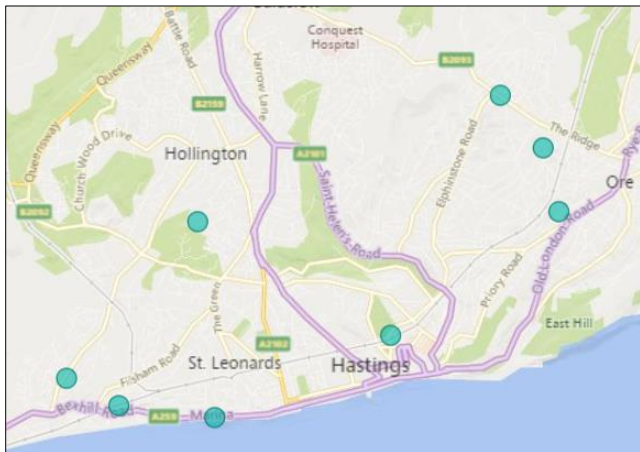
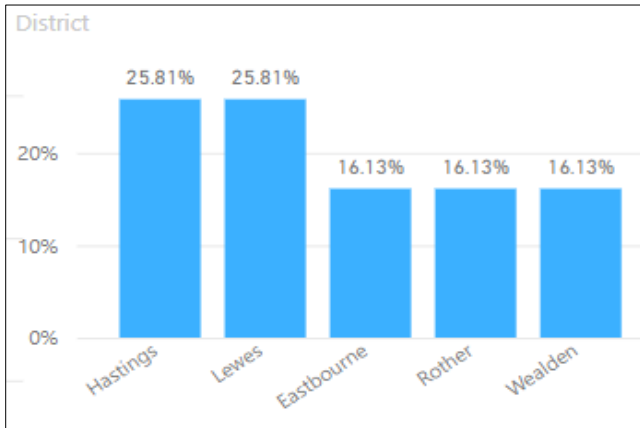
Demographics

- Age: 38.71% of victims were aged 30-59, 35.48% were aged 60-74 and 25.81% were aged 75+.
- Gender: 58.06% of victims were female and 41.94% were male.
- Lives Alone: 70.97% of victims lived alone and 29.03% did not.

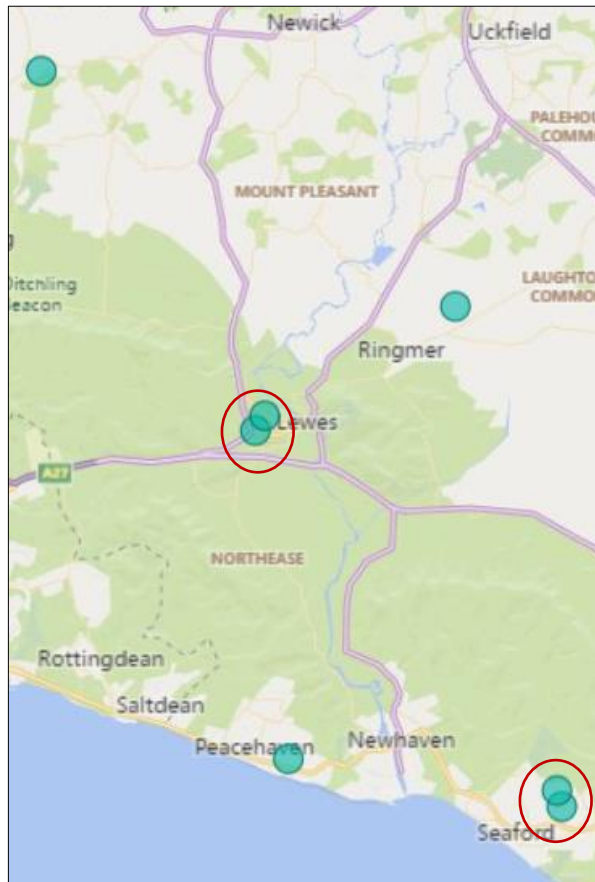
Locations

Hastings and Lewes districts both accounted for 25.81% each of dating & romance fraud (8 actual each); whilst Eastbourne, Rother and Wealden districts accounted for 16.13% each.

⁵ Extracted from the West Sussex Fraud Report October-December 2021, produced by Olivia Meadows 37986.



Hastings District



Lewes District

Lewes town and Seaford were the key areas for dating & romance fraud in Lewes district.

Investment & Fraud Recovery Overview

There are many different types of investment fraud. They usually involve criminals contacting people out of the blue and convincing them to invest in schemes or products that are worthless or do not exist. Once the criminals have received payment, they cease contact with the victim. The majority of investment frauds are run out of offices known as boiler rooms.

Fraud recovery fraud is when someone who has been a victim of fraud in the past is contacted again by fraudsters. They pretend to be a government, police or law agency that can help recover the money that was lost but ask for a fee to get it back.

There have been 23 Op Signature reports related to investment & fraud recovery in East Sussex between October and December 2021. This is an increase of 91.7% (11 actual) when compared to the same three month period the previous year. A total of £516,310 was lost and the median amount lost (where a loss was recorded) was £13,750. The most common payment method was bank transfer (46.67%), followed by bank card (33.33%). Telephone was the most common contact method (43.48%), followed by website/online (13.04%).

There have been reports nationally relating to individuals being contacted through social media or instant messaging and persuaded to invest. These relate to reported increases in younger people investing and people looking to invest outside the mainstream banking system which is currently offering low interest rates⁶.

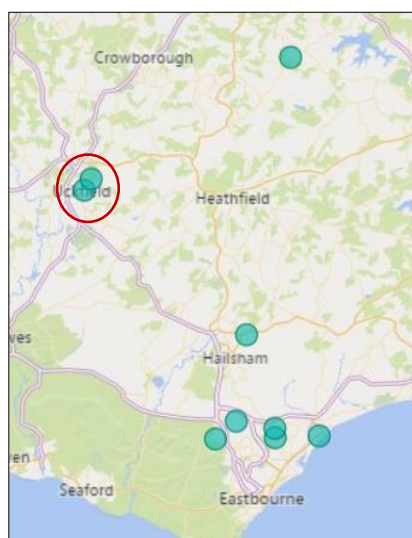
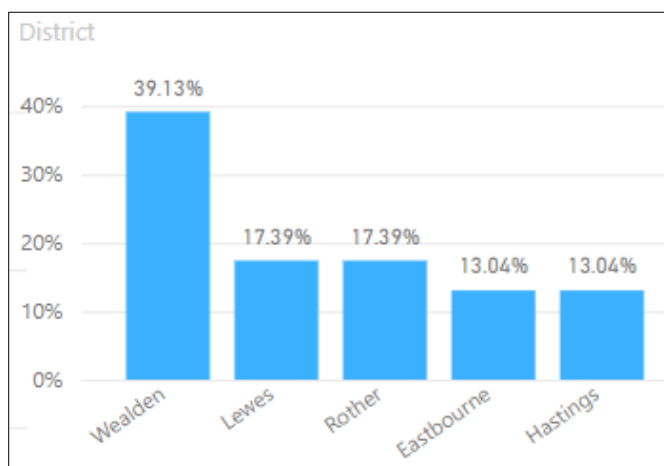
⁶ Extracted from the West Sussex Fraud Report October-December 2021, produced by Olivia Meadows 37986.

Demographics

- Age: 60.87% of victims were aged 75+, 13.04% were 60-74, and 26.09% were 30-59 years.
- Gender: 26.09% of victims were female and 73.91% were male.
- Lives Alone: 60.87% of victims lived alone and 39.13% did not.

Locations

Wealden district recorded the largest proportion of investment & fraud recovery frauds accounting for 39.13% (9 actual) with Eastbourne and Hastings districts recording the lowest volume each contributing to 13.04% (3 actual each) The key area in Wealden district was Uckfield.



Other Emerging Issues & Threats⁷

Covid-19

Online fraudsters have quickly reacted to news of the new COVID-19 variant Omicron, with a carefully crafted phishing campaign. These new phishing emails are designed to appear as if they are sent from the NHS and urge recipients to get an 'Omicron PCR test' for the new variant. The bogus emails falsely claim that the new variant requires a new test kit. They feature a link, legitimate looking 'get it now' button and are sent from 'NHS Customer Service'. The emails also invite readers to visit a site.

However, clicking the link takes you to a phishing site, which then asks users to enter their full name, date of birth, address, mobile number, email address and their mother's maiden name – which scammers could use to craft follow-on identity fraud attacks. It also asks for a payment of £1.24 for 'delivery'. Presumably, if users proceed with this, they will also have their bank card details stolen. Any confusion around the new variant and new PCR testing rules is likely to be exploited by scammers.

We would also expect fraud reports relating to Covid Passes to continue to be received over the coming months, particularly as fraudsters look to take advantage of people booking holidays for next year. We may also see an increase in scams in relation to booster injections. The implementation of Plan B measures due to the new variant could also lead to an increase in demand for counterfeit certifications or other fraud reports relating to Covid passes.

⁷ Monthly Threat Update – MTU Law Enforcement – December 2021, City of London Police which was included in the West Sussex Fraud Report October-December 2021, produced by Olivia Meadows 37986.

Spiking Reports linked to Fraud

There has been a lot of media coverage nationally around a reported increase in females being spiked or injected. In addition, there has been some further reporting around people being spiked and then having their bank or other accounts compromised where a significant amount of money is then taken.

A quick check of Action Fraud reports shows that twenty-nine reports that mentioned 'spiking' or being 'spiked' were received between September and mid-December. All victims believed that they were spiked prior to debit cards and Sim cards being stolen and then money being transferred out of their bank accounts. Some victims recall being escorted to a cash point. Other victims report that their PayPal was also hacked, and cryptocurrency purchased. All these incidents took place at licensed premises or at house parties.

Changing Methods

The Telegram App has been reported to be an increasingly popular choice for cyber criminals due to its apparent lack of moderation and encryption. The app is being used to share cyber hacking tips and to buy and sell stolen data with anecdotal evidence suggesting it is easier to use for these purposes than the dark web.

There have been reports that cyber criminals are specifically recruiting native English speakers to make their scams seem more genuine. Current advice is to be wary of communication with poor grammar and spelling mistakes, however, recruitment may make it trickier to identify these scams.

There have been reports of scammers on fraud forums discussing attempts to apply for roles in telecommunications and banking sectors to act as insiders for other fraudsters as they are able to access customer data.

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Rother District Council

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Report to: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Date: | 14 March 2022 |
| Title: | Performance Report: Third Quarter 2021/22 |
| Report of: | Director - Place and Climate Change |
| Ward(s): | N/A |
| Purpose of Report: | To monitor the delivery of the Council's Key Performance Indicators |
| Officer Recommendation(s): | It be RESOLVED : That Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider these findings and recommend any actions to Cabinet, as necessary. |

Introduction

1. For the financial year 2021/22, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and Cabinet selected a set of 13 key performance indicators (KPIs). These indicators stand as a barometer of the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and those service areas that Members wish to scrutinise over the year, as agreed by Cabinet on 24 May 2021.
2. For the 2021/22 financial year, the focus has been set on five themes:
 - Housing and Communities: to monitor delivery of the Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
 - Economic Development and Poverty: to monitor the impact of the pandemic on household incomes, council tax and business rates collection.
 - Waste Collection: to monitor the proportion of household waste collected that is sent for reuse, composting and recycling.
 - Additional Income: to monitor significant non-tax income as a part of the Council's revenue streams.
 - Planning processing: to monitor the processing times of applications.
3. This report is a summary of the Council's performance against the five themes at the end of the third financial quarter (1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021). The report gives Members an opportunity to scrutinise the progress towards the Council's stated aims, outcomes and actions in the Corporate Plan and makes any necessary recommendations to Cabinet for future service delivery.

Overview

4. A summary of the KPI performance is set out in the table overleaf. Performance is compared to the previous quarter result and to the same quarter the previous year.

| Housing & Communities | Status | Compared to same quarter previous year | Compared to previous measurement |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Number of all households in temporary accommodation | | | |
| Average weeks in temporary accommodation | | | |
| Number of households on the housing register | | | |
| Net additional homes provided (supply target) | | | |
| Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (supply target) | | | |
| Economic Development and Poverty | Status | Compared to same quarter previous year | Compared to previous measurement |
| Number of Council Tax reduction claimants | | | |
| Council Tax collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit) | | | <i>Not comparable</i> |
| Business Rates collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit) | | | <i>Not comparable</i> |
| Waste Collection | Status | Compared to same quarter previous year | Compared to previous measurement |
| ESCC Waste re-used, composted and recycled (reported one quarter in arrears) | | | |
| Additional Income | Status | Compared to same quarter previous year | Compared to previous measurement |
| Net income from all investment assets | | | |
| Additional income generation | | <i>New indicator 2021/22</i> | |
| Planning Processing | Status | Compared to same quarter previous year | Compared to previous measurement |
| Major applications: days to process | | | |
| Minor applications: days to process | | | |

| PI Status | | Long Term Trends | | Short Term Trends | |
|-----------|---------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | Alert | | Improving | | Improving |
| | Warning | | No Change | | No Change |
| | OK | | Getting Worse | | Getting Worse |
| | Unknown | | | | |

5. The tables of performance and explanation accompanying each of the five themes can be found at Appendices A, B, C, D and E.

Indicators by Exception

- Members requested to have reported, by exception, any other performance that is doing significantly better or significantly worse than its target set. For this quarter there is nothing further to report.

Conclusion

- This report sets our performance against the agreed key performance indicators for the five themes for the third quarter of 2021/22.
- Members are requested to consider performance against targets or forecasts and pass any additional recommendations for action to Cabinet for consideration.

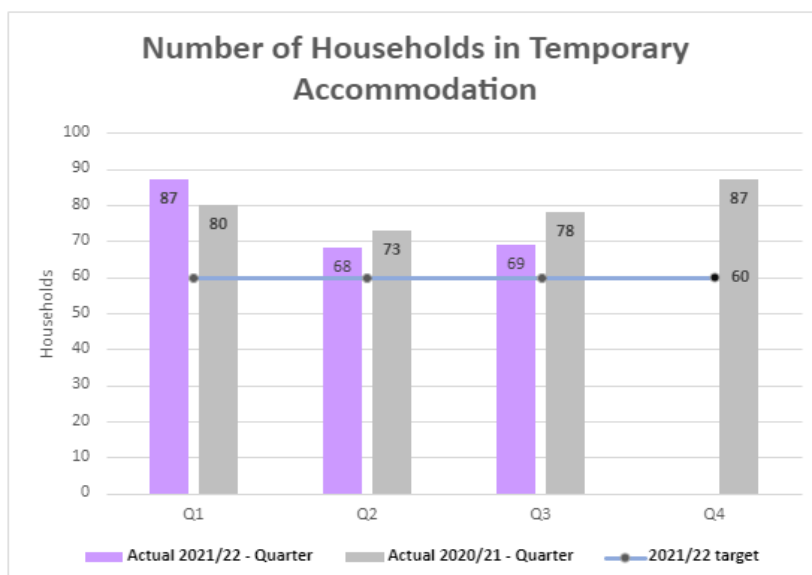
| Other Implications | Applies? | Other Implications | Applies? |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Human Rights | No | Equalities and Diversity | No |
| Crime and Disorder | No | Consultation | No |
| Environmental | No | Access to Information | No |
| Sustainability | No | Exempt from publication | No |
| Risk Management | Yes | | |

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chief Executive: | Malcolm Johnston |
| Report Contact Officer: | Joanne Wright |
| e-mail address: | joanne.wright@rother.gov.uk |
| Appendices: | A – Housing & Homelessness B – Economic Development and Poverty C – Waste Collection D – Additional Income E – Planning Processing |
| Relevant previous Minutes: | CB21/7 |

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

Number of all Households in Temporary Accommodation

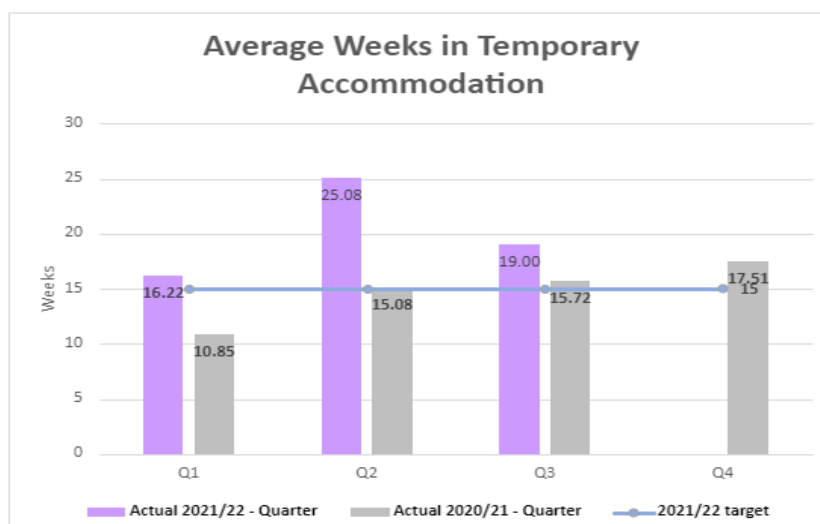
1. This measurement is the number of households that the Council has placed in temporary accommodation (TA) on the last day of the month. Mainly these are households either accepted as homeless and waiting for a home or are waiting for a decision on their application for homelessness.
2. The target for 2021/22 is 60 households. Third quarter result is 69 households.



Polarity: Lower is better

Average Weeks in Temporary Accommodation

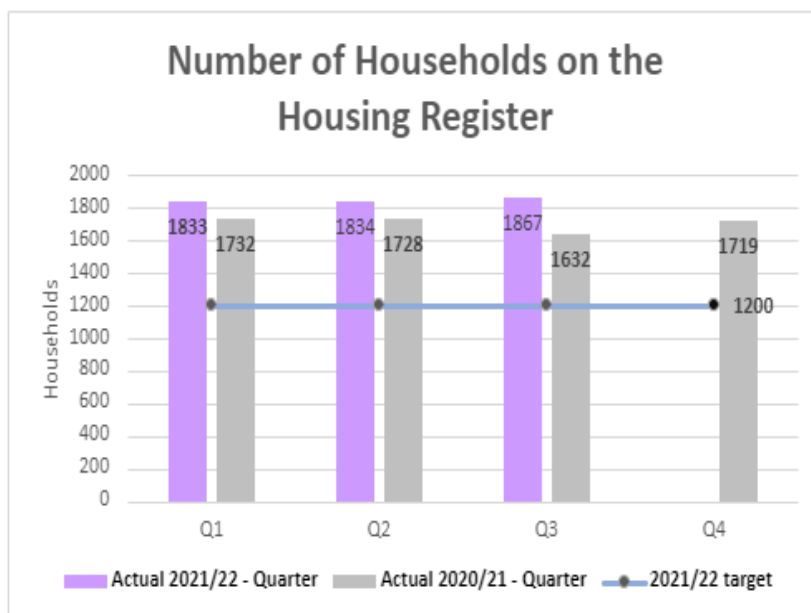
3. This measurement is the average number of weeks that households in temporary accommodation have remained in temporary accommodation.
4. The target for 2021/22 is 15 weeks. Third quarter result is 19 weeks.



Polarity: Lower is better

Number of Households on the Housing Register

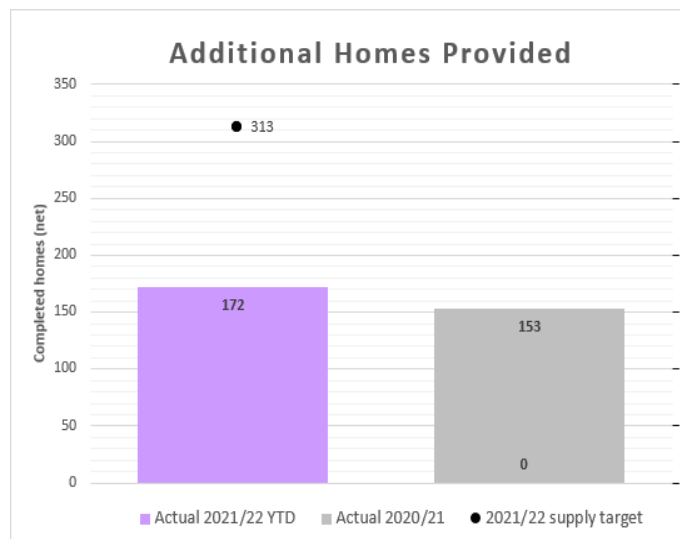
5. This measurement is the number of households on the housing register on the last day of the month when measured. This list covers all households who meet the criteria to be able to join the register.
6. The target for 2021/22 is 1,200 households. Third quarter result is 1,867.



Polarity: Lower is better

Additional Homes Provided

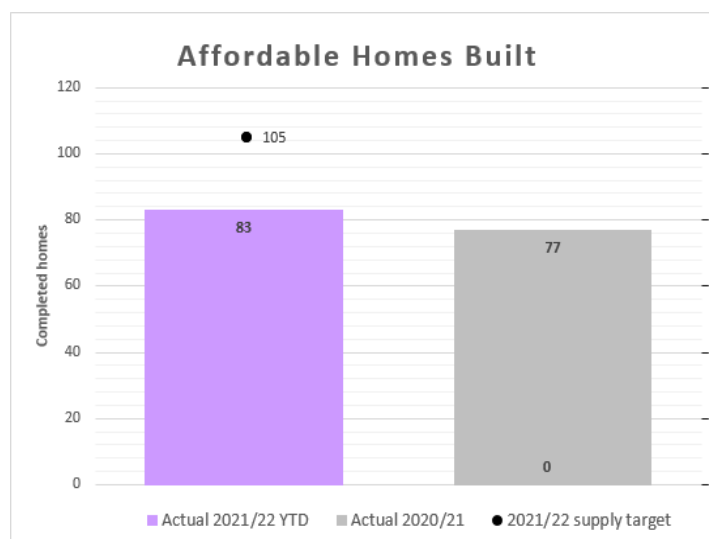
7. This measurement counts the number of all new homes in Rother, allowing for demolitions and change of use to give a net gain. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes to manage spatial development and the provision of affordable and decent housing stock.
8. This indicator has two targets: the supply target and the Local Plan target. The supply target is based on the projected delivery for the year, as set out in the April 2020 Housing Land Supply and Trajectory report.
9. The supply target is 313 new homes for 21/22. Third quarter result is 172 (total).
10. As the Core Strategy is now more than 5 years old, the Local Plan target is now based on the standard method for assessing Local Housing Need.
11. As of April 2020, the annual Local Plan target is 736. It should be noted that this figure does not include the 20% buffer which is required to be included within the Council's five-year housing land supply position calculations.



Polarity: Higher is better

Affordable Homes Built

12. This measurement is the gross number of new affordable homes that have been completed in the district. By completed we mean that the home has been built and handed over from the developer to the provider for occupation by a tenant or purchaser. The home may not yet be occupied. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcome for affordable and decent housing stock, specifically the action to support the development of affordable accommodation.
13. The indicator has two targets: the supply target and the Local Plan target. The supply target is based on anticipated delivery from planned sites that we knew about at the time of setting the target.
14. The supply target is 105 affordable new homes for 2021/22. The Local Plan target is based on local housing need set out in the Local Plan and is set at 121 new affordable homes by the end of 2021/22. Third quarter result is 83 (total).



Polarity: Higher is better

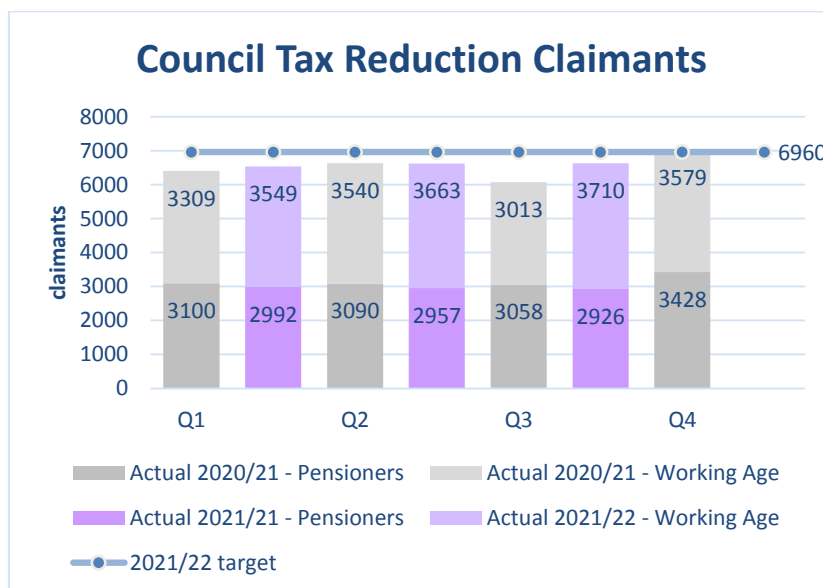
Housing & Communities Summary

9. There were 17 new homes for affordable rent and 14 homes for shared ownership delivered during quarter three to 31 December 2021. As things stand, we think we will meet the supply target of 105. This is already an increase compared to the total in 2021/22 of 77 new affordable homes.
10. The average weeks that households spent in TA was 19 weeks at the end of December.
11. Members will be aware that it has been recommended that the average length of stay in TA be abandoned as a target in 2022/23. The number reduces when we experience a high number of new placements as it has the effect of reducing the average time accommodated on average.
12. The number of households on the housing register continues to rise; however, this is likely to reduce when the new allocations scheme is adopted.
13. Additional homes built – we have enabled the delivery of 153 new homes in 2021/22 to date, which is 19 more than the whole of last year; we are encouraged that this may indicate that we are beginning to return to the levels of housing supply prior to the pandemic.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and POVERTY

Number of Council Tax Reduction Claimants

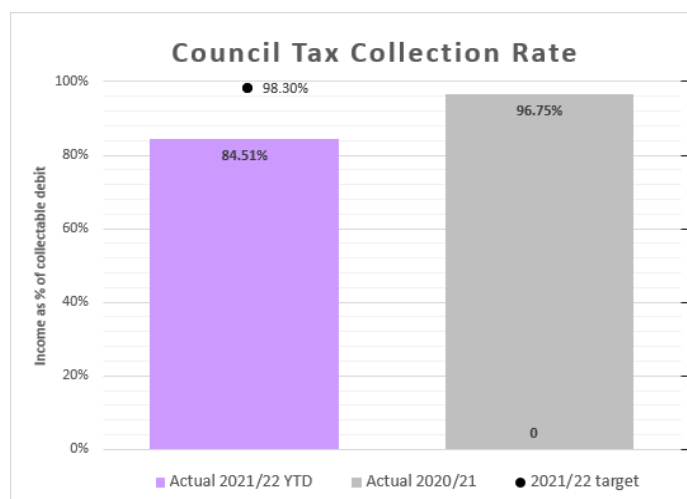
1. This measurement monitors the total number of council tax reduction (CTR) claimants (working age and pensioner) in a receipt of a reduced council tax bill.
2. The measurement indicator has been set at 6,960 (3,919 working age, 3,041 pensionable age). The third quarter total is 6,636.



Polarity: Lower is better

Council Tax Collection Rates

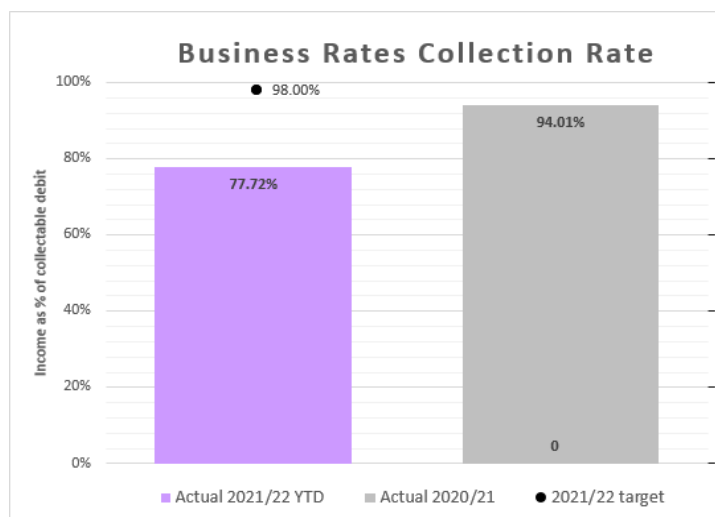
3. This measurement monitors the percentage of council tax estimated collectable debt in the year.
4. The target has been set at 98.30%. Third quarter total is 84.51%.



Polarity: Higher is better

Business Rates Collection rates

1. This measurement monitors the percentage of business rates collected of the estimated collectable debt in the year.
2. The measurement indicator has been set at 98% by the end of the financial year. Third quarter total is 77.72%.



Polarity: Higher is better

Economic Development and Poverty Summary

3. The number of CTR claimants remains broadly similar to the previous year and below the total estimated claimants for the year. The expected spike in the number of claimants following the ending of the furlough scheme has not occurred. However, this will continue to be monitored closely.
4. Council Tax collection rates for the current year as at the end of December continue to be approximately 1.4% ahead of 2020/21, which were hit during the start of the pandemic. Arrears of council tax from previous years now stand at £3.1m of which £1.1m relates to 2020/21. To give Members an insight into the recovery action taking place, the following table shows the activity from first reminder through to post court arrangements. In addition, 4,500 households have special payment arrangements in place.

Council Tax 2021/2022 Recovery

| | Dec | Year to date |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------------|
| First Reminders issued | 0 | 10,622 |
| Final Notices | 361 | 7,547 |
| Summons issued | 0 | 2,876 |
| Liability Orders issued | 118 | 1,997 |
| Cases to Enforcement Agents | 0 | 722 |
| Attachment of Earnings | 0 | 12 |
| Charging Orders | 0 | 4 |
| Attachment of Benefits | 9 | 218 |

5. Business Rates collection rates are lower than previous years. This has been distorted by the additional rate relief the Government awarded for the first

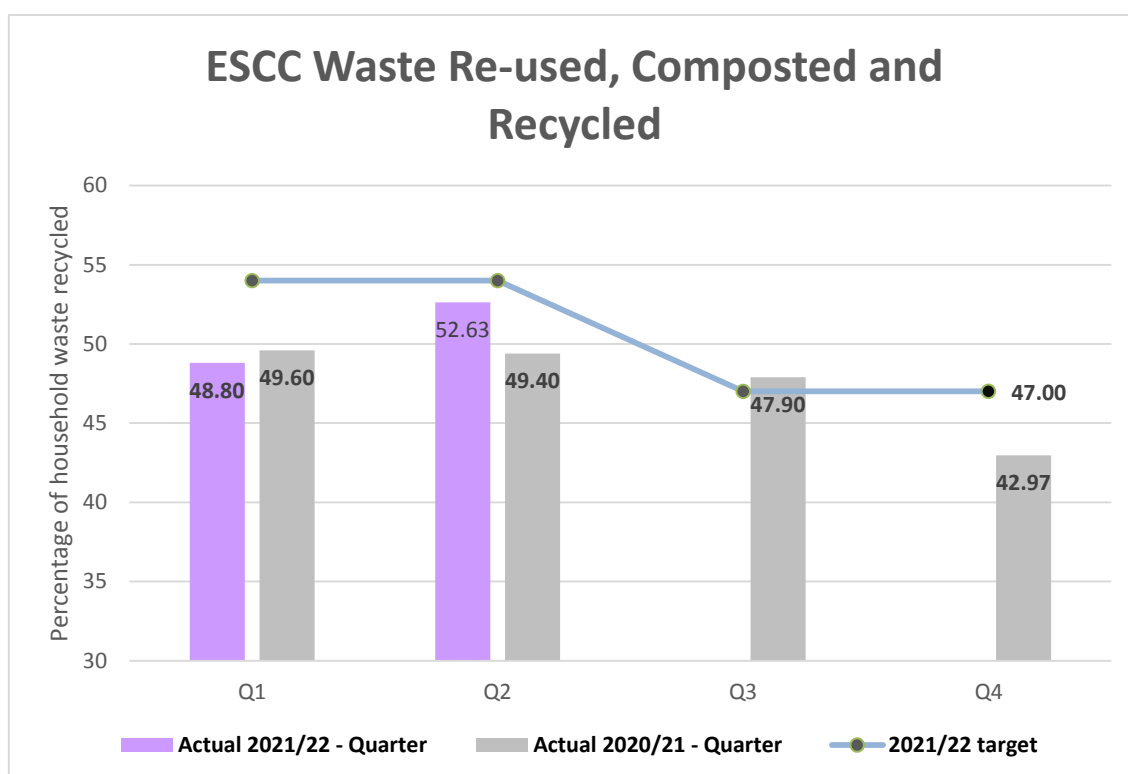
quarter of the year and the near 100% relief awarded in 2020/21. However, as at the end of December the collection rate had increased to 77.72%. Arrears for previous years stand at £710,000. The wide scope of the rate relief has resulted in a low outstanding amount of £173,000 relating to 2020/21. The following table shows the activity from first reminder through to post court arrangements.

| Business Rates 2021/2022 Recovery | Dec | Year to date |
|------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| First Reminders issued | 0 | 998 |
| Final Notices | 51 | 782 |
| Summons issued | 0 | 189 |
| Liability Orders issued | 20 | 121 |
| Cases to Enforcement Agents | 0 | 28 |

WASTE COLLECTION

Household waste Re-used, Composted and Recycled

1. This measurement is the percentage of collected household waste sent to be re-used, recycled and composted.
2. This is based on data reported by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) which includes all waste collection streams and is reported one quarter in arrears. The target for 2021/22 varies depending on the time of year leading to an average of 52%.



Polarity: Higher is better

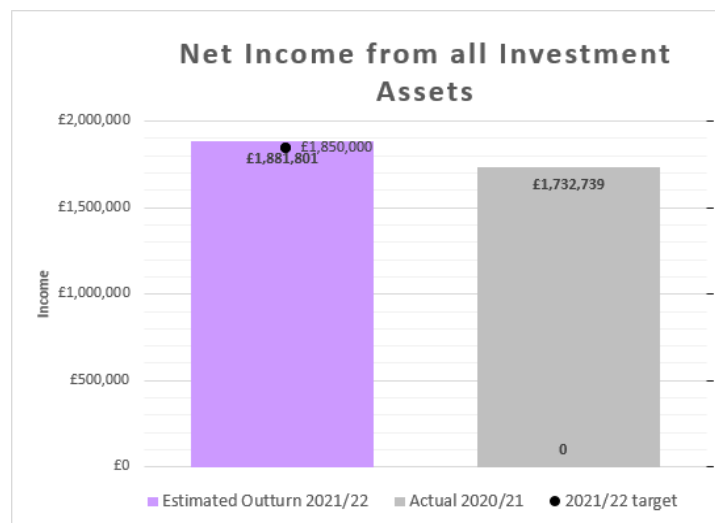
Waste Collection Summary

3. Please note, ESCC advise that the recycling rates for the districts and boroughs are currently under review due to discrepancies between ESCC figures and DEFRA's for some authorities and are subject to change. ESCC will provide an update on this in due course.
4. The reported figures are for quarter two, as we consistently have data one quarter in arrears from Waste Data Flow. The result is 52.63%, as averaged across the three months. The results for July is 54.9%, for August is 51.22% and for September is 51.77%. This is an improvement on the same quarter last year. The rate will fall as we go into the winter period.

ADDITIONAL INCOME

Net Income from All Investment Assets

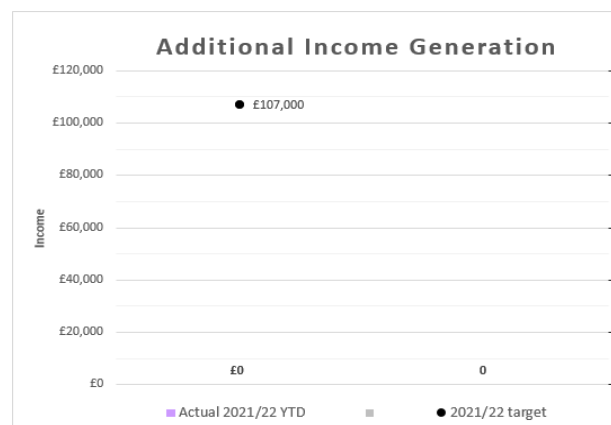
1. This measurement is forecast annual net income from investments calculated from gross income less expenditure excluding borrowing and interest payments.
2. The Asset Income total does not include 'community' assets which might also generate an income, such as sports facilities, allotments etc.
3. The target for 2020/21 is £1,850,000. This does not include any provision for income from any new property purchases achieved in the year.



Polarity: Higher is better

Additional Income Generation

4. Additional income generation through increased or new fees for discretionary services.
5. The target for 2021/22 is £107,000.



Polarity: Higher is better

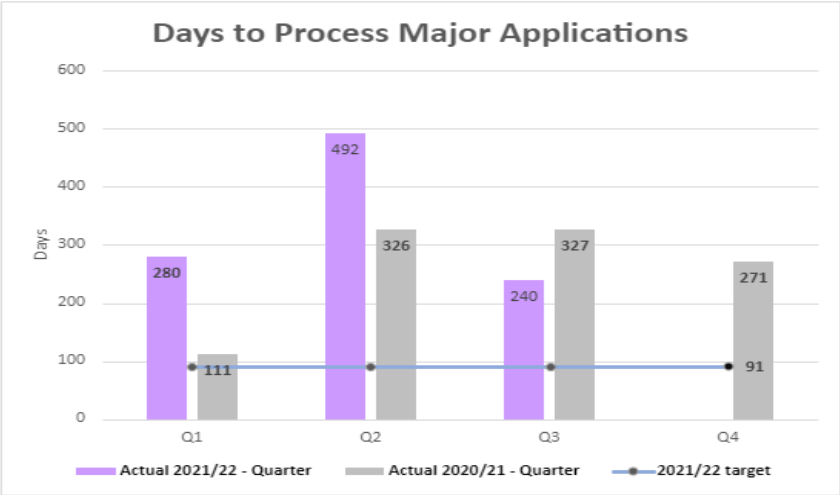
Additional Income Summary

6. There is a projected small shortfall of 1.7% or £31,800 in the projected 2021/22 outturn. The property team are actively looking to improve revenues from existing assets to bridge this gap.
7. Delivering additional income is integral to the Financial Stability Programme. Work has commenced with Heads of Service to identify proposals that will be presented to the Financial Stability Programme Board in due course. As a result of the continuing pandemic, this work and the subsequent implementation of proposals is delayed and therefore it is unlikely that the target for 2021/22 will be met.

PLANNING PROCESSING

Days to Process Major Applications

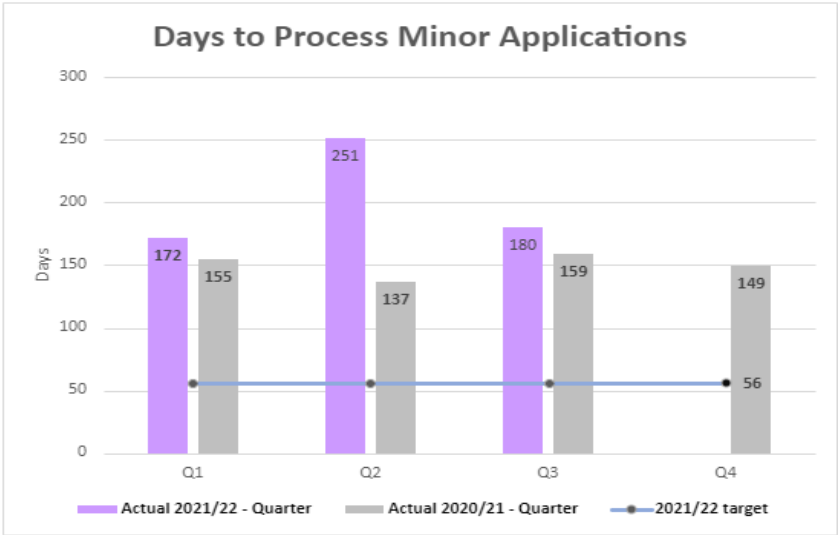
- 1. This measurement is the average number of calendar days to determine 'major' planning applications.
- 2. The target for 2021/22 is 91 days. The result is 240 days.



Polarity: Lower is better

Days to Process Minor Planning Applications

- 3. This measurement is the average number of calendar days to determine 'minor' planning applications.
- 4. The target for 2021/22 is 56 days. The result is 180 days.



Polarity: Lower is better

Planning Processing Summary

5. In previous reports it was projected that there would be a rise in processing time when clearing the backlog and then an improvement would start to be shown in the third quarter. There was a marked improvement in the third quarter, compared to the second quarter, for processing of both major and minor applications. However, work continues on processing improvements and the impact should be clearer with the fourth quarter results. For example, changes to the delegation scheme will be being discussed at the Planning Committee on 10 March. Members can read the report on the Council's website.

[Agenda for Planning Committee on Thursday 10th March 2022, 9.30 am - Rother District Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

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Rother District Council

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 14 March 2022

Title: Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring Quarter 3 - 2021/22

Report of: Antony Baden – Chief Finance Officer

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To note the estimated financial out turn for 2021/22 based on expenditure and income to the end of Quarter 3, 31 December 2021.

To recommend approval of the continuation of two Service Level Agreements (SLA) in respect of Rother District Citizen’s Advice and Bexhill Museum, and agree to the extension of funding of £85,000 for Rother Citizens Advice and £8,500 for Bexhill Museum for a further one-year period with a report to Cabinet later this year.

Officer

Recommendation(s): It be **RESOLVED:** That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) Cabinet be requested to approve the continuation of two Service Level Agreements in respect of Rother District Citizen’s Advice and Bexhill Museum, and agree to the extension of funding of £85,000 for Rother Citizens Advice and £8,500 for Bexhill Museum for a further one-year period.

Introduction

1. This report updates Members on the Council’s finances as of 31 December 2021 and projects a provisional outturn for 2021/22. The Revenue Budget and Capital Programme positions are summarised in Appendices A and B, respectively. The impact of the forecast on the Council’s reserves is summarised in Appendix C. The report also includes a brief update on the Collection Fund performance.
2. There have been two reportable virements since the last financial update to Members. The first relates to the Audio-Visual system maintenance (£13,000), which has been transferred from the Corporate Core budget to the Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration budget. The second is the transfer of a property from Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration that is no longer used as a commercial let, but is instead used as storage space by Housing, Community and Neighbourhood Services.

Revenue Budget

3. The Revenue Budget forecast as of 31 December 2021 indicates a surplus of £128,000 against the approved budget drawdown from Reserves of £2.7m. This represents an improvement of £222,000 since the Quarter 2 forecast. The position is summarised in Appendix A and material variances that have been identified since the last forecast are explained in paragraphs 4 to 15.

Corporate Core – Deficit £24,000

4. There have been no changes since the last forecast.

Environmental Services – Surplus £100,000

5. The surplus has increased by £13,000 since the last forecast and no significant changes have been identified.

Strategy and Planning – Deficit £677,000

6. The forecast deficit has decreased by £60,000 mainly due to a predicted reduction of £54,000 in the cost of support from Capita Business Services to clear the planning applications backlog.
7. There was also a reduction in the costs of judicial reviews forecast (£17,000) and additional income from the administration of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts (£38,000), although this was largely offset by a predicted downturn in Planning fee income of £47,000.

Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration – Surplus £41,000

8. No significant changes have been identified since the last forecast.

Housing, Community and Neighbourhood Services – Surplus £32,000

9. The forecast surplus has improved by £25,000 since the previous quarter. The biggest change relates to the Housing Needs and Rough Sleeping Initiative budgets. In the previous report an overspend of £81,000 was predicted, but these budgets are now anticipated to achieve a 'break even' position. Also, car parking income is expected to exceed the budget by a further £32,000.
10. However, the changes in paragraph 9 have been partially offset by additional car parking running costs (£40,000), a modest increase in the cost of Waste Collection (£28,000) and essential maintenance costs at Bexhill Leisure Centre and Bexhill Leisure Pool (£25,000).

Resources – Deficit £354,000

11. The forecast deficit has increased by £138,000 since the previous quarter, of which £65,000 is attributable to additional salary costs and £31,000 is due to a small net increase in the cost of Housing Benefit claims. Additional costs of £27,000 in relation to IT systems operations have also been forecasted and several other smaller variances totalling £15,000 have increased the predicted overspend.

Net Financing Costs – Surplus £823,000

12. There have been no changes since the last forecast, although the Council took advantage of the low interest rates and obtained further Public Works Loan Board borrowing in December 2021. However, the first repayments are not due until June 2023 therefore there will be no impact on the 2021/22 revenue budget.
13. The impact of the new borrowing has been built into the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan forecast reported to Members during the budget setting process.

Financial Stability Programme (FSP) – Deficit £474,000

14. There have been no changes since the last forecast.

Income – Surplus £662,000

15. Further Central Government grants of £270,000 have been received since the last forecast. These are predominantly in relation to the extra costs incurred by the Council in administering COVID-19 grant payments to businesses and individuals.

Capital Programme

16. The Capital Programme forecast spend as at the 31 December 2021 is £15.348m, which is £47.345m lower than the revised budget approved by Cabinet on 7 February 2022 as part of the Capital Strategy report. As previously reported, this is mainly due to the continued impact of the pandemic. The position is summarised in Appendix B.
17. The main change since the Quarter 2 forecast relates to the purchase of the Mount View site, which is shown in line 9 of Appendix B. The Sussex NHS Partnership Trust have an option to purchase a portion of the land for the development of a new mental health hospital. The option fee covers the costs incurred by the Council by any borrowing related to the site acquisition. The purchase price will effectively be offset by a capital receipt once the site is sold and thus will not increase the scale of the approved capital programme.
18. Where schemes are forecast to underspend, it is still expected that they will be completed in future years. A revised programme was approved by Cabinet on 7 February 2022 as part of the Council's Capital Strategy and future cashflows will continue to be monitored and reported until scheme completion.

Impact of the revenue and capital forecasts on Reserves

19. The forecast impact on Reserves is a drawdown of £3.118m against the planned use of £3.319m. This is a decrease of £277,000 from the previous forecast.

Collection Fund

20. The council tax collection rate at the end of Quarter 3 was 84.51% of the collectable debit and 87.14% of the budgeted yield. Both figures are higher than

the corresponding figures for 2020/21 by 1.35% and 1.20% respectively. Collection performance is shown below:

| | Equivalent Period | |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | 2021/2022 | 2020/2021 |
| Collectable Debit | £82,228,343 | £77,678,592 |
| Income Received | £69,495,059 | £64,596,241 |
| Income Received as a % of collectable debit | 84.51% | 83.16% |
| Budgeted yield (at 98.3% collection) | £79,751,695 | £75,164,936 |
| Income Received as a % of budgeted yield | 87.14% | 85.94% |

21. The Business Rates collection rate at the end of Quarter 3 was 77.72% of the collectable debit, which is 0.49% higher than the corresponding figure in 2020/21. This represents a considerable improvement from the previous quarter when the collection rate was 6.30% down on the 2020/21 figure. Collection performance is shown below.

| | 2021/2022 | Equivalent Period 2020/2021 |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Collectable debit | £14,692,455 | £8,317,100 |
| Income Received | £11,419,620 | £6,423,247 |
| Income Received as a % of collectable debit | 77.72% | 77.23% |
| Amount outstanding for year | £3,272,835 | £1,893,852 |

22. The Council currently provides funding of £85,00 per annum to Rother District Citizens Advice. This was agreed from 1 April 2020 for a four-year period with a review after two years. Officers have been discussing a number of issues with Rother District Citizens Advice following the COVID-19 pandemic and it would be appropriate to continue the funding for a further one-year period while the arrangement and service levels are reviewed.
23. The Council also provides funding of £8,500 per annum to Bexhill Museum, which was also agreed for a four-year period from 1 April 2020, with a review after two years. Members will be aware that there are on-going discussions with Bexhill Town Council over services they may wish to provide, and it is felt appropriate to continue with the funding for a further one-year period to allow those discussions to develop.

Conclusion

24. The revenue forecast for Quarter 3 shows a deficit of £2.571m, which is £128,000 lower than the approved planned use of Reserves. The Chief Finance Officer will continue to work closely with Heads of Services and Members to reduce further the planned drawdown from Reserves.
25. The Council's Capital Programme is forecast to underspend by £47.345m in 2021/22, but this is due to timing differences and the approved five-year programme is still on target to be delivered.

| Other Implications | Applies? | Other Implications | Applies? |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Human Rights | No | Equalities and Diversity | No |
| Crime and Disorder | No | External Consultation | No |
| Environmental | No | Access to Information | No |
| Risk Management | No | Exempt from publication | No |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Chief Executive | Malcolm Johnston | | |
| Report Contact Officer: | Antony Baden | | |
| e-mail address: | antony.baden@rother.gov.uk | | |
| Appendices: | Appendix A | Revenue Budget Forecast | |
| | Appendix B | Capital Programme Forecast | |
| | Appendix C | Impact on Reserves | |
| Relevant Previous Minutes: | None | | |
| Background Papers: | None | | |
| Reference Documents: | None | | |

Revenue Budget 2021/22 Forecast as at the 31 December 2021

| Line | Rother District Council General Fund Summary | Draft 2020/21 Actual £ (000) | Original 2021/22 Budget £ (000) | Revised 2021/22 Budget £ (000) | 2021/22 Estimated Outturn £ (000) | 2021/22 Quarter 3 Variance £ (000) | Change in Previous Quarter Variance £ (000) |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Corporate Core | 2,117 | 2,034 | 1,985 | 2,009 | 24 | 0 |
| 2 | Environmental Services | 507 | 658 | 609 | 509 | (100) | (13) |
| 3 | Strategy and Planning | 1,030 | 1,090 | 1,043 | 1,720 | 677 | (60) |
| 4 | Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration | (392) | (297) | (319) | (360) | (41) | 8 |
| 5 | Housing, Community & Neighbourhood Services | 9,539 | 8,739 | 8,675 | 8,643 | (32) | (25) |
| 6 | Resources | 4,256 | 3,350 | 3,293 | 3,647 | 354 | 138 |
| 7 | Total Cost of Services | 17,057 | 15,574 | 15,286 | 16,168 | 882 | 48 |
| 8 | Net Financing Costs | 118 | 1,101 | 1,101 | 278 | (823) | 0 |
| 9 | Salaries turnover | 0 | (288) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | Financial Stability Programme - savings/cost reductions | 0 | (632) | (632) | (158) | 474 | 0 |
| 11 | Net Cost of Services | 17,175 | 15,755 | 15,755 | 16,288 | 533 | 48 |
| | Income | | | | | | |
| 12 | Special Expenses | (687) | (692) | (692) | (692) | (0) | 0 |
| 13 | Net Business Rates & Section 31 Grants | (4,142) | (3,747) | (3,747) | (3,747) | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | Non-Specific Revenue Grants | (3,194) | (1,653) | (1,653) | (2,315) | (662) | (270) |
| 15 | Council Tax Requirement (Rother only) | (7,019) | (7,097) | (7,097) | (7,097) | (0) | 0 |
| | Other Financing | | | | | | |
| 16 | Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit | (849) | 134 | 134 | 134 | (0) | 0 |
| 17 | Total Income | (15,891) | (13,054) | (13,054) | (13,717) | (662) | (270) |
| 18 | Contribution from Reserves/Funding Gap | 1,284 | 2,700 | 2,700 | 2,571 | (128) | (222) |

Capital Programme 2021/22 Forecast as at the 31 December 2021

| Line | | 2021/22 Actual to Quarter 3 £ (000) | 2021/22 Revised Budget £ (000) | 2021/22 Estimated Outturn £ (000) | 2021/22 Quarter 3 Variance £ (000) |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| | Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration | | | | |
| | Other Schemes | | | | |
| 1 | Community Grants | 81 | 130 | 110 | 20 |
| 2 | Cemetery Entrance | 64 | 172 | 89 | 83 |
| 3 | Rother Transformation ICT Investment | 231 | 384 | 231 | 153 |
| 4 | Corporate Document Image Processing System | 0 | 435 | 36 | 399 |
| 5 | 1066 Pathways | 65 | 66 | 65 | 1 |
| 6 | Ravenside Roundabout | 0 | 200 | 0 | 200 |
| 7 | Development of Town Hall Bexhill | 175 | 460 | 445 | 15 |
| | Property Investment Strategy | | | | |
| 9 | Mount View Street Development - Public/Commercial | 0 | 964 | 2,975 | (2,011) |
| 10 | PIS - Beeching Road/Wainwright Road | 4 | 963 | 373 | 590 |
| 11 | PIS - Barnhorn Road | 192 | 3,402 | 577 | 2,825 |
| 12 | PIS - Beeching Road 18-40 (Creative Workspace) | 477 | 501 | 595 | (94) |
| 14 | PIS - 64 Ninfield Road | 18 | 100 | 0 | 100 |
| | Housing Development Schemes | | | | |
| 15 | Community Led Housing Schemes | 106 | 600 | 434 | 166 |
| 16 | Blackfriars Housing Development - infrastructure only | 2,213 | 10,728 | 2,900 | 7,828 |
| 17 | Mount View Street Development - Housing | 3,657 | 6,940 | | 6,940 |
| 18 | Alliance Homes (Rother) Ltd | 151 | 25,000 | 1,508 | 23,492 |
| 19 | Alliance Homes share capital | 0 | 100 | 101 | (1) |
| | Housing and Community Services | | | | |
| 20 | De La Warr Pavilion - Capital Grant | 56 | 54 | 56 | (2) |
| 21 | Sidley Sports and Recreation | 143 | 811 | 710 | 101 |
| 22 | Land Swap re Former High School Site | 0 | 1,085 | 185 | 900 |
| 24 | Bexhill Leisure Centre - refurbishment | 0 | 140 | 50 | 90 |
| 25 | Disabled Facilities Grant | 888 | 1,625 | 1,250 | 375 |
| 26 | New bins | 112 | 125 | 114 | 11 |
| 27 | Bexhill Promenade - Outflow pipe | 2 | 100 | 20 | 80 |
| 28 | Bexhill Promenade - Protective Barriers | 45 | 47 | 46 | 1 |
| 29 | Bexhill Promenade - Shelter 1 | 5 | 0 | 5 | (5) |
| 30 | Fairlight Coastal Protection | 4 | 0 | 19 | (19) |
| 31 | Housing (purchases - temp accomodation) | 301 | 7,300 | 2,255 | 5,045 |
| | Strategy & Planning | | | | |
| 32 | Payments to Parishes - CIL | 40 | 88 | 40 | 48 |
| | Resources | | | | |
| 34 | ICT Infrastructure – Ongoing Upgrade Programme | 108 | 123 | 109 | 14 |
| 35 | Invest To Save initiatives (Financial Stability Programme) | 29 | 50 | 50 | 0 |
| | Total Capital Programme | 9,167 | 62,693 | 15,348 | 47,345 |

| Line | | 2021/22 Revised Budget £ (000) | 2021/22 Estimated Outturn £ (000) |
|------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| | Funded By: | | |
| | Capital Receipts | 1,085 | 185 |
| | Grants and contributions | 13,893 | 6,143 |
| | CIL | 431 | 238 |
| | Borrowing | 20,846 | 6,727 |
| | Capital Expenditure Charged to Revenue | 1,438 | 547 |
| | Borrowing - Alliance Homes (Rother) Ltd | 25,000 | 1,508 |
| | Total Funding | 62,693 | 15,348 |

Reserves

| | Draft 2020/21 Actual £ (000) | Original 2021/22 Budget £ (000) | Revised 2021/22 Budget £ (000) | 2021/22 Estimated Outturn £ (000) | 2021/22 Quarter 3 Variance £ (000) |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Revenue Reserves and General Fund - Opening Balance | (14,970) | (13,209) | (13,209) | (13,209) | 0 |
| Use of Reserves to Fund Capital Expenditure | 477 | 619 | 619 | 547 | (72) |
| Use of Reserves to Balance Budget incl deficit | 1,284 | 2,700 | 2,700 | 2,571 | (129) |
| Balance 31/3/20 | (13,209) | (9,890) | (9,890) | (10,091) | (201) |

Rother District Council

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Report to: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Date: | 14 March 2022 |
| Title: | Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy |
| Report of: | Joe Powell (Head of Service Housing and Community) |
| Ward(s): | All |
| Purpose of Report: | For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider and recommend to Cabinet the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy for consultation. |
| Officer | |
| Recommendation(s): | It be RESOLVED : That Cabinet be requested to approve the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy for consultation with key stakeholders and the wider population of Rother. |

Introduction

1. The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2027 includes several objectives that aspire to improve the economic, housing, health and wellbeing outcomes of its residents; therefore, adopting measures and supporting local initiatives that address some of the causes of income, health and housing poverty (and alleviate its effects) will support the Council in its wider corporate ambitions.
2. In January 2020, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the formation of an Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group (APT&FG) and set its Terms of Reference (Minute OSC19/48 refers). The aim of the APT&FG was to investigate the effects of income, health and housing poverty on local people and the local services that support them. The original timetable for the activity of the APT&FG has been revised due to the impact of COVID-19.
3. In June 2021, the APT&FG made recommendations to Cabinet that an Anti-Poverty Strategy be developed for Council approval (Minute CB21/18 refers). The recommended aim of the strategy was for statutory and community services operating in the Rother district to work together to reduce levels of poverty. The main objectives of the strategy were recommended as follows:
 - **Coordination:** develop local strategic commissioning and operational structures to coordinate services designed to alleviate poverty.
 - **Access:** maximise the accessibility of services so that those in the greatest need can be reached.
 - **Promotion:** promote information, advice and support to service users and professionals.
4. It was also recommended that the development and delivery of the strategy be coordinated through existing partnership structures such as the Local Strategic Partnership.

Strategy Development

5. On 4 November 2021, a multi-agency event was held at The Pelham, led by the Council in partnership with Rother Voluntary Action (RVA). The purpose of the event was to review the recommended objectives and identify the high level aims and actions that would support us to achieve these.
6. The event was well attended and productive. Attendees were presented with feedback and case studies that had been secured by RVA following a series of consultations with local community groups from urban and rural areas of the district. We also presented the findings of the APT&FG based on the evidence gathering sessions it had undertaken. The objectives were reviewed and supported by those present at the event with a series of high level aims and actions also identified. These actions have been captured within the draft Action Plan appended to the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy at Appendix A.
7. The group also identified that the aims and actions identified within the strategy and its action plan need to be delivered by a multi-agency Anti-Poverty Strategy Steering Group (APSSG) to ensure objectives remain achievable. Progress reports on the action plan will also be fed to the Rother Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSP will support and monitor the progress of the strategy action plan through the promotion of its objectives through the East Sussex Strategy Partnership. The LSP will also support the coordination of existing resources and influence future service commissioning through its networks.

Consultation

8. The consultation plan, as attached at Appendix B, sets out the groups we intend to consult and the methods we intend to use. The majority of the consultation will take place via an online questionnaire; however, telephone and written consultation responses will be accepted.
9. The consultation questionnaire, as attached at the end of Appendix B, sets out several questions related to the draft document and proposed strategy objectives and action plan.

Conclusion

10. It is clear from the strategy development that the causes of poverty are multiple and complex and its symptoms wide ranging. The effects of poverty are felt by a range of different sectors of the community across different demographic groups and geographic locations. Many of the causes of poverty cannot be influenced effectively at a local level and the Council cannot effectively tackle the symptoms of poverty on its own.
11. The strategy proposed has been developed between key local partners to ensure that the objectives identified are relevant and that the actions proposed ambitious, while being achievable within the resources available locally. The priority is to form the APSSG and begin to deliver the high level aims and actions that have been identified. The APSSG will develop and refine its objectives as it establishes itself. It will identify gaps in service provision and areas where greater collaboration and coordination between services can support improved outcomes for our residents. The Strategy should therefore be

regarded as an important first step towards developing a more comprehensive response to tackling poverty locally.

12. The APSSG will provide periodic progress updates to the LSP in its role as the governing body responsible for monitoring the strategy and reporting progress to the East Sussex Strategic Partnership.

Legal Implications

13. An Equalities Impact Assessment will need to be completed before a final Strategy is adopted.

Environmental Implications

14. Current and future district environmental strategies and interventions will need to consider the needs of those experiencing poverty of access to adequate income, health, housing and education and ensure these needs are met.

| Other Implications | Applies? | Other Implications | Applies? |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Human Rights | No | Equalities and Diversity | No |
| Crime and Disorder | No | External Consultation | Yes |
| Environmental | Yes | Access to Information | No |
| Risk Management | No | Exempt from publication | No |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chief Executive: | Malcolm Johnston |
| Report Contact Officer: | Joe Powell |
| e-mail address: | joe.powell@rother.gov.uk |
| Appendices: | A – Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy B – Consultation Plan and Questionnaire |
| Relevant previous Minutes: | OSC19/48 CB21/18 |
| Background Papers: Reference Documents: | None |

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Anti-Poverty Strategy

2022-2025

FOREWORD

It is often said that the morality of a society should be judged on how it treats its weakest and most disadvantaged members.

For a few in society, the year 2022 sees exorbitant profits and wealth and yet for many, the year brings about further hardship on top of years of strained financial circumstances.

Ten years of austerity alongside stagnant wages had already plunged many people into hardship and by 2019, when work on this strategy started, many people were looking to their local councils for help. With resources stretched at every level of local government following the withdrawal of most central government funds, the options open to councils in tackling poverty have been limited.

Despite this, the 2019-formed coalition administration at Rother District Council made a clear commitment in the Council's corporate plan to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of local hardship services, the results of which include this strategy.

The strategy itself is a culmination of work done by the cross-party Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group, set up by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As chair of the group, it was an honour to lead the discussions in this area and, following some initial suggestions, we began by seeking to establish the state of poverty and of anti-poverty efforts in the district, meeting with local partners and Council officers to determine what services existed, where there were gaps and how better links could be made.

Following this, it was considered advantageous to commission a strategy in collaboration with Rother Voluntary Action and other local partners.

Since the start of this work, the situation for many experiencing hardship has grown worse following the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the emerging cost of living crisis. It is therefore of even greater importance that this strategy is implemented in a meaningful way to strengthen Rother's connections with groups and charities in the voluntary and community sector, who are on the front lines tackling poverty, as well as improving how our own services are delivered.

The aims and objectives in this strategy will hopefully bring about genuine, tangible improvements to the lives of those below the poverty line and help prevent others from falling into major hardship. This is a precise, strategic plan rather than empty statements and hot air that will lead to real change and improvement.

A huge thank you is owed to the officers and staff at the Council who have put this document together and to the members of the Task and Finish Group as well as our external partners and collaborators.

Through this strategy, and the work that follows, we should see that those experiencing poverty within our district are better given the tools and support they need to overcome it.

As a local authority with an implicit duty of care to our residents, working towards this aim is not something tertiary but is in fact a fundamental task we should feel duty bound to undertake in order to build a fairer society for all.

To quote Nelson Mandela,

“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life.”

Cllr Sam Coleman

Chair of the Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group

INTRODUCTION

“Poverty is not simply about not having enough money or going without luxuries. It is about struggling to get through each day. About constantly making sacrifices; about living in a state of worry verging on perpetual fear, about never knowing how you will survive the week; about never having a few days away, let alone a holiday. It is about your children being haunted by the prospect of being stigmatised, humiliated and bullied. About pensioners not knowing how they can carry on living yet dreading imposing a burden on relatives when they die... Most of those in poverty cannot help being in their situation. No one chooses to be poor.”¹

In January 2020 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the formation of an Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group (APT&FG). The aim of the APT&FG was to investigate the effects of income, health and housing poverty on local people and the services that support them.

The APT&FG held two events at the end of 2020 to gather evidence from external partners and internal Council colleagues and meet its objectives. The objectives were:

- To undertake a review of the accessibility of appropriate financial products, including an analysis of the forms of less appropriate forms of credit and the extent of their use.
- To assess how residents are educated about finances and consider what improvements can be made to financial literacy in the district.
- To consider the impact of Council Tax Reduction policy and the accessibility of Council Tax Reduction to those experiencing financial hardship.
- To consider the impact of Council administered discretionary housing benefit payments (DHP) its accessibility and the processes used to allocate DHP to those at risk of homelessness.
- To investigate the availability of financial advice, homelessness advice, employment and training advice and the role of the Council in supporting these.
- To investigate the availability of affordable fuel, food and other provisions and the Council’s role in supporting these.

The evidence gathering sessions provided reassuring evidence of the levels of commitment to alleviating the symptoms of poverty amongst the agencies in attendance. There is a great deal of service activity locally and an impressive level of knowledge and expertise within both Council and partner services. However, the evidence gathering sessions identified areas for improvement. The way in which services are **coordinated** is sometimes disjointed and there was evidence of service

¹ Reporting poverty in the UK, A practical guide for journalists, page 9 Revised edition 2009, Copyright: Society of Editors. Published by: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

duplication, particularly in the provision of benefits and budgeting support. In addition, while a wide range of specialist services are available to residents, they are not always delivered in a way that makes them **accessible** so that crisis situations can be prevented from developing; and finally, the way in which service information is **promoted** to service users and between professionals is uncoordinated at times and very focussed online. It was identified that a multi-agency Anti-Poverty Strategy may well offer partners a means of achieving improvements in these areas.

VISION, AIMS and OBJECTIVES

To work together to tackle the symptoms of poverty in order to reduce its impact and enable communities to thrive.

The aim of the strategy is for statutory and community services operating in the Rother district to work together to reduce levels of poverty through:

- **Coordination:** develop local strategic commissioning and operational structures to coordinate services designed to alleviate poverty.
- **Access:** maximise the accessibility of services so that those in the greatest need can be reached.
- **Promotion:** promote information, advice and support to service users and professionals,

CHALLENGES

Co-ordination

- There are a high number of services available locally and there was concern that these may not be being coordinated between service providers and commissioners effectively at strategic levels.
- There was evidence that there is no group locally coordinating the operational delivery of benefits advice, homelessness support, housing quality and food and fuel poverty services.
- Every contact counts: a similar concern that front-line staff did not know what services are available locally and are unable to advise people holistically.
- Barriers to data sharing need to be overcome so that organisations can share information between teams and organisations to share information to assist individuals effectively.
- The provision of affordable childcare is crucial in supporting access to employment as well as lifting children out of the effects of poverty through improved educational attainment.

Further challenges identified related to the accessibility of services and their promotion:

Accessibility

- Access to the internet is imperfect, particularly in rural areas and service providers should not assume internet access is effective across all demographics and geographical locations.

- There is a lot of reliance locally on signposting individuals to services through online routes and the telephone when many vulnerable people may not be able to access online or telephone services.
- Service locations are distant from one another and not always in convenient locations.
- Rural areas are challenging places in which to deliver services; however, there is limited use of technology and utilising existing community locations such as parish / town council buildings to deliver services.
- There needs to be an upskilling of RDC staff so that residents are provided with information and the right advice at the right time – making every contact count.

Promotion

- There is a low level of knowledge amongst professionals and service users of the existing East Sussex Community Information Service.
- Literacy levels among some is limited - with the average reading age being nine years old nationally - are services therefore reaching those with low literacy levels effectively, through written communication and promotion?
- There is an overwhelming amount of information produced that promotes different services and it is not coordinated through a central group that could target vulnerable groups collectively.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Pre-pandemic, up to 14.5 million people were in poverty when taking housing costs into account which is one in every 4 people in the UK. However, estimates of a further 700,000 people experienced hardship during the pandemic which pushes the poverty figure in the UK to more than 15 million. In 2019/20 there were 4.3 million children living in poverty in the UK – 31% of all children. Of children living in lone-parent families, 49% are in poverty – lone parents face a higher risk of poverty due to lack of an additional earner, low rates of maintenance payments, gender inequality in employment and pay, and childcare costs.

People who are living in poverty are more likely to be affected by: under-achievement at school, unemployment, health problems (physical and mental), substance misuse, debt, poor quality accommodation and insecure housing and homelessness. The average reading age of the UK population is 9 years – that is, they have achieved the reading ability normally expected of a 9-year-old.

Eight in ten people claiming universal credit in November were in work or looking for work. More than 30% of couple households with one full-time earner are in poverty, nearly as high as the rate of hardship for families without any full-time workers. The number of working families struggling to make ends meet hit a record high just before the pandemic, with one in six working households – or 17.4% – living in poverty.

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHY

Rother's population as of 2020 was 96,700 from 90,588 in 2011 (Census). Almost half live in the main urban town of Bexhill, 4,745 live in Rye, 7,125 live in Battle, with the remaining living in the rural villages and hamlets spread throughout the district. Rother

has one of the oldest populations (with a median age of 52 years). In fact, 9.24% of Rother's population is aged 80+, almost double the national average (4.96%).

Housing tenure nationally is 63.3% owner occupied; 16.7% private rented; 17.6% social rented. This compares to Rother at 73.5% owner occupied; 14% private rented; and 10.4% social rented. Noticeably the size of the social rented sector in Rother is significantly less than that nationally, which indicates a potential imbalance in housing tenures locally, placing greater pressures on the private rented sector to accommodate our housing need than nationally.

In Rother the percentage of adults whose current marital status is separated or divorced is significantly higher compared to England however lone parent households are significantly lower. The percentage of the population who provide 50 or more hours per week unpaid care is significantly higher compared to the national average.

LOCAL CONTEXT

10530 people in Rother are affected by income deprivation²

Rother now ranks as 135 out of 317 Local Authorities in terms of rank of average rank³ compared to 148 (out of 326) in 2015. There are two neighbourhoods among the most deprived decile (compared to 1 in 2019), and 42 neighbourhoods out of 58 ranked as relatively more deprived in 2019 than in 2015. Twenty-three LSOAs⁴ in Rother rank more deprived decile than in 2010, compared to 7 which rank as relatively less deprived. Table 1 demonstrates Rother's rank across Local Authorities broken down into subjects in terms of rank of average rank.

Table 1

| Domain | Rank (2015) | Rank (2019) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Overall</i> | 148 | 135 |
| Income | 151 | 143 |
| Employment | 122 | 113 |
| Education | 132 | 153 |
| Health | 174 | 148 |
| Crime | 252 | 221 |
| Barriers to housing & services | 121 | 55 |
| Living environment | 132 | 107 |

Sidley is in the Top 10 neighbourhoods experiencing deprivation in East Sussex, with the other nine in that Top 10 being in Hastings. Altogether six LSOAs in Rother are among the most deprived 20% in England, four in Bexhill (3 in Sidley and 1 in Central), one in Rye and one in Eastern Rother. 8.5% of the Rother District population have no qualifications, this is nearly twice as many as the South East figure (4.8%).

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Indices of Deprivation, 2019

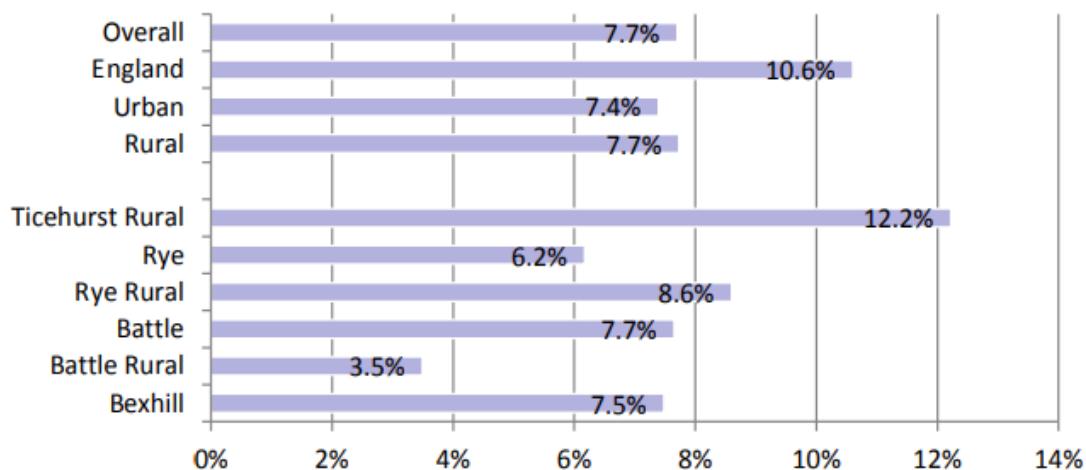
³ Rank of Average Rank – this measure summarises the average level of deprivation across an area, based on the population weighted ranks of all the LSOAs within it.

⁴ Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are small areas designed to be of a similar population size, with an average of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households. There are 32,844 Lower-layer LSOAs in England. LSOAs are a standard statistical geography produced by the Office for National Statistics for the reporting of small area statistics.

| Qualifications (Jan 2020-Dec 2020) | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| | Rother (Level) | Rother (%) | South East (%) | Great Britain (%) |
| NVQ4 And Above | 17,800 | 35.4 | 45.1 | 43.1 |
| NVQ3 And Above | 23,800 | 47.4 | 63.8 | 61.3 |
| NVQ2 And Above | 35,300 | 70.3 | 80.5 | 78.1 |
| NVQ1 And Above | 44,100 | 87.7 | 90.2 | 87.7 |
| Other Qualifications | # | # | 5.0 | 5.9 |
| No Qualifications | 4,300 | 8.5 | 4.8 | 6.4 |

Source: ONS annual population survey

Fuel poverty refers to a household unable to afford an adequate standard of warmth and pay for other energy bills to maintain their health and wellbeing. If a household has to spend more than 10% of their income on heating, they are classed as being in fuel poverty. Using the ‘Low Income High Costs’ definition of fuel poverty adopted by the government in 2013 and excluding social housing stock, overall the results show that 7.7% of households in Rother are in fuel poverty. Overall there is a slightly higher incidence of fuel poverty in rural than in urban areas, with the highest incidence found in Ticehurst (rural).



Rother has significantly higher levels of people with long term health problems or a disability than seen nationally. High numbers of households with long term health problems and disabilities will add pressure to existing services, and housing provision; careful planning is required to ensure the needs of all types of households are met on new build housing development. Rother has amongst the highest levels of self-reported bad health and Limiting Long-Term Illnesses or disability of all the

districts/boroughs. Life expectancy at birth and age 75, and all-age, premature and preventable mortality are similar to East Sussex.

| Type | People with long-term health problem or disability | Day-to-day activities limited a little | Day-to-day activities limited a lot | People without long-term health problem or disability |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| England and Wales | 17.9 | 9.4 | 8.5 | 82.1 |
| South East | 15.7 | 8.8 | 6.9 | 84.3 |
| Rother | 23.4 | 12.8 | 10.7 | 76.6 |

Rother has similar income and employment deprivation to East Sussex, including the percentage of older people affected by income deprivation and children in low income families, rates of working age people claiming ESA, JSA and UC, households with dependent children and no adults in employment (Census 2011) and households in fuel poverty. There are 3,944 Universal Credit claims under Bexhill Job Centre Plus as of December 2021 which is broken down to 1094 searching for work and 1410 in work.

| Earnings by place of residence (2021) | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Rother (Pounds) | South East (Pounds) | Great Britain (Pounds) |
| Gross Weekly Pay | | | |
| Full-Time Workers | 579.8 | 660.1 | 613.1 |
| Male Full-Time Workers | 639.4 | 709.1 | 655.5 |
| Female Full-Time Workers | 528.5 | 584.6 | 558.1 |
| Hourly Pay - Excluding Overtime | | | |
| Full-Time Workers | 14.98 | 16.97 | 15.65 |
| Male Full-Time Workers | 16.48 | 17.91 | 16.26 |
| Female Full-Time Workers | 14.15 | 15.65 | 14.86 |

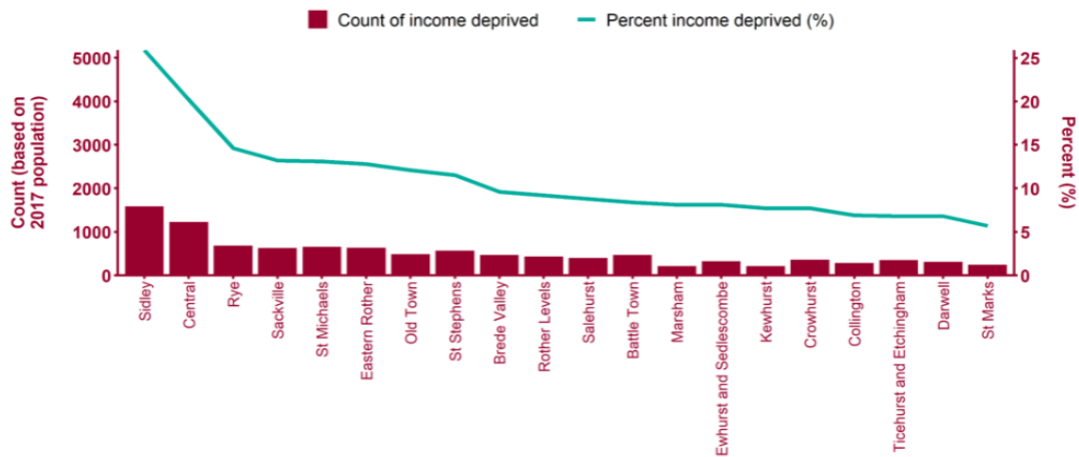
Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis
Notes: Median earnings in pounds for employees living in the area.

Economic activity and inactivity in 2011

This dataset shows economic activity and inactivity amongst those aged 16-74 from the 2011 Census.

| Economic activity category | All people aged 16-74 | All economically active | Employee | Self-employed | Unemployed | Economically active full-time student | All economically inactive | Long-term sick or disabled | Looking after home or family | Retired | Economically inactive student (including full-time students) | Other economically inactive |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------|---------------|------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Geography | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| England and Wales | 100.0 | 69.7 | 52.2 | 9.7 | 4.4 | 3.4 | 30.3 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 13.8 | 5.8 | 2.2 |
| South East | 100.0 | 71.9 | 54.2 | 11.0 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 28.0 | 2.9 | 4.4 | 13.7 | 5.2 | 1.8 |
| East Sussex | 100.0 | 68.1 | 48.2 | 13.4 | 3.6 | 2.8 | 31.9 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 17.8 | 4.0 | 1.8 |
| Rother | 100.0 | 63.4 | 43.2 | 14.8 | 3.2 | 2.1 | 36.6 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 22.5 | 3.8 | 1.9 |

Income deprivation by ward (IMD 2019)

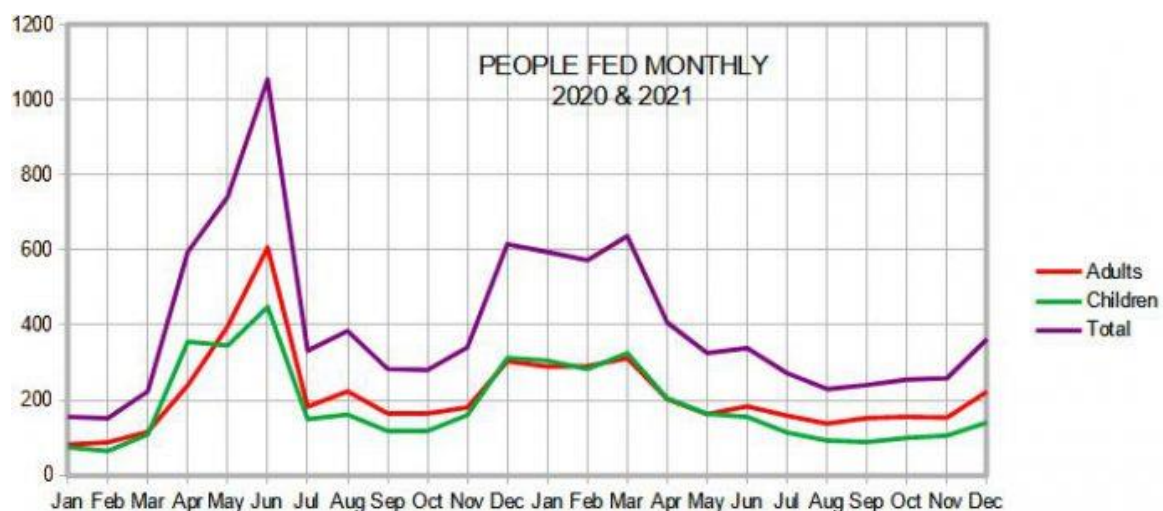


Benefit capped households 2015-2020

| Month | Nov 15 | Nov 16 | Nov 17 | Nov 18 | Nov 19 | Nov 20 |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Geography | | | | | | |
| England | 18,866 | 23,600 | 57,405 | 54,456 | 68,907 | 165,213 |
| South East | 2,086 | 4,357 | 7,792 | 7,664 | 11,101 | 27,451 |
| East Sussex | 138 | 421 | 434 | 466 | 673 | 1,685 |
| Eastbourne | 23 | 110 | 107 | 132 | 159 | 393 |
| Hastings | 48 | 37 | 162 | 137 | 153 | 372 |
| Lewes | 39 | 113 | 22 | 27 | 173 | 400 |
| Rother | 9 | 69 | 68 | 76 | 86 | 209 |
| Wealden | 20 | 94 | 73 | 105 | 117 | 318 |

In the first three quarters of 2021/22, Bexhill foodbank has fed 7,254 people – 4,830 adults and 2,424 children. They have processed on average 50 vouchers a week of mixed family groups, many of which are single working people. In the year 2020/21, a total of 12,651 people were fed through Bexhill foodbank. The foodbank does not just support households with food but hosts advice sessions through Hastings Advice and Representation Centre (HARC) where the majority of enquiries led to charitable applications and discretionary housing payment applications. The main need stems from shortfalls in rent support. They are also seeing high utility debt, the worst being £6K for just one household. Rye Foodbank have also hosted advice services since April 2021 and have had to be versatile in their approach due to the continued pressures of COVID, so not only have HARC held face to face sessions but they have also conducted sessions through Zoom.

The amount of people fed through Rye Foodbank 2020 & 2021



NEXT STEPS

Tackling the causes of poverty requires a commitment from all partners to joint work in partnership to overcome these issues and make a real difference to the lives of local people who are being directly impacted by living in poverty.

This strategy sets out our approach for tackling poverty across Rother District against a backdrop of growing demand for services, reducing public sector budgets and increases to the daily cost of living. The partnership acknowledges there are limits on the impact local action can have on some aspects beyond their control, for example, those driven by central government policy, and therefore the actions they will take will be localised.

There is a commitment from voluntary, statutory and business sectors to alleviate poverty. Delivery of the strategy will be overseen by the Rother Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and there will be an annual report produced which will: detail the successes and progress made towards meeting the objectives, outline priorities to action for the year ahead, and look at the poverty challenges and responses from partners. The initial Action Plan can be found in Appendix A, with the provisional timeline for the strategy detailed overleaf.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| RDC and RVA refine strategy and action plan in consultation with Working Group | March 2022 |
| Draft Strategy Consultation – report to OSC | 14 March 2022 |
| Draft Strategy Consultation – report to Cabinet | 28 March 2022 |
| Consultation period (6 weeks) | April - May 2022 |
| Final Strategy – report to OSC | June 2022 |
| Final Strategy – report to Cabinet | June 2022 |
| Final Strategy – report to Full Council | 4 July 2022 |

ACTION PLAN

| | Action | When | Who | Progress |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C O O R D I N A T I O N | Form a local Anti-Poverty Strategy Steering Group (APSSG) – coordinate homelessness and anti-poverty strategies and be governed by the LSP | Spring 2022 | RDC, RVA | A date for the first APSSG meeting has been set. |
| | APSSG to develop a framework to increase levels of officer co-location between services in community locations. | Summer 2022 | RDC, RVA | Options to co-locate Council services in community locations, including remote access, are in place |
| | APSSG to engage with local strategic leaders to act as consultee to regional and sub-regional commissioners | Summer 2022 | All | The APSSG will inform future commissioning via the LSP. |
| A C C E S S | Deliver new Bexhill place-based Hub and new rural virtual Hubs | Spring 2023 | RDC, RVA | We are working to identify potential sites and routes to delivery. |
| | APSSG to support existing service hubs with more targeted signposting | Summer 2022 | APSSG | A more refined action plan will be developed by the APSSG |
| | The APSSG to collaborate to form a Street Sheet to map the services available | Winter 2022 | APSSG | To be developed via the APSSG |
| | The APSSG to collaborate to Increase social prescribing through GP surgeries | Summer 2022 | APSSG | To be developed via the APSSG |
| P R O M O T I O N | The APSSG to develop a training resource video of local services for residents and frontline staff | March 2023 | APSSG | To be developed via the APSSG |
| | The APSSG to work together to improve accessibility to information, including | March 2023 | APSSG | To be developed via the APSSG |

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| | through digital channels. | | | |
| | The APSSG to develop an annual Anti-Poverty networking event for local services | August 2022 | APSSG | To be developed via the APSSG |

CASE STUDIES

“My wife cooked and cared for me. Since her death 2 years ago, I have been trying to cook for myself but it has been quite difficult, partly due to my inability to cook but also due to the fact that I have severe arthritis which makes it difficult for me to regularly prepare a full, healthy meal. The food bank and Warming Up the Homeless have been really helpful with supplying me with food, as in addition to my health issues, I haven’t got much money to spare for food” - Male, 70

“I lost my job during the pandemic last year, and I have been unable to find another job since. As I live on my own and have no help from family, the benefits I get are not enough to cover my living costs and after I have paid all the bills, there is very little left for food. I feel embarrassed about having to visit the foodbank, but I know it’s necessary if I want to eat!” - Female, late 20s

“I am a single mum, working full time with two children. My childcare costs, even with help of UC, cost half my wages. I literally pay to go to work. I am having to apply for food vouchers through the Household Support Fund to get me and my children through. I don’t know what we’ll do when the fuel prices rocket in Spring as I already enter my overdraft each month. I would be better off not working, how is that possible!”- Female, 45

Poverty Definitions

Poverty in the UK tends not to be absolute, but relative poverty.

- Absolute poverty: When basic human needs are lacking, e.g. clean water, nutrition, health care, education, clothing and shelter.
- Relative poverty: When someone's resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities. Nonetheless, relative poverty is still a serious issue.
- Relative income poverty: Households whose combined income is 60% or less of the average (median) British household income in that year (after housing costs). Such a level of income restricts one's ability to fully participate in society. This is the most common measure of poverty and is used by the UK Government. References made to poverty within this strategy are to relative income poverty.

The sociologist Peter Townsend, who was a founding member of Child Poverty Action Group, defined poverty in 1979:

"Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies in which they belong."

This shows how important it is to understand that poverty is relative – you are poor if you are unable to live at the standard that most other people would expect. A child can have three meals a day, warm clothes and go to school, but still be poor because her parents do not have enough money to ensure she can live in a warm home, have access to a computer to do her homework, or go on the same school trips as her classmates. More than 2,500 children in Rother are living in poverty.

List of websites and documents:

Child Poverty Action Group - <https://cpag.org.uk>

Joint Strategic Needs & Assets Assessment - www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk

Office for National Statistics - www.ons.gov.uk

Joseph Rowntree Foundation – www.jrf.org.uk

Rother District Needs and Assets Profile 2017 from the East Sussex Joint Strategic Needs & Assets Assessment

Child Poverty Act 2010 (abolished in 2016 by the Welfare Reform and Work Act)
Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000

Fuel Poverty (England) Regulations 2014

Health & Social Care Act 2012

[Council Plan 2021/22 | East Sussex County Council](#)

[East Sussex Strategic Partnership - Pride of Place \(essp.org.uk\)](http://essp.org.uk)

[Healthy Hastings and Rother - NHS East Sussex CCG](#)

RDC Anti-Poverty Strategy

CONSULTATION PLAN 2022

While Rother District Council has formed the draft Strategy with a range of statutory and community sector partners it will seek to identify any gaps for inclusion and gather evidence of the potential impact of the Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan. This includes understanding the strength of feeling on the proposals from residents, community groups and wider stakeholders.

Aims of the consultation

This consultation will give the Members of Rother District Council (the Councillors) further evidence to take into account when making a final decision on the content of the strategy.

Who we will consult:

Resident target groups:

- Users of community and support services

Statutory Partners:

- Department Work & Pensions
- Mental Health Services
- ESCC

Voluntary sector partners:

- Local organisations that support vulnerable groups that could be affected by poverty

Internal/other:

- Finance
- Housing Benefit & Council Tax
- Parish / Town Councils
- Customer Services
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Legal Services
- Environmental Services

How we will consult:

| GROUP | METHOD | COMMUNICATION |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Benefit & Debt Advice Service | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Rother Voluntary Action | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| The Pelham | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Brighton Housing Trust | On-Line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Citizen's Advice | On-line Questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Customer Services | Request for comments | Via e-mail, meeting if required |
| Depart Work & Pensions (DWP) | On-Line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| ESCC Adult Social Care | On-line Questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| ESCC Children's services | On-line Questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| ESCC Gypsy & Traveller liaison | On-line Questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |

| GROUP | METHOD | COMMUNICATION |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Finance | Request for comments | Via e-mail, meeting if required |
| Hastings Advice & Representations Centre (HARC) | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Hastings Furniture Service | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Homelessness Unity Group | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Homelessness/ Housing Options clients | On-Line questionnaire | Leaflet with details given to applicants during interview |
| Homeworks | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Housing Benefit & Council Tax | Request for comments | Via e-mail, meeting if required |
| Housing Register applicants | On-line questionnaire | Additional paragraph on all letters/emails going to new applicants |
| Legal Services | Request for comments | Via e-mail, meeting if required |
| Mental Health Services | On-line Questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Neighbouring Local Authorities | On-line Questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Other interested residents | On-line questionnaire | Via MyAlerts with link to questionnaire |
| Parish/Town Councils | On-line Questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| Planning & Strategy | Request for comments | Via e-mail, meeting if required |
| Rother Voluntary Action | On-Line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |
| The Mediation Service | On-line questionnaire | Via e-mail with link to questionnaire |

In addition to the above plan, a local press release will be communicated, in order to raise awareness of the ongoing consultation and allow all residents to have their say.

As well as through the on-line questionnaire, all consultees will be given the opportunity to provide comments on the strategy via e-mail. The RDC social media accounts will provide regular reminders regarding the ongoing consultation. Paper copies of the questionnaire will be available at our help points for those unable to take part on-line. Residents will also have access to the Help Point online computers.

Consultation will commence 4 April 2022. The deadline for consultation responses to be received is 15 May 2022.

Following the Consultation: The outcomes of the consultation will be used to update the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy to present to Cabinet and full Council for adoption to cover the next three years (2022-25).

Anti-Poverty Strategy Consultation Questionnaire (Draft)

Welcome to our consultation. We wrote our draft Anti-Poverty Strategy after talking to a wide range of local, regional and national organisations in autumn/winter 2021.

Our vision is to work together, with our local partners, to tackle the symptoms of poverty in order to reduce its impact and enable communities to thrive.

We want to know:

- Is there support for our approach and proposed actions?
- What other relevant information is available about poverty in Rother and reducing its impact?
- Any organisations with an interest in becoming our partner?

This information will help the Councillors make their decisions on adopting the anti-poverty strategy and carrying out the action plan.

There is an opportunity at the end of the survey to comment or make suggestions on anything not covered in our key questions.

To move to the next page, press the Next button. You can submit your answers only on the last page of the questionnaire by pressing the Finish button.

Next

Objective One: Co-ordination

The first challenge we identified is coordination. Our objective is to develop local strategic commissioning and operational structures to coordinate services designed to alleviate poverty.

There are a lot of local services, but we need to improve:

- Co-ordination between our various strategies.
- Operational delivery between local services.
- How all our front-line staff can provide a more holistic service because they know about other local services.
- Improve how local services share information.
- Affordable childcare improves access to both employment and educational attainment.

1. How much do you agree or disagree that co-ordination is key challenge in Rother?

Strongly agree, agree, agree a bit, disagree a bit, disagree, strongly disagree.

Next

We propose three main actions to improve co-ordination.

2. How much do you agree or disagree that the council taking these actions will help achieve the objective?

Form a local Anti-Poverty Strategy Steering Group to co-ordinate homelessness and anti-poverty strategies.

Provide the Rother Local Strategic Partnership with quarterly updates on progress of the action plan.

Engage with local strategic leaders to act as a consultee to regional and sub-regional commissioners.

Answers:

Strongly agree, agree, agree a bit, disagree a bit, disagree, disagree strongly

Note: a commissioner refers to teams or organisations that fund local services by other organisations.

- 3. Please tell us what you would like us to know about improving co-ordination between local services in Rother.**
(Open text question)

Next

Objective Two: Accessibility

Our objective is to maximise the accessibility of services so that those in the greatest need can be reached.

We identified improvements are needed for:

- Internet access, particularly in rural areas
- Too much reliance on signposting through online or telephone methods.
- Service locations are often in distant or inconvenient locations.
- When trying to deliver services in rural areas better use could be made of existing technology and community facilities.
- Improve the skills of our staff to provide a wider range of information and make every contact count.

- 4. How much do you agree or disagree that accessibility is a key challenge in Rother?**

Strongly agree, agree, agree a bit, disagree a bit, disagree, strongly disagree.

Next

We propose four main actions to improve accessibility.

- 5. How much do you agree or disagree that the council taking these actions will help achieve the objective?**

Deliver new Bexhill place-based hub and new rural virtual hubs.

Support existing service hubs with more targeted signposting.

Create a Street Sheet to map the services available.

Increase social prescribing through GP surgeries.

Answers:

Strongly agree, agree, agree a bit, disagree a bit, disagree, disagree strongly

Notes:

Street Sheet means (explanation to be added)

Social prescribing means (explanation to be added)

6. Please tell us anything you want us to know about accessibility in Rother.

(Open text question.)

Next

Objective Three: Promotion

Our objective is to promote information, advice and support to service users and professionals.

We identified improvements are needed for:

- Everyone knowing more about the East Sussex Community Information Services (ESCIS).
- Low literacy levels – the national average reading age is 9 years old – mean we can't rely on written communications and promotions.
- Lots of information is available on different services but it isn't co-ordinated to get to vulnerable people in one package.

7. How much do you agree or disagree that promotion is a key challenge in Rother?

Strongly agree, agree, agree a bit, disagree a bit, disagree, strongly disagree.

Next

We propose three main actions to improve promotion.

8. How much do you agree or disagree that the council taking these actions will help achieve the objective?

Create a training resource video of local services for residents and frontline staff

Create a video explaining statutory services.

Develop an annual Anti-Poverty networking event for local services.

Answers:

Strongly agree, agree, agree a bit, disagree a bit, disagree, disagree strongly

9. Please tell us anything you would like us to know about promotion in Rother.

(Open text question).

Next

10. Are you answering this questionnaire as a:

Resident

Parish or town council

Voluntary sector organisation

Public service organisation

Business or business organisation

Other (name)

[Direction to next section for organisations or elsewhere for residents]

11. Is your organisation interested in potential partnership in any of the following:

- i. Service hubs
- ii. Mapping services
- iii. Social prescribing through GPs
- iv. Training resource video of local services
- v. Video explaining statutory services
- vi. Anti-poverty networking event for local services

Next

12. Organisation name

13. Contact name

14. Job Title/Position

15. Contact email address

Next

(Directed residents)

Would you be directly affected by an anti-poverty strategy?

Yes, No

Next

Thank You

Thank you for taking part in this consultation

Deadline information when finalised

Next steps information when finalised

Please press 'Finish' to send your answers.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| WORK PROGRAMME 2021 – 2022 | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| DATE OF MEETING | SUBJECT – MAIN ITEM IN BOLD | Cabinet Portfolio Holder |
| 14.03.22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and Disorder Committee: to receive a report from the Community Safety Partnership • Performance Report: Third Quarter 2021/22 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring Quarter 3 - 2021/22 • Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy | Dixon Byrne |
| 25.04.22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report and Recommendations of the Constitution Review Steering Group • Call-in and Urgency Procedures • Draft Annual Report to Council • Progress on the Environment Strategy | Oliver Field |
| WORK PROGRAMME 2022 - 2023 | | |
| 06.06.22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Report: Fourth Quarter 2021/22 • Annual Work Programme | |
| 18.07.22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Outturn 2021/22 | |
| 12.09.22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Report: First Quarter 2022/23 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring – Quarter 1 2022/23 | |
| 17.10.22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2027/28 • Annual Review of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024) | |
| 21.11.22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Report: Second Quarter 2022/23 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring – Quarter 2 2022/23 | |
| 23.01.23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Revenue Budget Proposals 2023/24 • Key Performance Targets 2023/24 | |
| 13.03.23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and Disorder Committee: to receive a report from the Community Safety Partnership • Performance Report: Third Quarter 2022/23 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring – Quarter 3 2022/23 | |
| 24.04.23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call-in and Urgency Procedures • Draft Annual Report to Council | |
| ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration incl Leisure Centre, Fountains, Skate Park and Accessibility of Green Spaces across the district • Corporate Plan review – referred back by Cabinet • Review of the Economic Regeneration Strategy • Peer Review • Draft Corporate Customer Services Strategy Proposals • Litter Strategy • Review of the Tourism Strategy and the impact of Airbnbs – Spring 2022 • Impact of Airbnb and second homes in Rye/Winchelsea/Camber – Spring 2022 | | |

- Effectiveness of 'MyAlerts'
- Town Hall Renaissance Project