



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date and Time - **Monday 23 January 2023 – 6:30pm**

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

Councillors appointed to the Committee:

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

Substitute Members: Mrs M.L. Barnes, L.M. Langlands and R.B. Thomas.

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To authorise the Chair to sign the Minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 November 2022 and 28 November 2022 as correct records of proceedings.

2. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES

The Chair 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 Chair 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.

5. ROTHER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: LEISURE FACILITIES STRATEGY (Pages 3 - 22)

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6. **DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24 PROPOSALS** (Pages 23 - 40)
7. **REVIEW OF THE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2024 (PART A)** (Pages 41 - 60)
8. **REVIEW OF THE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2024 (PART B)** (Pages 61 - 78)
9. **KEY PERFORMANCE TARGETS 2023/24** (Pages 79 - 82)
10. **WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 83 - 84)

Malcolm Johnston
Chief Executive

Agenda Despatch Date: 13 January 2023

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Rother District Council

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	23 January 2023
Title:	Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy
Report of:	Deborah Kenneally, Head of Neighbourhood Services
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of Report:	To present the results of the public consultation on the draft Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy for consideration and amendments prior to final approval of the strategy by Cabinet and full Council.
Officer	
Recommendation(s):	It be RESOLVED : That Cabinet be requested to recommend to Council that the draft Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy be approved and adopted.

Introduction

1. Rother District Council (RDC) undertook to review leisure requirements across the district for longer-term planning and once demand for leisure services and the financial climate became clearer following COVID.
2. To be considered in conjunction with the review is the wider Playing Pitch & Leisure Facilities Strategy currently being undertaken jointly by the planning teams of both RDC and Hastings Borough Council, to ensure the new Local Plan reflects residents and sports club's requirements into the future.
3. Consideration has been given to the fact that the current leisure management contract for Bexhill Leisure Centre and Bexhill Leisure Pool, operated by Freedom Leisure (FL), expires on 31 March 2024 and the separate Rye Sports Centre contract, also operated by FL, expires on 31 March 2026, and so a clear direction is required for the future management of these facilities.
4. In addition to the above, it should be noted that the leisure facilities buildings in Bexhill are coming to the end of their structural 'life' and 'patch repairs' to the current structure are no longer economical or environmentally efficient. The buildings are in need of major refurbishment or replacement and it is therefore important that a strategy is agreed for the provision of appropriate leisure facilities for the future.
5. On 10 January 2022, Cabinet approved the appointment of a leisure strategist to complete market research on residents' use and requirements from built leisure facilities across the district and on health and well-being in general, to inform a draft Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy that is realistic

and achievable, and supports an active and healthy lifestyle (Minute CB21/70 refers).

6. The draft strategy was approved by Cabinet on 31 October 2022 and then went for public consultation via an online survey during November and December 2022, and the results will inform the final draft.
7. The public consultation sought comments and feedback on all aspects of the strategy, but most particularly the strategy's vision, key principles, aims and objectives, the role of town and parish councils as partners in leisure services and swimming provision. In order to gain as broad a feedback as possible, advance letters were sent to sports clubs, community organisations, parish and town councils and businesses encouraging them to respond. Posters were sent to Town Councils, Parish Councils and organisations that operate from premises, such as The Pelham, Bexhill to erect on notice boards. MyAlerts and social media was also used throughout November and December to promote the survey.

Key Results of the consultation

8. The detailed analysis of the consultation results can be seen at Appendix A Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy Consultation Report, and a printed copy of all the responses is available in the Members' Room.
9. The total responses received was 685, of which 667 were completed online and 18 received by email or letter, with the overwhelming majority, 634, coming from Rother residents. This is regarded as an excellent level of response and allows for meaningful feedback on the draft strategy.
10. **62.5% of respondents were female, 37.5% male, with the most represented age groups being 55-74 at 53%, 35-44 at 10% and the least represented being 18-24 and over 85. Disabled responses were well-represented at 20%**
11. Although the consultation was accessible to all, 45% of respondents stated they live in Bexhill, 68% said they were Rother leisure facilities users and 32% said they were not.

The key feedback received from the consultation questions is as follows:

12. **'Strategy Vision' – 84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed**
Of those that disagreed, most were concerned about Rye temporary pool closure, sustainability and impact on the environment and the Council retaining control of the services.
13. **'Strategy Principles underpinning Vision' – 83% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed**
Of those that disagreed, most were concerned about Rye temporary pool closure, with other comments based on funding and the need for investment, and with more emphasis requested on supporting local independent clubs.
14. **'Strategy Aim' – 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed**

Of those that disagreed, several were concerned about Rye temporary pool closure, with comments regarding liaising with town councils, leisure facilities having limited access to the disabled and that they are not inclusive enough.

15. **‘Strategy Objectives’ – 82% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed**

Of those that disagreed, several were concerned about Rye temporary pool closure, with comments regarding lack of public transport, requesting that the Council should take over the running of the centres, and with additional emphasis on local providers offering smaller facilities run by volunteers, but the buildings maintained by the Council.

16. **‘Role of town and parish councils as important partners’ – 59% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed**

A summary of those that disagree includes suggesting that this would be a further layer of bureaucracy adding to costs, and that good quality leisure provision should be provided by central Government and Sports Council, not Local Authorities or town and parish councils. Also noted was the lack of ability to fund facilities adequately.

17. **‘Anything missing’**

Numerous comments were received to this question, mainly focusing on costs and funding, public transport, disabled access to both indoor and outdoor facilities, importance of swimming across all age groups, private sector partnership schemes and the need to support local clubs.

Summary of consultation results

18. The results are strongly supportive overall of the draft strategy. There are some suggestions from the results listed in Appendix A that may be considered for adding to the strategy, including aspects of the wider joint Rother and Hastings ‘Playing Pitch and Leisure Facilities Strategy’ once it is finalised and becomes available, local clubs and volunteer sector and funding.

Next steps

19. Once the final 10 year plus strategy has been approved by the Council, officers will work with Councillors to develop an action plan that incorporates the vision, aims and objectives of the Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy.

Conclusion

20. The results show that there is overwhelming support for the strategy as drafted, with perhaps some additions to support future provision for the next 10 years and beyond.

Recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21. That Cabinet be requested to recommend to Council that the draft Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy be approved and adopted.

Financial Implications

22. On the 27 July 2020, Cabinet agreed to suspend the proposed redevelopment of the Bexhill Leisure Centre (Minute CB20/22 refers). Therefore, any recommendations arising from the strategists' report that require significant investment would be unfunded. Should Members decide to proceed with these recommendations, funding would need to be identified before commencement.
23. Failure to have a strategy in place may mean further Council funding will be spent on maintaining old, inefficient buildings that may not meet the needs of residents and could mean sites cannot remain open.

Risk Implications

24. There is a risk that if a Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy is not agreed and in place, there will be a delay to decisions on the future of built leisure facilities in Rother District and how they will be managed and operated in the future and this may result in loss of service.

Environmental Impact

25. Fully understanding the needs and requirements of residents in the Rother District and then providing appropriate leisure facilities to meet these needs is vital to support the community's health and well-being.
26. The existing built facilities are old and beyond their useful structural lifespan and no longer meet the environmental and 'climate change' aspirations of the future.

Equalities Impact

27. Equalities – a new strategy may improve the offering and inclusiveness of the sites, including making them more welcoming for disabled people.

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

Chief Executive:	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact Officer:	Deborah Kenneally, Head of Neighbourhood Services
e-mail address:	deborah.kenneally@rother.gov.uk
Appendices:	A – Rother Health and Well-being: Leisure Facilities Strategy Consultation Report
Relevant Previous Minutes:	CB09/57, CB20/22, CB21/70
Background Papers:	- None
Reference Documents:	- None

Rother Health and Well-being: Leisure Facilities Strategy Consultation Report

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1. This appendix sets out the responses received to the community consultation on the draft Rother Health and Well-being: Leisure Facilities Strategy.
- 1.2. The online consultation is the second opportunity for the community and organisations to provide feedback on the Rother Health and Well-being: Leisure Facilities Strategy; the first was during the development of the strategy to guide the strategic priorities for the district.
- 1.3. The outcome of this report and the consultation analysis is to further inform the 10-year strategy; the next step is to form an action plan based on the agreed strategy and priorities.

Context for the Consultation

- 1.4. It is important to highlight that this consultation has been undertaken during the UK's cost of living crisis, and also at a time when the cost of utilities has risen significantly. The impact of these cost increases, alongside recruitment issues, has had, and is continuing to have, massive impact on the leisure industry as a whole, making it necessary for difficult decisions to be made in order to continue providing some level of service. For example, in Rother district, Rye Swimming Pool has closed temporarily due to the rise in costs to heat the pool, however the sports centre facilities remain open.
- 1.5. Rother District Council is not the only local authority to be faced with increasing costs of providing leisure facilities; it is estimated that at least 50 other UK swimming pools will close in the next 12 months (UK Active Dec 2022). Sport England is offering some support to local authorities and their operators to explore ways of reducing energy costs, but as yet there is no specific financial support from central government.
- 1.6. This report and its supporting appendix reflecting the consultation responses are a 10 year+ strategy; the next steps will be to form an action plan based on the strategy agreed.

2. Summary of Consultation Approach

- 2.1. This second-stage consultation has been undertaken using an online survey. The survey is targeted at:
 - Residents and Rother visitors
 - Organisations e.g. NHS, schools, East Sussex County Council,
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Town and Parish Councils
 - Sports Clubs
 - Third sector organisations

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- 2.2. All schools, organisations and Town and Parish Councils were given advance warning of the survey i.e. 4th November 2022 to give them time to organise how they would make a response.
- 2.3. The survey (just over 5 weeks 11th November 2022 – 20th December 2022) has been promoted on the Council's website, through email alerts to the RDC Consultation panel and through other social media channels. Reminders have been sent on a regular basis on social media and 'My Alerts'.
- 2.4. As of 20th December 2023, the responses received comprise:

Yourselves as a Rother resident	634	95%
Yourselves, visit or work but don't live in Rother	10	1.5%
Town or parish council	7	1%
Voluntary or charity group or organisation	2	0.3%
Sports club	10	1.5%
Leisure business or facility	0	0%
Business or business group (other than leisure)	4	0.6%
Total	667	100%

- 2.5. **In addition, the following emails have been received:**

- 14 residents
- 2 sports clubs
- 1 parish or town councils
- 1 other public organisation

- 2.6. These emails, **plus** the online responses detailed above give a total of 685 responses.

- 2.7. Analysis of the responses is summarised below:

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Residents & Visitors

2.8. Of the responses received the split between male and female is:

- Male – 37.5%
- Female – 62.5%

2.9. The age of the respondents is shown below:

- 18-24- 1%
- 25-34 – 3%
- 35-44 – 10%
- 45-54 – 19%
- 55-64 – 26%
- 65-74 – 27%
- 75+ - 12%
- 85 and over - 1%

2.10. 20% of the respondents state they are registered with a disability.

2.11. The responses received to date are from a range of ethnic backgrounds as summarised below:

- White British – 92.6%
- White Other – 5%
- Mixed Asian & White – 0.5%
- Mixed Black & White – 0%
- Other mixed – 0.7%
- Asian Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi – 0.7%
- Asian Other including Chinese – 0.3%
- Black African, Carib, British – 0.3%
- Black Other – 0.2%

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2.12. The responses received are from the following geographical areas in the district:

- Bexhill – 45%
- Battle – 7%
- Rye – 15%
- Villages – 28%
- Hastings/St Leonards – 2%
- Kent – 1%
- Other East Sussex 2%

2.13. The majority (68%) of respondents are leisure facility users. 32% of respondents are not leisure facility users.

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Consultation Feedback

The overall responses from the consultation to the five areas for comment highlight the following:

- **Vision** - Agree or agree strongly – 84% of responses
- **Principles to Vision** – Agree or agree strongly – 83% of responses
- **Aim** – Agree or agree strongly – 88% of responses
- **Objectives** – Agree or agree strongly – 82% of responses
- **Town and parish councils as important partners** – Agree or agree strongly – 59% of responses

3.2. This feedback confirms that the majority of the 685 respondents agree with the strategy Vision, its Principles and Aim.

3.3. The vast majority of the 685 responses also agree with the Strategy objectives.

3.4. Over half of those responding agree that town and parish councils are important partners in the provision of leisure facilities to the community and seeking partnership opportunities, but the level of support for this is significantly lower at 59% than that for the other strategy areas highlighted for comment.

3.5. Although there is significant support for the strategy's 5 key areas as summarised above, there have also been comments and feedback which are less supportive and/or raise specific issues/queries. These are assessed below on a question-by-question basis and illustrate the breadth of responses received overall.

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3.6. Each response is assessed to:

- identify if it is already covered in the strategy and if so, where in the document,
- provide additional detail around the specific comment made

3.7. **Strategy Vision – 84% agree or strongly agree with the Vision as stated**

3.8. Comments from those that disagree with the Vision are analysed in Table 1.

Table 1 – Analysis of comments disagreeing with the Strategy Vision

*Comment	Response	
	If already covered in Strategy	If not covered in Strategy – rationale/other factors
Rye Pool proves partnership doesn't work well.	Mentioned in the Strategy as an RDC asset	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Opposed to closure of Bexhill Leisure Centre.	The Strategy does not state the leisure centre will close although it is noted that the buildings are ageing, and decisions will need to be made as to their future This is why the strategy is important to form an action plan	
Sustainability and relevance, empty skateparks.	Strategy references sustainability of provision based on need.	
Council should 100% control health and leisure facilities not left to mercy of outside influences.	NA	Provision of leisure facilities and services is not a mandatory requirement of local authorities in England, it is a discretionary service.
Act to stop Freedom Leisure closing pool/gym, no regard for customers or staff, needs new management.	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Widened beyond Bexhill (Rye pool).	Provision of swimming facilities across the District is covered in the supply and demand analysis underpinning the Strategy.	NA

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Closure cancels evening classes for youngsters.	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Don't want more people into area people should exercise at home.	NA	Not all physical activity can be done at home e.g., not everyone has a swimming pool. The social interaction benefits of being active together are also important for physical and mental health and wellbeing.
Stop expensive reports, mend fountains (Bexhill), sell off some land for decent swimming pool. Endless reports and consultation docs few read. Plant trees and flowers.	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.
Impact on environment or maintenance not considered, no faith in RDC for people of Bexhill.	The need for maintenance of existing leisure facilities is covered in the strategy analysis.	NA
Freedom Leisure not reliable partners (Rye) let community down.	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Survey focusses on facilities and not the research questions should have asked.	NA	All research questions were discussed, agreed and signed off by RDC and based on what facilities people would like to have access to
Vision already not being delivered in Rye.	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Plus, another half a dozen answers just saying reinstate Rye.	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.

*comments reproduced as written

3.9. Principles underpinning Vision – 83% agree or strongly agree with the Principles as stated

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3.10. **Comments** from those that disagree with the Principles are analysed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Analysis of comments disagreeing with the Strategy Principles

*Comment	Response	
	If already covered in Strategy	If not covered in Strategy – rationale/other factors
Rye Pool – multiple times, similar to above	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Where is the consultation and opinion of Bexhill Town Council, do they approve? Not enough infrastructure in place to cope with new builds	NA	Although invited to feedback, along with all town and parish councils, none was received from Bexhill Town Council to either consultation opportunity.
Only applies Bexhill, no consideration eastern Rother	The Strategy covers the whole district; the analysis maps all provision, reflects consultation with neighbouring local authorities and assesses catchment areas.	NA
Carbon neutral add pressure during austerity, add deficit to council taxes, apply for lottery & govt grants	NA	There is no specific central government funding to support the leisure industry at present. It is not clear if Levelling Up Funding will be extended to Round 3. Towns Funding is now closed. Sport England will have a new fund in place in 2023. Provision of leisure facilities and services is a discretionary element of local authority services i.e., LA's do not have to provide it.
Proposed cycle lane ridiculous, tick box, parking bag (bay?), dangerous outside schools.	Provision of safe active travel and recreational cycling and walking routes is important to enable more people to get active on a regular basis.	NA
Stop asking, just do. Mend and repair what we have. Brighten Bexhill.	Need for investment and maintenance of provision is mentioned in the Strategy.	NA
Actions speak louder than words.	NA	Not sure what this refers to
No cycle lanes, waste of money for minority.	Provision of safe active travel and recreational cycling and walking routes is important to enable more people to get active on a regular basis.	NA

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*Comment	Response	
	If already covered in Strategy	If not covered in Strategy – rationale/other factors
Word fob off the public, stop it, be clear and concise, simple and understandable, 'place-based provision' terrible English and many clueless, nothing is 'sustainable' or 'carbon neutral', etc. etc.	The Strategy reflects the priorities at local level and is aligned to national priorities to ensure RDC can consider relevant funding opportunities.	NA
No changes necessary	NA	No response needed.
Can't maintain rubbish bins properly, don't want more polluters in residential areas, can't maintain potholes properly, ideas farcical.	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.
Too much emphasis on provision, not enough on funding, no mention of local independently funded clubs, needs to be inclusive of all, more to wellbeing than sports facilities – lunch, chess, cards, modellers, mental health, etc.	Club consultation and feedback is mentioned in the Strategy. Many clubs have responded to this consultation and their comments are reflected in Section 4 of this report.	There is no specific central government funding to support the leisure industry at present. It is not clear if Levelling Up Funding will be extended to Round 3. Towns Funding is now closed. Sport England will have a new fund in place in 2023. Provision of leisure facilities and services is a discretionary element of local authority services i.e., they do not have to provide it.

*comments reproduced as written

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3.11. **Strategy Aim – 88% either agree or strongly agree with the Aim as stated**

3.12. **Comments from** those that disagree with the Aim are analysed in Table 3.

Table 3 – Analysis of comments disagreeing with the Strategy Aim

*Comment	Response	
	If already covered	If not covered – rationale/other factors
Rye pool should be open, re-open, etc.	The Strategy sets out the need for additional swimming provision in the District.	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Don't want aims, want action	NA	Not sure what this refers to
Not in some cases, in all cases, when partnerships do not work	The Strategy highlights important partnerships moving forward.	NA
Same language over and over again changes nothing	The Strategy reflects the priorities at local level and is aligned to national priorities to ensure RDC can consider relevant funding opportunities.	NA
Only care about Bexhill	The Strategy covers the whole district; the analysis maps all provision, reflects consultation with neighbouring local authorities and assesses catchment areas.	
Now adding to my carbon footprint to use a pool to help with health	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs.
Should be liaising more with the town council	This is reflected in the Strategy through the recommendation of partnership with town and parish councils.	NA
Strategy is limiting, facilities must accommodate those activity limited, but want to be community participative, otherwise facilities are exclusive not inclusive, helps ensure quality of life for all.	There is disability access at existing facilities. There is opportunity to improve this, and any new facilities would need to include a Changing Places facility (changing and shower room) and be inclusive to meet today's standards.	NA

*comments reproduced as written

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- 3.13. Objectives – 82% either agree or strongly agree with the Objectives as stated
- 3.14. Comments from those that disagree with the Aim are analysed in Table 4.

Table 4 – Analysis of comments disagreeing with the Strategy Objectives as stated

*Comment	Response	
	If already covered	If not covered – rationale/other factors
Rye swimming pool, gym, loss of classes, depriving rural residents, first priority should be to offer provision and maintain it, collaboration with Freedom Leisure, no reliable public transport around Rye so alternatives are offering nothing at all, take over and deliver, closure completely contradicts strategy,	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs. Provision of public transport is not covered by this Strategy.
If people want this sort of thing, they should pay individually for it. Does anyone really understand what carbon neutral means?	Strategy references sustainability of provision based on need. Older leisure facilities have a negative impact on carbon neutrality; modern facilities, with in-built greener energy systems can contribute significantly to achievement of local authority carbon neutral targets.	NA
Irrelevant to what needs doing	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.
Consultation waste of money, public relations exercise	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.
RDC should be stakeholders in all private sector development otherwise dilution of accessibility will occur, emphasis on local provided smaller facilities managed by volunteers but RDC does maintenance, office facilities, admin fees, advice.	The Strategy emphasises the point that there is a need to balance private and public provision and that they should complement each other.	RDC would determine all planning applications for any new facilities, public or private.

*comments reproduced as written

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3.15. Role of town and parish councils as important partners – 59% agree or strongly agree

Table 5 – Analysis of comments disagreeing with the role of town and parish councils as stated

*Comment	Response	
	If already covered	If not covered – rationale/other factors
Bexhill TC only work to things that suit them, they don't list or help, own agendas, will not deviate, omit things from minutes, no trust.	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.
You don't intend to give them any powers anyway.	NA	Town and Parish Councils already have the power to provide leisure facilities.
Rye Pool	NA	The closure of Rye pool is a result of increased utility costs not the partnership failing. All leisure operators are struggling to afford rising operational costs. Provision of public transport is not covered by this Strategy.
Provision of international quality facilities should be managed by central govt, Sports Council, private enterprise. Local councils only requirements provide land sites and planning consents.	NA	Town and Parish Councils already have the power to provide leisure facilities. There is no central government funding for leisure provision. The exception is if there is a national government decision to bid for a major event e.g., the Olympics or Commonwealth Games. In these circumstances, there is central funding allocated for investment.
Slow and can't make decisions.	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.
Another layer of bureaucracy, costs	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.
Mostly rubbish, ideas proposed by some parish councils a disgrace	NA	Not sure what this refers to.
All corrupt	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.

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*Comment	Response	
	If already covered	If not covered – rationale/other factors
Would be ideal if they were funded appropriately.	NA	There is no specific central government funding to support the leisure industry at present. It is not clear if Levelling Up Funding will be extended to Round 3. Towns Funding is now closed. Sport England will have a new fund in place in 2023. Provision of leisure facilities and services is a discretionary element of local authority services i.e., they do not have to provide it.
Large sums of money given to small population of area mostly middle/well off people	NA	The scope of this Strategy is physical activity, leisure, health and well-being.

*comments reproduced as written

Swimming provision

- 3.16. There was no specific question in the survey asking about swimming provision. However, references to Rye Pool come up frequently across all responses. Also mentioned a lot is that there appears to be a focus on Bexhill.

4. Comments on anything missing from the Strategy?

- 4.1. There was some feedback on what respondents perceive as 'gaps' in the Strategy. These comments are available separately, but essentially cover:
- Rye Pool
 - Costs and funding
 - Parking
 - Transport, public transport and the need to improve it
 - Pollution
 - Disabled access to outside facilities; need for disability input to Strategy (there was the opportunity for this during the initial public consultation)
 - Need for financial support from RDC for clubs
 - Need to recognise local clubs (all clubs were given the opportunity to respond to consultation; many did not respond)
 - Better use of footpaths
 - Inclusivity and accessibility
 - Community centres

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- Sustainability and the need to be carbon neutral
- Need for new, larger Bexhill facility, support for more swimming, much promised never delivered
- Bexhill focussed over rural/Rye
- States older, aging population but where is provision
- Need to access s106 funding
- Needs better, more, local research
- Needs more responses from more local clubs, groups that support those with disabilities
- Nothing about running, NHS initiatives, nutrition, running tracks, support for disabilities, mental health (health & well-being in title), Active Rother promotion, the sea/beach/seafronts water-based activities,
- Expensive to use facilities, income barriers,
- Not specific enough language: no action plan, no timescales, no measurable goals
- Private sector partnership schemes
- Bike provision, cycle paths, joined up routes, poor maintenance
- Improving grass pitches,
- An objective on developing elite - facilities, outdoor sports, destination provision, etc.
- Need for support for clubs and the volunteers who run them
- Equality of opportunity and inclusivity
- Improved signage
- Importance of swimming for older people
- Other opportunities for partnership with Energise Sussex Coast and Energise South

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5. Other Comments

5.1. Anything else you want to tell us about the strategy, that the council should take into account, that you strongly support or new information?

***Town and parish councils**

- Developers could be encouraged to provide finances for improved facilities within 106 or instead of affordable housing on difficult sites
- Sedlescombe Parish Council supports the strategy and was pleased to see that residents who may struggle to access facilities will be helped. The Parish Council was also pleased to see that the current climate emergency was included by way of ensuring that new provisions are required to be eco-friendly. It would be good to extend this strategy to encourage changes to existing infrastructure for example through switching to solar energy, encouraging living roofs (where achievable) etc.
- All Strategies require an Action Plan. This is a laudable Strategy and should be supported.

***comments reproduced as written**

Rother Health and Well-being: Leisure Facilities Strategy Consultation Report

***Sports clubs and leisure sector**

- As Chair of Westfield Cricket Club, I am surprised at the response, or lack of response from WPC given they condemned our old pavilion about 3 years ago and know that we are struggling to fund a new pavilion.
- Hastings Seagull SC strongly support the aim to increase water space for all ages and abilities. We will send a separate email regarding developing swimming in the area.
- Hastings Seagull Swimming Club welcome the recommendations contained in the Rother District Council Health and Wellbeing: Leisure Facilities Strategy 2023 – 2033 regarding future provision for swimming. It is accepted that any new Leisure Provider will look to run some Schools swimming and Learn to Swim sessions but, to take swimmers forward within the sport (swimming, polo, artistic swimming) will probably require expertise from the existing clubs. Whilst Learn to Swim is primarily for children, the actual sport is for all ages – our oldest Masters Swimmer (also a polo player) is 83! As mentioned previously, Hastings Seagull SC would be pleased to work with the District Council and Leisure Provider(s) in maximising the uptake, and hence pool usage, of the current and any proposed swimming pools throughout the District.
- As a major provider of Table Tennis in Rother I was disappointed that the council didn't recognise my club, Table Tennis Rother, which has capacity to build a strong base for the sport. Clubs need to be recognised as part of the strategy, particularly those from minority sports which have much to offer.
- Rye Bowls Club has made a separate, supplementary, written submission to Rother District Council (RDC), in support of the club's continued existence and the need for financial support from RDC. This has been necessary as we feel that the RDC questionnaire doesn't give sufficient opportunities to highlight RBC's situation and needs, should the suggestion of withdrawal of financial support arise, in the review of the strategy.
- Strategy is good but when providing for wheelchair users ask a wheelchair user for their views and experience
- Make sure that existing providers of leisure (e.g., sports clubs) are supported. There is a temptation to invest heavily in leisure that is individual in nature. That is important, but it's worth remembering that sports club provide positive mental health through fellowship/camaraderie/sense of belonging and that their role should not be side-lined or assumed to be always able to exist without support.
- The Cricket club is also dependent on the Rye Sports Centre for winter coaching. Our adults in 2023 are going to Claremont school at Bodiam as the Rye nets are not fit for purpose. The equipment has been there under-invested since 1987. I know because I was at the opening. Our colts remain there only because of transport issues.

***comments reproduced as written**

***Other organisations**

- I strongly support: The notion of neighbouring council's working together due to the understanding that people do cross borders to access their leisure provision within the context of still providing local services for those less likely/able to travel. The importance of teaching space for swimming lessons due to the coastal nature of the county The importance of physical activity, sports & leisure provision related to health and wellbeing - both physical and mental The notion of also utilising green and open spaces for leisure opportunities particularly informal/unstructured physical activity although this should also be incorporated into built facilities too.

Rother Health and Well-being: Leisure Facilities Strategy Consultation Report

- rural footpaths are massively underused. access to our beautiful countryside should not be confined to the well off and has huge well-being benefits.
- I agree that a better lane pool is needed. I agree that better sign posting is needed. However, there are many more "cheap" options available to get people active. I mentioned basketball nets being added to unused locations. New styles and signposts for walks Better signage for cycle routes More cycle routes in general.
- This "strategy" is nonsense. You have committed to nothing, suggested nothing, just a lot of hot air about carbon neutral and put it near public transport. Unless there is significant investment in public transport there will be none!

*comments reproduced as written

***Comments from remaining organisations (charity, business, etc.)**

- A new focus should be focused on Rye Swimming pool and servicing the rural communities of Rother. Further clarification should be given to local people as to the stages of developments at the new Bexhill Leisure centre.
- I think it would be important to reference the East Sussex Healthy Weight Strategy which specifically refers to leisure facilities in the physical activity priority area. This provides added weight specifically to the importance of leisure facilities in the context of health and wellbeing.
- There are not enough Outdoor basketball courts in Rother. Sedlescombe tennis court could have nets. Whatlington council car park could have a net. There are no Pavements in Whatlington. The speed limit on Whatlington road should be 30 not 40 Horses and cyclists are at risk as there are many unsighted bends.
- An actual plan and commitment to giving us the promised swimming pool and leisure centre. You had a large sum from M+S, and have wasted a lot on this 'strategy' that leads nowhere
- We believe that the strategy should include reference to providing leisure and wellbeing opportunities for unpaid carers as a seldom heard group.

*comments reproduced as written

***NHS Sussex**

NHS Sussex responded to the Strategy and is supportive of its Vision, Outcomes and Principles. NHS Sussex specifically identifies the following points: Tackling health inequalities is a key priority for the NHS and we welcome the strategy's recognition of the importance of this, together with the collaborative approach to working with partners.

We would welcome the opportunity to work in partnership with RDC and other key stakeholders to support the implementation of the strategy. With this in mind, our feedback is focussed on planning for implementation as follows:

- The strategy mentions production of a delivery plan: it would be helpful to understand the timescales for this and to explore opportunities for NHS Sussex and other stakeholders to support the development of this.

Rother Health and Well-being: Leisure Facilities Strategy Consultation Report

- It will be important to ensure that future design and provision maximises opportunities for inclusivity and creates opportunities which pays attention to a range of important factors such as the beliefs of the local population, accessibility for people living within our most deprived communities, people with disabilities and from minority ethnic groups. It would be helpful to understand any plans you may have as part of this.
- NHS Sussex is keen to understand the governance arrangements for the strategy and delivery plan and the role of the LSP as part of this in supporting the partnership working aspirations.
- NHS Sussex recommends that any new facilities work with appropriate partners to consider green transport plans to support access. NHS Sussex would be pleased to discuss how they can work increasingly together with RDC on schemes such as exercise on prescription. Additionally, in terms of how the strategy informs decision making about leisure facilities in Rother, where this may include any future contracting of facilities, NHS Sussex would be happy to contribute to the development of any service specifications. Further to this, we would welcome the opportunity to explore any potential sharing of facilities to support provision of healthcare services.

*comments reproduced as written

Summary recommendations for the Strategy based on feedback

This report and its supporting appendix reflecting the consultation responses are a 10 year+ strategy; the next steps will be to form an action plan based on the strategy agreed.

- 6.2. Based on the feedback received and summarised above, it is recommended that the following points are added to the Strategy:
- Club analysis and survey from the wider Rother and Hastings strategy work (Continuum)
 - Local clubs and the volunteer sector are recognised
 - More emphasis is placed on accessibility, relationship with public transport and the rural areas
 - Funding and potential sources e.g., s106
 - Reference to the role of footpaths
 - Reference the potential of existing cycling routes
 - Reference the playing pitch strategy work across Rother and Hastings (Continuum) to highlight opportunities for e.g. basketball nets and increased use of outdoor facilities
 - The planned Action Plan is developed, reflecting the recommendations as stated, but taking into account inclusivity, accessibility, extended partnership working and sustainability. The Action Plan should also consider funding sources

Rother District Council

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	23 January 2023
Title:	Draft Revenue Budget 2023/24 Proposals
Report of:	Antony Baden – Chief Finance Officer
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of Report:	To receive the draft Revenue Budget 2023/24 referred from Cabinet at its meeting held on Monday 9 January 2023. The report and recommendations arising are reproduced below and the Minutes of that meeting (Appendix 1) should be read in conjunction with this report.
Officer Recommendation(s):	It be RESOLVED : That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be considered by Cabinet when setting the 2023/24 Draft Revenue Budget at its meeting on 6 February 2023.

Introduction

1. The Council is required to set a balanced budget each year. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to estimate revenue expenditure and income for the forthcoming year from all sources, including contributions from reserves, in order to determine its net budget requirement.
2. This report updates Members on the second phase of the budget process, which is to prepare the draft Revenue Budget for 2023/24 by outlining the predicted financial position and the key issues Members need to consider.
3. Members will note that the 2023/24 budget requires £2.403 million from Usable Revenue Reserves in order to deliver the Council's services. Appendix A details the summary draft Revenue Budget for 2023/24 and an update on the five-year forecast, Appendix B gives summary information for each service area and Appendix C details the main changes from the 2022/23 Budget. Appendix D summarises the Council's Revenue Reserves position.
4. All Budgets are shown at "Net Operational Expenditure Levels" and exclude support service recharges. This ensures Members are provided with a clear identifiable core cost for each service.

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003

5. The Local Government Act 2003 (Section 25) requires that when a local authority agrees its annual budget and precept, the Section 151 Officer must report to it on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of its Reserves. As the Council's designated Section 151 Officer, the Chief Finance Officer in writing this report confirms that

the estimates have been prepared on a robust basis and is satisfied with the adequacy of its Reserves. Further information to support this statement is given in paragraphs 6, 34 and 35.

Budget Assumptions

6. The following assumptions were made when calculating the draft budget:
 - a. **Inflation** – a standard increase of 4.57% has been applied to non-pay budgets except for contracts where specific indices are applied, (see paragraph 25 below).
 - b. **Salaries** – an increase of 3% has been applied, with effect from September 2023 and an allowance of 1% has been assumed for staff turnover.
 - c. **Transfers** – the use of transfers between existing budgets has been applied to enable funding is re-directed to priority areas.
 - d. **Income** – where applicable, income budgets have been increased in line with the fees and charges approved by Cabinet on the 12 December 2022.
 - e. **Interest rates** – rates ranging between 3.2% and 4.4% have been used to calculate the financing costs on capital investment schemes.
 - f. **Investment Returns** – returns on investment have been calculated using the following rates:
 - i. Bank current & deposit accounts between 0.05% and 1.75%;
 - ii. Investments with other institutions/local authorities – 2.50%;
 - iii. Property Fund investments – 4.40%.
 - g. **Council Tax Base** – numbers are based on the latest December 2022 forecast and assumes a collection rate of 98.3%.

Local Government Finance Settlement

7. The draft Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) was announced by the Government on the 19 December 2022 and applies to 2023/24 and 2024/25. It does not give the Council any indication of funding streams beyond this two-year period. The Government had previously committed to undertake a Fair Funding review and a reset of the business rates system, but this was not addressed as part of this Spending Review. However, it has reaffirmed its commitment to do this in the next Parliament.
8. Each year, the Government sets the Council's Core Spending Power (CSP) as part of the LGFS. The CSP is a measure of the resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery. It sets out the money that has been made available through the LGFS. The table below shows that the 2023/24 CSP is £12.3 million, which is an increase of just over 5% (£0.9 million) on the 2022/23 figure:

	£ M
Core Spending Power 2022/23	11.4
Consisting of:	
Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)	2.6
Compensation for under-indexing the Business Rates multiplier	0.4
Council Tax	8.4
Total	11.4
New Homes Bonus Grant (NHB)	0.2
Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSD)	0.1
Lower Tier Services Grant (LTSG)	0.0
Services Grant	0.1
Funding Guarantee Grant	0.5
Core Spending Power 2023/24	12.3

9. The SFA consists of the Council's share of business rates income and Revenue Support Grant, (RSG). Its baseline funding figure of £2.6 million is an increase of £0.2 million from 2022/23 and there is also an increase of £0.4 million due to the freezing of the business rates multiplier. This brings the total SFA to £3.0 million but because the expected share of business rates income comfortably exceeds £3.0 million the Council yet again will not receive an RSG. The LGFS did explicitly state though that local authorities would not be expected to make a payment to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for a 'negative RSG'. Other key points that directly impact on the Council are discussed in paragraphs 10 to 16.
10. **Business Rates** - As mentioned in paragraph 7, the Business Rate baseline reset, which was originally planned for 2020, has been delayed again until the next Parliament. The risk of a redistribution of business rates away from the Council still exists but no assumptions have been included in the five-year forecast. The Business Rates Multiplier for 2023/24 will remain frozen again at 49.9p but Councils will be compensated for any reduction in income as a result of this decision. Finally, the Government has committed to reimburse Councils for any negative impact on its business rates income arising from the implementation of the 2023 revaluations.
11. **East Sussex Business Rates Pool** - Further to Cabinet's decision on the 12 December 2022 to continue its participation in the East Sussex Business Rates Pool (Minute CB22/54 refers), DLUHC has since written to the Council to approve the arrangement for 2023/24 and 2024/25.
12. **Revenue Support Grant** – The DLUHC has increased the overall RSG in line with Consumer Price Index inflation, however as explained in paragraph 9, the Council effectively has a negative RSG. Members will note that the DLUHC has confirmed, in common with previous years, Councils will not be required to pay over negative RSG.
13. **Council Tax setting** – The LGFS includes additional flexibility in setting the council tax for 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Council can now increase it by the higher figure of 3% (was 2% for 2022/23) or £5. Members could decide to set a higher increase but would need consent via a local referendum. A 3% increase would yield approximately £30,000 more than an increase of £5. The draft Revenue Budget assumes that the Council will increase Council Tax by the maximum allowed, which is 3% in this case. The Council will need to ensure

that it remains within this limit, including Special Expenses. An estimated increase to about £198.85 for an average Band D property is anticipated and this will be confirmed in phase three of the budgeting process, which will be reported to Cabinet on the 6 February 2023. This will be subject to agreement by Full Council on the 20 February 2023.

14. **Council Tax (other preceptors only)** – Whilst not directly impacting on the Council, Members may wish to note that the LGFS also included council tax setting flexibilities for precepting authorities. These are outlined below:
 - a. County Councils with social care responsibilities can again set an adult social care precept of up to 2% per year, without a referendum.
 - b. Council tax referendum principles continue **not** to apply to Town and Parish councils meaning there are no limits on their increases.
 - c. Fire & Rescue authorities are subject to a £5 referendum principle on Band D bills.
 - d. Police and Crime Commissioners are subject to a £15 referendum principle on Band D bills.

15. **The Council Tax Base** - The 2023/24 base has been calculated at 38,520.8 and shows an increase of 293.80 Band D equivalents since December 2021. The main reasons for the change are as follows:
 - a. An increase of 250.0 in chargeable dwellings;
 - b. A continued reduction in the take up of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, (the number of claimants increased in 2020/21 due to the impact of lockdown), which has increased the base by 82.0;
 - c. An increase in the number of eligible Discounts, which has decreased the base by 46.3;
 - d. Other minor changes, which has increased the base by 8.1.

16. **Other announcements** – The Government has indicated that it expects local authorities to benefit from a significant new funding stream in relation to the 'Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging' scheme. This will be assessed during 2023/24 and further details will be announced in due course.

Non-Specific Revenue Grants

17. As outlined in the table in paragraph 8, the Council will receive £856,000 in government grants as part of the LGFS and a further £900,000 in other grants, making a total of £1.756 million, (excluding New Burdens funding) as shown in Appendix A. This represents an increase of £106,000 from 2022/23. Further information is given in paragraphs 18 to 23.

18. **New Homes Bonus (NHB)** – This grant is paid to encourage councils to develop housing growth in their area. For 2022/23, the Council was allocated funding of £467,000, which included £32,000 for legacy payments, (legacy payments refer to homes brought into use in prior years). In 2023/24 legacy

payments will no longer be payable (see also paragraph 20), however, a new round of NHB payments have been included in the 2023/24 settlement. The Council's allocation is £226,000, which is £241,000 less than 2022/23. The Government will set out the future position of the NHB before 2024/25 LGFS.

19. **Rural Services Delivery Grant** – This grant remains unchanged at £64,000.
20. **Lower Tier Services Grant** – In response to the inflationary pressures facing local authorities the DLUHC have repurposed this grant and combined it with NHB legacy payments to form the Funding Guarantee Grant. The Council's allocation is £473,000 in 2023/24.
21. **Services Grant** – This has been reduced because the Council no longer must fund the 1.25% increase in employers National Insurance Contributions. The impact of this has been built into the department budgets. The Council's allocation is £92,000 in 2023/24, which is £32,000 less than 2022/23
22. **New Burdens Grants** – From time to time the Council receives funding for the net additional costs of new burdens placed on it by the Government. In 2023/24 the Council will receive an allocation of £32,000 to implement the requirements of the Elections Act 2022 and an unspecified grant to administer the impact of the Business Rates revaluations, (£20,000 has been included in the budget).
23. **Other grants** – the Benefits Administration, Local Council Tax Support and Homelessness Prevention grants do not form part of the CSP calculation and are still subject to confirmation. This will be reported to Members during phase three of the budget setting process.

Review of Cost Pressures

24. In the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) forecast reported to Cabinet on the 12 December 2022, Members were advised of several cost pressures that may affect the Council's budget. These have been reviewed as part of the second phase of the budget process and are discussed in paragraphs 25 to 31 below.
25. **Contractual Inflation** – The base budget has been revised upwards to £628,000 to allow for inflationary increases on other smaller service contracts.
26. **Homelessness** – The pressures on the Council's budget are well documented. Members will recall an overspend of £260,000 was outlined in the Quarter 2 monitoring report to Cabinet on the 31 October 2022 (Minute CB22/47 refers) and included in the first draft of the MTFP. Further discussions with the Head of Service have indicated that an additional £240,000 is required for the 2023/24 budget, bringing the total additional cost since 2022/23 to £500,000. The Senior Leadership Team will be actively managing this issue in order to reduce the forecast costs to a more manageable level.
27. **External Audit fees** – The forecast has been revised downwards slightly since the MTFP report to Cabinet on the 12 December 2022 by about £8,000 from 2023/24 onwards.
28. **Net Financing Costs** – Since phase one of the budget reported an estimated cost of £889,000 the forecast has been reviewed for subsequent changes in interest rates. In general terms the PWLB rates have decreased slightly whilst

conversely the Bank of England base rate has yet again increased. This means that forecast borrowing is slightly cheaper whilst our income returns from investments has increased. This has resulted in a net reduction of £246,000. Members should note however, that these estimates continue to be extremely sensitive to changes in interest rates and capital expenditure cash flows. Therefore, the need to review larger and more complex schemes on an individual basis for affordability must remain in place.

29. **Staffing Costs** – The salaries budget has been calculated from first principles and has resulted in an overall cost increase of about £502,000, which is broadly in line with original expectations. The main changes are as follows:
 - a. Impact of 2022/23 pay award and the 3% increase payable from September 2023 - £722,000;
 - b. Net reduction of 1% in employer pension contribution rates – (£36,000);
 - c. Reversal of the 1.25% increase in the employer's national insurance rate – (£99,000);
 - d. Staff turnover of 1% - (£105,000);
 - e. Other minor changes - £20,000.
30. **Non-Pay Inflation and Electricity** – These forecasts remain unchanged.
31. **Housing Benefits** – As reported to Cabinet on the 31 October 2022 in the Quarter 2 monitoring paper (Minute CB22/47 refers) there is a cost pressure in the Housing Benefits budget due to less than anticipated recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments arising from the improved performance of claims processing. Whilst it represents only around 2% of the overall expenditure on Housing Benefit payments, the cost is nonetheless significant. A detailed review was carried out between the Revenues and Benefits Manager and the Chief Finance Officer and an estimate of £520,000 has been built into the 2023/24 Budget. Further work will continue in order to identify a possible reduction.

Financial Stability Programme (FSP) and further Savings

32. Further progress has been made in respect of the service devolution part of the FSP and discussions have taken place with some Parish and Town Councils. The outcome of these will be costed and reported as part of phase three of the budget setting process.
33. Work has also begun to identify further savings in order to address the underlying budget deficit. Managers are completing service plans for their areas of budget responsibility and this will be completed by the 31 January 2023. Plans will include savings proposals, which will be discussed with Members. Although these savings are not required as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process, it is crucial that proposals are developed and implemented as early as possible in order to give the Council greater budget flexibility.

Usable Revenue Reserves

34. The draft Revenue Budget for 2023/24 proposes the use of £2.217 million from Usable Revenue Reserves and the drawdown of £186,000 to support capital expenditure. This would be a total drawdown of £2.403 million, which will reduce Reserves to £5.125 million by the 31 March 2024. Appendix D sets out the impact on Usable Revenue Reserves of the five-year forecast if the actions explained in paragraphs 32 and 33 are not implemented.
35. Reserves are currently forecast to be about 45% of the Council's Net Revenue Expenditure by the end of 2022/23 and this is forecast to reduce to about 33% by the end of 2023/24. It is highly likely that many other local authorities will be in a similar position. Members should also note that in the context of this Council's budget setting process, Reserves means Usable **Revenue** Reserves. It does **not** include, for example, Capital Receipts, which until recently were permitted to be used to fund revenue expenditure.
36. Whilst one of the Council's corporate objectives was to achieve Financial Stability by the end of 2025/26 and so end the revenue budget's reliance on Reserves, the current financial crisis has made this significantly more difficult to achieve. The LGFS does little to alleviate the problem and there is an expectation on the part of Government that councils will use their Reserves to fund revenue expenditure. In fact, the written statement issued by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities on the 19 December 2022 *'encourages local authorities to consider whether they can use their reserves to maintain services in the face of immediate inflationary pressures, taking account, of course, of the need to maintain appropriate levels of reserves to support councils' financial sustainability and future investment. The Government notes the significant increase in some local authority reserves over the two years of the pandemic'*. As a result, the DLUHC are intending to publish reserves data currently collected in the Local Authority Revenue Expenditure and Financing Outturn statistics.

Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit

37. The Collection Fund will be reviewed during the third phase of the budget process and reported to Cabinet at the 6 February 2022 meeting.

Budget Consultation

38. The budget consultation is due to close on the 31 January 2023 and interim results will be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 23 January 2022.

Conclusion

39. The Council's financial outlook has significantly deteriorated over the last 12 months due to economic uncertainty, the cost of living crisis and increasing inflation. Its ability to deliver a balanced budget is now even more dependent on strong financial management, the delivery of the FSP and now the delivery of further Savings. Resources will also need to be reorganised if the priorities and objectives of the Corporate Plan are also to be achieved.

40. Therefore, it is essential that the Council maintains a suitable level of Reserves and continues to operate within the approved budget each financial year to prevent further unplanned calls on reserves. Failure to do so will impact on the Council's ability to meet its statutory obligations and will result in Members having to make more difficult decisions around the provision of local services.

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

Chief Executive	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact Officer:	Antony Baden, Chief Finance Officer
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Appendices:	Appendix A - Draft Revenue Budget – 2022/23 to 2026/27 Appendix B - Revenue Budget Summary - Cost of Services Appendix C - Main changes in net cost of services between 2021/22 and 2022/23 Appendix D – Usable Revenue Reserves Appendix 1 – Cabinet Minute Extract
Relevant Previous Minutes:	CB22/54 CB22/47
Background Papers:	Local Government Settlement 2023/24
Reference Documents:	None.

Appendix B

Revenue Budget Summary - Cost of Services

Appendix B

Revenue Budget Summary - Cost of Services	Revised Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24		
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
	£	£	£	£
Acquisition, Transformation and Regeneration	(12,710)	2,715,180	(3,024,713)	(309,533)
Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety	629,220	1,035,740	(359,740)	676,000
Corporate Core	2,172,870	2,297,300	(78,110)	2,219,190
Housing and Community	8,212,150	14,335,903	(4,904,240)	9,431,663
Resources	3,302,595	19,294,060	(15,426,440)	3,867,620
Strategy and Planning	1,324,940	2,179,100	(1,050,300)	1,128,800
Total	15,629,065	41,857,283	(24,843,543)	17,013,740

Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration	Revised Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24		
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
	£	£	£	£
Economic Development & Regeneration	(1,215,950)	1,232,090	(2,731,163)	(1,499,073)
Head of Service Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration Programme and Policy Office	595,890	786,570	(233,560)	553,010
Transformation	281,790	275,750	(29,050)	246,700
	325,560	420,770	(30,940)	389,830
Total	(12,710)	2,715,180	(3,024,713)	(309,533)

Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety	Revised Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24		
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
	£	£	£	£
Food and Safety	264,930	310,730	(31,500)	279,230
Licensing	31,880	231,400	(199,500)	31,900
Pollution	318,810	482,250	(128,740)	353,510
Service Manager Environmental Services	13,600	11,360	0	11,360
Total	629,220	1,035,740	(359,740)	676,000

	Revised Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24		
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
Corporate Core				
	£	£	£	£
Chief Executive	364,900	390,600	(6,540)	384,060
Communications	51,660	52,820	0	52,820
Democratic and Electoral Services	618,770	663,300	(11,060)	652,240
Emergency Planning	32,670	42,560	0	42,560
Facilities	378,730	346,700	(20,230)	326,470
Human Resources	304,430	353,720	(35,930)	317,790
Internal Audit	155,740	169,800	(4,350)	165,450
Legal Services	265,970	277,800	0	277,800
Total	2,172,870	2,297,300	(78,110)	2,219,190

	Revised Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24		
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
Housing and Community				
	£	£	£	£
Customer Services	486,460	542,290	(16,480)	525,810
Head of Service Housing & Community	93,060	97,040	(9,540)	87,500
Housing	1,769,180	3,609,543	(1,175,250)	2,434,293
Neighbourhood Services & Contracts	5,588,080	9,785,780	(3,696,930)	6,088,850
Property & Maintenance services	275,370	301,250	(6,040)	295,210
Total	8,212,150	14,335,903	(4,904,240)	9,431,663

	Revised Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24		
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
Resources				
	£	£	£	£
Assistant Director	880	0		0
Finance	1,657,265	1,658,140	(39,750)	1,618,390
ICT	975,680	1,010,470	(69,700)	940,770
Revenues and Benefits	668,770	16,625,450	(15,316,990)	1,308,460
Total	3,302,595	19,294,060	(15,426,440)	3,867,620

	Revised Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24		
		Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
Strategy and Planning				
	£	£	£	£
Building Control	56,910	58,130		58,130
Business Support	132,000	361,500	(200,930)	160,570
Development Management	522,440	1,098,270	(797,110)	301,160
Enforcement	115,740	123,080		123,080
Planning Strategy	489,510	527,230	(52,260)	474,970
Service Manager Strategy and Planning	8,340	10,890	0	10,890
Total	1,324,940	2,179,100	(1,050,300)	1,128,800

MAIN CHANGES IN NET COST OF SERVICES BETWEEN 2022/23 AND 2023/24

	£'000	£'000
Revised Revenue Budget 2022/23		16,736
Draft Revenue Budget 2023/24		15,860
Net Increase in Cost of Services		(876)

Analysis of Variations**Expenditure**

Additional savings from the Financial Stability Programme	(1,353)
Increased income returns from Investments	(244)
Reduction in Borrowing costs due to reprofiling of the capital progra	(664)
Increasing Homelessness costs	500
Increase in Housing Benefit costs - reset of Overpayment recovery	520
Increased Property rental income	(639)
External Audit fees	98
Removal of Planning Appeals from the 2022/23 base budget	(300)
Pay Inflation	722
Other changes in Pay, e.g. removal of the Health & Social Care levy	(220)
Contractual Inflation	628
Non Pay Inflation	270
Increase in Fees & Charges	(199)
Other Minor Changes	6
Total Increase in Cost of Services	(876)

Usable Revenue Reserves

	Revised 2022/23 Budget £ (000)	2023/24 Budget £ (000)	2024/25 Budget £ (000)	2025/26 Budget £ (000)	2026/27 Budget £ (000)	2027/28 Budget £ (000)
Potential Use of Reserves						
Earmarked Reserves and General Reserves	(11,088)	(7,528)	(5,125)	(3,815)	(2,847)	(2,780)
Use of/(Contribution to) Reserves	3,560	2,403	1,310	968	67	57
Total Reserves	(7,528)	(5,125)	(3,815)	(2,847)	(2,780)	(2,723)
<u>Analysis of (Use of)/Contribution to reserves</u>						
To fund capital expenditure	374	186	187	130	130	130
To balance the budget	3,186	2,217	1,123	838	(63)	(73)
TOTAL	3,560	2,403	1,310	968	67	57

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Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting – 9 January 2023**CB22/61. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24 PROPOSALS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Finance Officer on the preparation of the draft Revenue Budget for 2023/24. The report outlined the likely financial position, cost pressures and key issues that Members needed to consider as part of the second phase of the budget setting process. Appended to the report were details of the summary draft Revenue Budget, the summary information for each service area, main changes from the 2023/24 budget and the Council's usable revenue reserves.

The following assumptions had been made in calculating the draft Revenue Budget:

- inflation of 4.57% applied to non-pay budgets except for contracts where specific indices were applied;
- with effect from September 2023 salaries had been increased by 3% and an allowance of 1% assumed for staff turnover;
- the use of transfers between existing budgets had been applied enabling funding to be re-directed into priority areas;
- interest rates of between 3.2% and 4.4% had been used to calculate the financing costs on capital investment schemes;
- between 0.05% to 4.40% interest rates had been used to calculate investment returns; and
- an assumed Council Tax collection rate of 98.3%.

The following key issues were highlighted:

- the draft Local Government Finance Settlement announced by Government in December applied to 2023/24 and 2024/25 only and did not guarantee any future funding streams beyond this two-year period; the Council's Core Spending Power had been set at £12.3m, an increase of £0.9m from 2022/23;
- the East Sussex Business Rates Pool for 2023/24 and 2024/25 would be retained;
- the council tax referendum principle for Rother would allow an increase in council tax of £5 or 3% (1% increase from 2022/23) whichever was the highest; it had been assumed that the Council would increase council tax by the maximum allowed before a referendum was required – for Rother, this was 3% and would raise an additional £30k (approximately); it was noted that other preceptors had greater flexibility to raise income than Rother District Council;
- for 2023/24, to ensure the Council remained within the referendum limit, it was assumed that £198.85 would be agreed for a Band D property;
- the 2023/24 council tax base had been calculated at 38,520.8 and showed an increase of 293.80 Band D equivalents mostly due to an

- increase in chargeable dwellings and eligible discounts, reduction in Council Tax Reduction Scheme claimants and other minor changes;
- new Government funding streams in relation to 'Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging' Schemes were anticipated during 2023/24; details would be announced once received;
- the Council was expected to receive Government grants of £1,756m which represented an increase of £106,000 from 2022/23;
- in response to inflationary pressures, the DLUHC would combine the New Homes Bonus legacy payments with the Lower Tier Service Grant; the Council's allocation would be £473,000;
- service grants had been reduced to £92,000 for 2023/24;
- to implement the requirements of the Elections Act 2022, the Council would receive £32,000, as well as an unspecified amount to administer the impact of business rate revaluations (£20,000 had been included within the budget); and
- £2.217m was proposed to be drawn down from Usable Revenue Reserves with a further drawdown of £186,000 to support capital expenditure; a total drawdown of £2.403m which would reduce reserves to £5.125m by 31 March 2024. Reserves were forecast to reduce to 33% of Net Revenue Expenditure by the end of 2023/24.

It was noted that the Government was aware that many Councils' level of reserves had increased over the two years of the pandemic and were in favour of reserves being used to maintain service levels, provided that an adequate level of Reserves was maintained to support financial sustainability.

The cost pressures that might affect the Council's finances were highlighted within the report and these included contractual inflation, homelessness demands, increased external audit fees, net financing costs, increased staffing costs, non-pay inflation and the recovery of housing benefits overpayments.

In order to give the Council greater budget flexibility and reduce reliance on reserves, it would be essential to deliver the Financial Stability Programme (FSP), including the devolvement of services to some town and parish councils and identify savings from the departmental service planning process. Heads of Service and Service Managers had been tasked with finding savings to build into the 2024/25 budget but ultimately it would be a decision for Members as to where the savings were made.

The budget consultation was currently ongoing and due to close on 31 January 2023; interim results would be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 23 January and Cabinet in February.

Members were keen to ensure that the FSP was delivered in order to protect discretionary services, which included the devolvement of services to parish and town councils across the district. Further progress in these areas would be reported to Members in the third phase budget report to Cabinet on the 6 February 2023.

RESOLVED: That the draft Revenue Budget for 2023/24 be approved for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 23 January 2023.

(Cabinet Agenda Item 6).

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Rother District Council

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 23 January 2023

Title: Review of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 (Part A)

Report of: Joe Powell, Head of Service Housing and Community

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To update Members on progress of the Improvement Delivery Plan of Priority 1 and Priority 3 of the above strategy as it relates to Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Housing Aspirations only. Progress on Priority 2 of the Strategy will be presented in a separate report.

Officer

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

- 1) Cabinet be requested to agree that the ‘targets achieved’ as listed in Appendix B be removed from the Improvement Delivery Plan and replaced with the amended targets proposed at Appendix A; and
- 2) the progress made against the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy included in the Improvement Delivery Plan (Appendix A) be noted.

Introduction

1. A request from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to separate the Housing element of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (The Strategy) from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping element has been noted and this report will update Members on progress made towards achieving the Strategy’s Priorities 1 and 3 only: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping. Priority 2 of the Strategy will be reported separately.
2. The Strategy and its action plan were developed in 2019 following an extensive research and consultation exercise, with key stakeholders and the public. Recommendations from a Member ‘Task and Finish Group’ were also used to shape three key priorities of the final Strategy, including the need to increase housing supply while improving measures to address homelessness and the quality of accommodation. The Council will continue to monitor the progress of the Strategy’s action plan through annual consultation with its strategic partners from across Housing, Health, Social Care and voluntary sectors.
3. An annual review of the Strategy action plan is completed by officers and reported to Members annually, so that progress against the Strategy objectives can be monitored and key actions reviewed and updated for the year ahead. The outcome of the full review of Priorities 1 and 3 of the Housing Development

and Housing Quality element of the Strategy can be found in the updated Improvement Delivery Plan (Appendix A). A summary of all actions achieved since the Strategy's inception in 2019 is included in Appendix B below. The remainder of this report will summarise key highlights from the Improvement Delivery Plan achieved since the last report to this Committee in November 2021.

PRIORITY 1: Increasing the Supply of Housing

Affordable Housing Delivery

4. We continue to seek to broaden the range and number of Registered Providers that are active in the district. We have benefitted greatly in terms of affordable housing provision from the delivery of wholly affordable housing sites across Rother in 2021/22. These will continue into 2022/23.
5. We continue to rely heavily on Optivo (now Southern Housing Association) to deliver the majority of the affordable housing that is completed across the district. Like all registered providers and housing developers, Southern are operating in a challenging business environment. It is essential therefore that the Council continues to ensure that Rother is an area that Southern can work well in and allow us to continue to see strong levels of affordable housing delivery.
6. The Council relies on the activities of partners such as Southern to deliver affordable housing. It is therefore essential that a strong pipeline of sites being built out is maintained. The Housing team are aware of a current slow-down in the number of new sites starting on site and is actively working with its registered provider partners to address this.
7. Much of this slow down can be attributed to macro-economic factors outside of the Council's control and influence, including the costs of materials, energy and labour. These very high inflationary pressures combined with increased finance rates makes residential development less profitable. A predicted levelling off and potential slight fall in house prices also appears to be affecting developer appetite to start new schemes.
8. We have seen a good rate of new housing development on schemes that are already on site, notably the larger schemes in Bexhill at Rosewood Park and Worsham Farm. Further completions in Battle at Tollgates and Lily Bank have helped to ensure strong delivery of affordable housing in the town. A further scheme is nearing completion to the south of North Trade Road, Battle and another due to start on site to the north of North Trade Road. Both of these schemes will provide on-site affordable housing.
9. However, there have been affordable housing schemes that have not been taken forward this year. The ongoing development at Goddens Gill, Northiam will not deliver any affordable rented or affordable homeownership housing, meaning local residents will continue to have to compete with those from outside the area to afford housing in Northiam. The viability challenges on other sites mean this situation is likely to be replicated elsewhere. The Housing Delivery Team is working closely with developers and the planning service to challenge viability appraisals that show provision of affordable housing is not viable; unfortunately, due to high finance and inflationary pressures coupled with materials price

increases, the delivery of affordable housing on smaller sites continue to be very challenging.

Community Led Housing

10. The housing service were very pleased to see the completion of the first Community Land Trust led scheme in East Sussex in 2022. The 15-unit scheme at Orchard Close, Ickelsham is now fully occupied. The scheme provided 12 homes for social rent, together with a further three homes for affordable home ownership for local people.
11. The scheme came to fruition thanks to the Icklesham Parish Community Land Trust (IPCLT) supported by the work of the Sussex Community Housing Hub (SCHH) which the Council funds in part. Having delivered this scheme, IPCLT are again working with the SCHH to identify a second site in the parish to bring forward for community led housing.
12. The SCHH are also supporting Bexhill Community Land Trust (BCLT) with the acquisition and redevelopment of Cemetery Lodge, Turkey Road to provide affordable housing for local people. Alongside this, the SCHH are engaged in early stage activities in Burwash; Beckley; Rye; Pett, Guestling and Fairlight (Marsham CLT). These activities are supported by the housing team and early stage funding for housing needs surveys and other initial works provided through the Council's Community Housing Fund (CHF).
13. The CHF is now almost spent. To complement this work, the Housing service recently sought and obtained Member approval to use s106 obligation funds to pay for community led housing related costs, namely at Cemetery Lodge. It is the intention of the housing service to continue to use this pot to support revenue bids for CLH schemes across the district.
14. The housing service are seeing an increasing number of viability challenges to providing on-site affordable housing. This can necessitate an increase in accepting financial contributions towards off-site provision. Having a strong pipeline of CLH projects is a good way of utilising these funds to provide affordable housing.

Rother Housing Company

15. The Rother DC Housing Company Ltd Business Plan (2022 to 2025) was adopted in February 2022 and commits to deliver 1,000 newbuild homes over 15 years. Blackfriars forms the first site of the housing company development programme. This 200 dwelling scheme demonstrates significant progress towards achieving the 1,000 home target. This totals 20% of the total target required to be delivered by 2037. Priorities for the housing company during 2023/24 will be to continue to deliver the Blackfriars scheme and deliver the wider aims and objectives of its approved business plan.
16. The company takes an annual review and refresh of its business plan to Cabinet for approval. In 2022/23, it will take the opportunity to implement the various recommendations provided by Counties & Capital Consultancy following a review of the company. The Company will continue to build a pipeline of schemes to achieve the remaining housing target by 2037.

Planning policy

17. The Policy team is continuing to progress the collation of evidence to inform the new Local Plan. In relation to planning for new housing supply, the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) is being completed in-house and consultants have been engaged to research and advise upon housing and economic development need and development viability. It is anticipated that consultation (Regulation 18) on a draft new Local Plan will take place later this year.
18. In addition, a Technical Advice Note (TAN), which explains the Council's adopted policy approach to 100% Affordable Housing has been prepared and agreed by full Council.

PRIORITY 3: IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND SUITABILITY OF EXISTING HOUSING AND NEWBUILD HOUSING

Improving the quality of housing in the private rented sector

19. In 2021/22, 94 inspections were completed (including 32 temporary accommodation dwellings). From 1 April 2022 to December 2022, there were 13 further inspections. These inspections have included three temporary accommodation dwellings.
20. The Warm Home Check service provides energy efficiency advice and financial advice around heating. The scheme is run by East Sussex County Council and households are encouraged to self-refer to the scheme. This scheme is promoted and discussed during the HHSRS inspections. Numbers of households that self-refer are difficult to be certain of but are believed to be around 99 for 2020/21.
21. Officers across the Housing and Special Projects team are continuing to explore delivering residential schemes using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) techniques. To date, a viable opportunity to deliver a Council-led scheme on this basis has not been identified. Work in this area will continue into 2023/24.

Conclusion

22. Rother has continued to see strong delivery of affordable housing in 2021/22 and is on course for delivery of over 100 units again in 2022/23. As an authority that is not currently able to develop its own stock, this is testament to strong partnership working and good stakeholder engagement. However, there is a concern that the pipeline of new affordable housing development coming forward beyond 2022/23 is reduced and this will add to the rise in homelessness and associated temporary accommodation costs.
23. The Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024) is now entering the last full year of its life. With this in mind, officers are now beginning to meet and discuss priorities together with the remit and scope for a successor strategy.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
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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:	Joe Powell		
e-mail address:	Joe.powell@rother.gov.uk		
Appendices:	A - Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, Priority 1 & Priority 3: Improvement Delivery Plan B - Summary of Targets Achieved		
Relevant previous Minutes:	Minute CB22/18		
Background Papers:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 Housing-Homelessness-and-Rough-Sleeping-Strategy.pdf (rother.gov.uk)		
Reference Documents:	None		

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PRIORITY 1: INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING					
Objective	Action	Outcome and Timeframe	Target	Head of Service/ Lead	November 2022 update
1.1 Increase the development of housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase land for development and/or develop new housing on Council owned surplus land (where feasible) for those in housing need; for market, private rent, affordable rent, low cost market options, including shared ownership. • Purchasing, developing and/or facilitating the delivery of 'stalled' sites that are vital to the delivery of affordable housing, using Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) as a last resort where other options have failed. • To acquire in partnership, or develop where appropriate, Council owned temporary accommodation provision to meet the varied needs of homeless households in Rother. 	<u>Outcome 2</u> : Bring forward Blackfriars site and other suitable sites for housing.	<p>Start on Site to be achieved on at least five Council owned sites by 2024.</p> <p>To deliver at least 334 homes by the end of 2024/25.</p>	ATR	<p>Action to achieve target in progress.</p> <p>Blackfriars update:</p> <p>The delay on progress of the new spine road has caused a delay of the housing starting on site this year. Currently we are aiming to start onsite in 2023/24. The scheme will see delivery of 200 new homes to include 130 affordable homes (AH), an increase of 60 AH delivered on a Council owner site, to be delivered as Shared Ownership tenure.</p>

- To support ESCC and registered housing providers in meeting the needs of those requiring supported housing, for example older people, care leavers, people with mental health issues.
- Development and Site Allocations document (DaSA).

Rother DC Housing Company Ltd Business Plan (22 to 25) adopted in 22 February, commits to deliver 1000 newbuild homes over 15 years. Blackfriars forms the first site of the housing company development programme. This 200 dwelling scheme demonstrates significant progress towards achieving the 1000 home target, which is expected to complete in 2025. This totals 20% of the total target required to be delivered by 2037. Priorities for the housing company during 23/24 will be to utilise the time afforded by the delay of the road programme, to improve efficiencies across the scheme, to ensure optimum financial performance. Additionally, the Company will review and refresh the current business plan, implement the various recommendations provided by Counties & Capital Consultancy following a review of the Company during 22/23. The Company will continue to develop a pipeline of schemes to achieve the remaining housing target by 2037.

- Local Plan Review (2019-2034) To provide housing as required by the Local Housing Needs Assessment under the NPPF.

Officers have completed the initial investigation phase of the first two sites as part of RDC's Council Led Developments programme where funds were previously agreed by Cabinet CB18/73. Cyprus Place was investigated and understood to have a marginal viability to bring forward 10 homes. It was agreed by Members this site was too important for the local business of Rye to be brought forward for housing development at this time. Old Lydd Road following its updated designation for housing a development of 10 units has progressed through planning and is now awaiting determination after an amendment was submitted in November.

The King Offa Residential development has been allocated for allocated for up to 52 homes and the outline planning permission RR/2019/430/P has been approved subject to the completion of the section 106, which is awaiting the land transfer from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) which is progressing after ESCC's continued negotiating with their tenant. The current proposed date for completion of the sale of land is 31 January 2023.

- Provide a monthly report to the Council's Scrutiny and Planning Committees, covering the number of planning approvals, and development compared to the Local Plan target.

Outcome 3:
Increase provision of affordable housing through Council led development on a year by year basis.

Indicative supply target for 2022 - 2023 totals 118 affordable homes.

ATR and S&P

Working towards the following annual targets:
To date 64 (end Q2) units have been delivered. The target for 2022/23 is still expected to be met unless unforeseen issues limit on-site activity.

Outcome 5:
Increase supported housing options to meet identified needs.

Work with partners to commission 100 units of supported accommodation for homeless households with support needs through acquisition and leasehold agreements by March 2024.

H&C

RDC have purchased eight properties through Rough Sleeper accommodation grants (RSAP/NSAP). We have been awarded further funding for four more units – three are being purchased and we are still identifying one more. We have also delivered three units of Housing First Accommodation by working with Council's Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT).

- March 2022 – 20 units.

We have a total of 22 RDC owned properties when accounting for 14 additional homes for use for Temporary Supported Accommodation. We have offers on eight more properties.

We have recently launched our Rother Leasing Scheme and have one property occupied.

				<p>Total 37 properties.</p> <p>ESCC accommodation-based support services have commissioned 20 units of accommodation for young people and those with mental health needs.</p>
<p>Page 51</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2023 – 50 units. • March 2024 – 100 units. 	<p>We have a total of 25 additional units.</p> <p>ESCC accommodation-based support services have commissioned a further 20 units of accommodation for young people and those with mental health needs.</p> <p>We continue to work with private investors and a local registered provider to bring forward a further 20 such units in 2023/24.</p>

		<p><u>Outcome 7:</u> Local Plan Annual Housing Target.</p>	<p>737 dwellings per annum.</p>	<p>S&P</p>	<p>The LHN for Rother is 737 dwellings per annum, a sharp contrast to the annualised Core Strategy target of 335 dwellings per annum. As at November 2022 this means the Council is only able to identify 2.79 years of housing supply. There were 237 net additional dwellings built in 2021/22, this is a significant increase on the annual average of 203.</p> <p>Expected delivery for 2022/23 is 473 units. This is a significant increase and reflects the delivery lag of larger sites coming forward.</p>
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<p>1. Community led housing (CLH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue working with the Sussex Community Housing Hub (SCHH), parish and town councils and community groups in identifying suitable sites, including exception sites, and supporting the delivery of community led housing. Service Level Agreement in place to secure services from Sussex Community Housing Hub for 4 years from October 2021. 	<p><u>Outcome 1:</u> Delivery of CLH housing</p>	<p>At least two community led schemes delivered by 2022/23.</p> <p>A minimum of 45 community led homes across Rother delivered or in the pipeline of delivery by 2024.</p>	<p>ATR</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress.</p> <p>One scheme of 15 units delivered at Orchard Close, Icklesham. This was the first CLT led scheme to be completed in East Sussex. Further scheme underway at Cemetery Lodge subject to planning and land transfer.</p> <p>Further group formed in Pett/Guestling/Fairlight named Marsham CLT to consider delivery of RDC owned site.</p> <p>CLH & Exception Sites being actively explored in Burwash, Rye & Beckley also.</p>
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		<p><u>Outcome 2:</u> An increase in the number of groups supported to deliver CLH</p>	<p>At least four groups established in the Rother District as CLH groups by the end of 2024.</p>	<p>ATR</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>Three CLTs established in Rother to date.</p> <p>Ongoing advice and assistance provided by the Sussex Community Housing Hub to establish new groups delivered via the SLA signed October 2021.</p> <p>Further CLH group in development in Battle, Burwash, Rye and Beckley. Groups in Icklesham and Bexhill both looking to undertake second schemes in their areas.</p>
		<p><u>Outcome 1:</u> Joint protocol between Housing partners, Planning and legal teams</p>	<p>In place by April 2022</p>	<p>ATR</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress.</p> <p>Draft protocol complete.</p> <p>This action is currently on hold and will be progressed in conjunction with the Peer Review of the Planning service.</p> <p>Target date amended accordingly.</p>
<p>1.4 Increase housing supply by bringing empty homes in the district back into use</p>	<p>Put in place an action plan which would set out a number of methods for bringing into use empty homes, from contacting owners and offering incentives to increasing Council tax on long term empty properties and the use of compulsory purchase orders (CPOs).</p>	<p><u>Outcome 2:</u> Delivery of action plan</p>	<p>Action taken against five empty properties a year from 2020/21.</p>	<p>ESL&CS</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress.</p> <p>Prosecution action taken against one property during 2020/21 so far.</p>

PRIORITY 3: IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND SUITABILITY OF EXISTING HOUSING AND NEWBUILD HOUSING					
Objective	Action	Outcome and Timeframe			November 2022
3.1 Reducing fuel poverty Page 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the opportunity of introducing affordable warmth methods of construction on any residential developments taken forward by the Council. Working with registered providers to explore the opportunity for introducing affordable warmth methods of construction on all affordable housing. 	<u>Outcome 1:</u> Modern Methods of Construction and high energy efficiency standards considered for all Council led development, where possible	To incorporate Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) on all Council led delivery where feasible from 2021. Aim to achieve Housing Quality Mark (HQM) level 3 minimum on all Council led housing schemes where feasible from 2021.	Head of Service: ATR	Action to achieve target in progress. This is being actively progressed at the design stage of the Reserved Matters application for Blackfriars. MMC and HQS is under consideration for all Council led housing projects being progressed under Priority 1 (Outcome 2). Outcome 1 and targets have been updated accordingly.

<p>Page 55</p>		<p><u>Outcome 2:</u> Modern Methods of construction used for all housing provider developments of affordable housing (excluding s106 sites) where possible.</p>	<p>Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) considered for all registered provider and community led housing developments from 2020-21 where feasible.</p> <p>To grant CHF for at least one community led housing scheme per annum, where sustainable forms of construction and renewable energies are proposed.</p>	<p>Head of Service: ATR</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>Through a Register Provider Forum (Wealden Rother & Hastings) RDC continues to explore opportunities (including new funding opportunities) to incorporate MMC and improved energy efficiency standards (with the exception of s106 sites).</p> <p>The eligibility criteria for the Councils Community Housing Fund (CHF) prioritises new housing schemes where community groups are employing sustainable/modern methods of construction.</p> <p>The Outcome and new targets have been updated accordingly.</p>
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<p>3.2 Improving the quality of housing in the private rented sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place measures which would target poor rented sector homes for improvement, particularly in wards of higher deprivation. 	<p><u>Outcome 2:</u> Deliver a range of measures to improve private sector property conditions in Rother.</p>	<p>Five homes a year improved because of licensing or statutory notices being served.</p> <p>A minimum of five properties will be assessed per annum under the HHSRS system, to include temporary accommodation where required.</p> <p>At least five referrals per annum to ESCC Warm Home Check service.</p>	<p>ESL&CS</p>	<p>These targets should be monitored each year.</p> <p>In 2021/22 94 inspections (including 32 temporary accommodation dwellings) under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) were undertaken of residential properties across the district. From 1 April 2022 to December 2022 there were 13 further inspections. These inspections have included three temporary accommodation dwellings.</p> <p>The Warm Home Check service provides energy efficiency advice and financial advice around heating. The scheme is run by ESCC and households are encouraged to self-refer to the scheme. This scheme is promoted and discussed during the HHSRS inspections. Numbers of households that self-refer are difficult to be certain of but are believed to be around 99 for 2020/21.</p>
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<p>3.3 Modern methods of construction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the opportunity to introduce modern methods of construction on any residential developments taken forward by the Council. • Working with registered providers to explore the opportunity to introduce modern methods of construction, for example timber framed kits, for all affordable housing developments. 	<p><u>Outcome 2:</u> Modern methods of construction used for all registered provider developments (excluding s106 sites), where possible.</p>	<p>From April 2020</p>	<p>ATR</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress.</p> <p>RDC continues to explore opportunities to work with RP's and community led housing groups to deliver sustainable forms of constructions on all schemes where it is feasible to do so (with the exception of s106 sites).</p> <p>Future monitoring of this Action will be included under Outcome 2.</p>
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<p>3.4 Increase the number of affordable homes built to NDSS and accessible and adaptable standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of new planning policy requirements (Policy DHG4 and Policy DHG3) from the emerging DASA. 	<p><u>Outcome 1:</u> All affordable homes to be built to the NDSS & M4 (2) ¹</p> <p><u>Outcome 2:</u> 5% of affordable housing to be built to M4 (3) Category 3, wheelchair accessible delivery¹</p>	<p>Two homes built to wheelchair standards per year from April 2020.</p>	<p>ATR</p>	<p>Target needs to be continually monitored.</p> <p>1 x 1 bed bungalow at Tollgates, Battle and 1 x 3 bed house at Barnhorn Close, Bexhill built to wheelchair standards during 2022/23 to date (December 2022).</p> <p>For noting. Schemes delivered onsite during 19/20 and 20/21 combine different standards before the adoption of the Development and Site Allocations Plan (DaSA) policies. To include homes built to Lifetime Homes (LTH) standards and the Council's own wheelchair brief. These standards have now been abolished and superseded by Building Regulations, incorporated in the adopted DaSA as per the notes below.</p>
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*NDSS – The Government introduced the 'Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard' in March 2015, which are nationally recognised space standards

*M4 (2) Category 2 and M4 (3) Category 3 is included in The Building Regulations (2010) Approved Document 'M'. This legislation relates to the accessibility and adaptability of new homes. M4 (3) specifically relates to reasonable provisions being made in the home for wheel chair users.

Key:

ATR	Acquisitions, Transformations & Regeneration
H&C	Housing & Communities
S&P	Strategy & Planning
ESL&CS	Environmental, Health, Licensing & Community Safety

Table 1: Summary of all targets achieved			
PRIORITY 1: INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING			
Objective	Target Achieved		Service Area
1.1 Increase the development of housing	Outcome 1: Set up framework enabling purchasing or developing of new homes	20/21	ATR
	Outcome 2: Bring forward Blackfriars site and other suitable sites for housing.	20/21	ATR/H&C
	Outcome 3: Increase provision of affordable housing through council led development on a year by year basis	20/21	ATR/S&P
	Outcome 3: Increase provision of affordable housing through council led development on a year by year basis On target to increase delivery from 2020/21 to 2021/22 and 2021/22 to 2022/23	2022	ATR/S&P
	Outcome 4: Increase in temporary accommodation within Rother District	21/22	H&C
	Outcome 5: Increase supported housing options to meet identified needs (March 2022 target of 20 units achieved)	2022	H&C
	Outcome 6: Adoption of DaSA	19/20	S&P
	Outcome 8: More effective monitoring of delivery against Local Plan targets	19/20	S&P
1.2 Community Led Housing	Outcome 2: An increase in the number of groups supported to deliver CLH At least four groups established in the Rother District as CLH groups by the end of 2024	2022	H&C
1.4 Increase housing supply by bringing empty homes in the district back into use	Outcome 1: Action plan in place	20/21	ESL&CS
	Outcome 2: Delivery of action plan	21/22	ESL&CS
Priority 3: IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND SUITABILITY OF EXISTING HOUSING AND NEWBUILD HOUSING			
3.1 Reducing fuel poverty	Outcome 1: Affordable warmth methods of	19/20	ATR

	construction considered for all Council led residential developments		
	Outcome 2: Affordable warmth methods of construction considered for all registered provider developments	19/20	ATR
3.2 Improving the quality of housing in the private rented sector	Outcome 1: Review of existing service provision completed	19/20	ESL&CS
	Outcome 2: Delivery of action plan	19/20	ESL&CS
3.3 Modern methods of construction	Outcome 1: Modern methods of construction used for all council led development, where possible	20/21	ATR
3.4 Increase the number of affordable homes built to NDSS and accessible and adaptable standards	Outcome 1: All affordable homes to be built to the NDSS & M4 (2)	20/21	S&P/ATR
	Outcome 2: 5% of affordable housing to be built to M4 (3) Category 3, wheelchair accessible delivery	20/21	S&P/ATR
	Outcome 2: 5% of affordable housing to be built to M4 (3) Category 3, wheelchair accessible delivery 2 homes built to wheelchair standards per year from April 2020	2022	S&P/ATR

Rother District Council

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 23 January 2023

Title: Review of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 (Part B)

Report of: Joe Powell – Head of Housing and Community

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To update Members on progress of the Improvement Delivery Plan of Priority 2 of the above strategy as it relates to Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Housing Aspirations only. Progress on Priority 1 and 3 of the Strategy will be presented in a separate report.

Officer

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

- 1) Cabinet be requested to agree that the ‘targets achieved’ as listed in Appendix B be removed from the Improvement Delivery Plan and replaced with the amended targets proposed at Appendix A; and
- 2) the progress made against the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy included in the Improvement Delivery Plan (Appendix A) be noted.

Introduction

1. A request from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to separate the Housing element of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (The Strategy) from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping element has been noted and this report will update Members on progress made towards achieving the Strategy’s Priority 2 only: Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Meeting Housing Aspirations. Priority 1 of the Strategy: Increasing the development of housing and Priority 3: Improving the quality and suitability of existing housing and new build housing will be reported separately.
2. The Strategy and its action plan were developed in 2019 following an extensive research and consultation exercise, with key stakeholders and the public. Recommendations from a Member ‘Task and Finish Group’ were also used to shape three key priorities of the final Strategy, including the need to increase housing supply while improving measures to address homelessness and the quality of accommodation. The Council will continue to monitor the progress of the Strategy’s action plan through annual consultation with its strategic partners from across Housing, Health, Social Care and voluntary sectors.
3. The aims and objectives of the Strategy are complemented by the stated aims of the Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group. The Anti-Poverty Strategy was adopted by Council in July 2022 (Minute CB22/18 refers).

4. An annual review of the Strategy's action plan is completed by officers and reported to Members annually, so that progress against the Strategy objectives can be monitored and key actions reviewed and updated for the year ahead. The outcome of the full review of Priority 2: Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Housing Aspiration of the Strategy can be found in the updated Improvement Delivery Plan (Appendix A). A summary of all actions achieved since the Strategy's inception in 2019 is included in Appendix B below. The remainder of this report will summarise key highlights from the Improvement Delivery Plan achieved since the last report to this committee in November 2021.

PRIORITY 2: Rough Sleeping, Homelessness and Meeting Housing Aspirations Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Visit

5. In Spring 2022, we requested a review of the performance of the housing department through our Homeless Advice and Support Team (HAST) a department of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). In June, the HAST team attended the Council's offices and were impressed with a number of our initiatives that we have been working on. They had particular praise for the success of our Rother Tenant Finder Scheme as well as the purchases for Temporary Accommodation (TA) properties. The visit also identified areas for improvement including the need for a review of the Allocations Policy as well as noting the significant increase in demand experienced by the service since the COVID-19 pandemic. A report was taken to the Council's Senior Leadership Team and the recommendations fed into the Housing and Community Service Plan.

Accommodation initiatives

6. We have purchased four more units of Housing First accommodation in 2022, providing accommodation to rough sleepers, supported by the four units of accommodation in February 2021. Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) and the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP). Housing First is recognised as best practice in settled accommodation for individuals with high level multiple and complex needs. The support is commissioned through the new RSI contract. We have also been successful in our bid for funding a further four units and purchases are underway for this, bringing our total to 12 units of Housing First accommodation in 2023. The additional grant allocation is £391,050.
7. We have identified through the RSI a gap in provision for vulnerable females, particularly in respect of female-only accommodation. This includes the findings of an earlier Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) which noted a lack of accommodation options for women with multiple and complex needs. The proposal made by the new East Sussex Housing Partnership (formerly the East Sussex Housing Officer Group - ESHOG) will deliver 12 respite rooms across East Sussex and this funding has been extended until March 2023. Accommodation is being provided by established emergency accommodation providers, who are experienced in supporting homelessness services, with additional wrap-around support from the RSI.

Temporary Accommodation Purchases

8. We completed a 6-month pilot to deliver support to clients in Rother-owned TA, with an emphasis on accessing the private rented sector. We will be taking the lessons learnt from this pilot to develop a commissioned service to provide housing management and support for our Temporary Accommodation Support Scheme (TASS); currently the TASS is being delivered by our in-house Housing Management Officer. To date the Housing Solutions team has secured 22 houses and flats (units of accommodation) with 16 occupied and seven under refurbishment, within one block of flats. There are a further nine units under offer at various stages of purchase. Inclusive of the 22 units of accommodation are eight units of accommodation that are used for Housing First, supporting former rough sleepers, and for which external grant has been secured from Homes England.

New support services

9. We were successful in securing further funding from DLUHC for the RSI until 2025, as part of this tender the RSI has a new countywide provider for Outreach, Temporary Accommodation Move On and Housing First Support for the five authorities to deliver "The RSI & Complex Needs Homeless Service." The countywide approach will deliver a seamless support service across the breadth of our rough sleeper accommodation pathways.
10. BEAM, a crowdfunding platform that supports homeless people to access training and get into work, has been commissioned until Summer 2023. The aim of the service is to help people who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness, to find stable employment, accommodation and financial security. This programme was launched in August and in the first three months, 32 customers were referred to this service. Using BEAM's online platform, members of the public can read the customer's story and donate funds to help pay for transport costs and training to provide them with a better chance of finding employment to maximise their future housing options. In the first active month, two customers accessed employment and have gone on to secure accommodation so far.
11. We have commissioned BHT Sussex to provide access to specialist housing advice to the residents of the Rother District in order to assist residents to retain their current home or, if this is not possible, to provide advice and information on how to access suitable alternative housing. The service will provide specialist housing advice, including representation at court to at least 100 people per annum and will pay for 11 hours a week of a specialist housing adviser. The target client audience are those Rother residents who are not eligible to receive this advice under the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), for example, because their income is too high or they are at risk of homelessness but their housing issues are outside of the LAA funding remit.

Multi-Agency work

12. The East Sussex Housing Partnership has been restructured. The aim of the restructure was to develop a number of specialist sub-groups that facilitate greater partnership working across housing development and homelessness support services. The sub-groups are governed by the Partnership's Executive Group which will continue to lead in the strategic coordination of housing and

homelessness services between wider sectors, with Rother being represented by the Head of Housing and Community. To complement the restructure, a new Housing Partnership Lead has been recruited which is funded by the Local Housing Authorities and East Sussex Public Health. Rother’s Head of Service, Housing and Community, will jointly line-manage the post with Public Health.

13. In March 2022, the Homes for Ukraine (HfU) scheme was set up which matched Ukrainian guests with hosts who could accommodate them in their homes. We have worked with a number of organisations, including East Sussex County Council, Rother Voluntary Action, BHT Sussex, Mediation Plus and Sussex Community Development Agency – to ensure there is support available to those within the HfU scheme. Additional Floating Support Officers have been recruited on the existing support contract to ensure capacity to deal with the additional households, and a migrant employability service has also been rolled out to assist with maximising people’s income to enhance housing options.

Conclusion

14. The progress and success of many of the achievements included in this report is testament to the strength of partnership working in Rother and ongoing commitment from all stakeholders to improve the quality of life for our residents, notwithstanding the considerably challenging impact on services due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing rise in the cost of living for households.
15. The Strategy is now in the fourth year since adoption, and a significant amount of progress has been achieved. To support the continued progress and achieve all three priorities included in The Strategy, it is recommended that the updates and changes included in the Implementation and Delivery Plan are agreed, and the annual review and reporting of the Strategy continues.
16. In 2023, we will start to draft The Strategy 2024-2029 and engaging with wider stakeholders.

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

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Appendices:	A - Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, Priority 2: Improvement Delivery Plan B - Summary of Targets Achieved
Relevant previous Minutes:	CB22/18
Background Papers:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 Housing-Homelessness-and-Rough-Sleeping-Strategy.pdf (rother.gov.uk)
Reference Documents:	-

PRIORITY 2: ROUGH SLEEPING, HOMELESSNESS AND MEETING HOUSING ASPIRATIONS					
Objective	Action	Outcome and Timeframe	Target	Service Area	November 2022 update
2.1 Reduce homelessness by improving the provision of housing related support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and deliver initiatives to improve the provision of employability and tenancy readiness support for people in housing difficulty and promote greater opportunities to sustain and access suitable long-term housing solutions (subject to funding availability). Work with specialist providers to enable the delivery of accommodation-based support services that meet the needs of vulnerable groups unable to access general needs accommodation. Work with commissioning and delivery partners to expand the provision of housing related floating support services to assist households to sustain existing accommodation or access new accommodation which meets their housing needs. 	<p><u>Outcome 4:</u> Increase the number of adaptations made to the homes of disabled people to support them to sustain their accommodation through the provision of DFGs.</p>	By April 2022 – 150 DFGs actioned annually	H&C	<p>Targets to be monitored</p> <p><u>2021/22</u> The total DFGs actioned was 177, however, 73 did not progress as they were refused, cancelled or applicant died. The final spend was £1,162,724 on 104 grants.</p> <p><u>April – Oct 2022</u> 89 DFGs have been approved thus far, with 46 DFGs completed. There has been a huge increase in demand and Occupational Therapist referrals this year. ESCC waiting list for assessment has been addressed. There is a shortage of contractors for the Home Improvement Agency but we are supporting them with recruiting more.</p>

		<p><u>Outcome 5:</u> New RP managed supported temporary accommodation is delivered in Rother.</p>	<p>Deliver 12 new supported temporary accommodation units by March 2023.</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>We have secured 22 houses and flats (units of accommodation) with 16 occupied and 7 under refurbishment, within one block of flats. There are a further 9 units under offer at various stages of purchase. Inclusive of the 22 units of accommodation are 8 units of accommodation that are used for Housing First, supporting former rough sleepers, and for which external grant has been secured from Homes England.</p> <p>We completed a pilot with a local RP, and will take the lessons learnt from that to form the basis of the tender for the Temporary Accommodation Support Scheme. In the meantime, the Housing Management Officer is delivering the support and property management in RDC owned Temporary Accommodation.</p> <p>A new Housing Partnership Lead recruited in partnership with East Sussex Public Health in order to achieve greater levels of joint</p>
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					commissioning and service delivery across the whole system of services supporting homeless households.
		<p><u>Outcome 6:</u> The present level of floating support in East Sussex is sustained or increased</p>	The existing level of floating support available in Rother is increased.	H&C	<p>Targets to be monitored</p> <p>ESCC and local housing authorities commissioned a new provider to deliver the Floating Support Service (formerly Homeworks) until 2031. There is also increased capacity in this service to deliver floating support to the Homes for Ukraine scheme.</p>

<p>2.2 Reduce homelessness through closer joint working</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish regular local multi-agency homelessness forum to design, deliver and monitor homelessness prevention measures Restructure ESHOG to provide additional capacity to support partnership working across housing, development and homelessness services Review eviction protocols and procedures with social landlords and private letting agents operating in Rother RE-commissioned Homeless Unity Group (HUG) to improve community provision of rough sleeper support services Work with Social Care and Health partners to develop a whole –system approach to supported housing delivery that meets the range of housing related support needs across the county. Create systems change through a pan-Sussex governance structure (Changing Futures) Deliver the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AFEO) project to support people who are leaving prison, and those who are homeless after 	<p><u>Outcome 5:</u> Improve access to the PRS for ex-offenders and provide additional tenancy sustainment services</p>	<p>By January 2022 commission specialist service to work with ex-offenders</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>Through Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AFEO) we have additional financial resources until March 2023 – this is aimed at people who have left prison within last 12 months.</p>
		<p><u>Outcome 6</u> Levels of homelessness are minimised</p>	<p>Sustain the number of homeless applications at existing levels and reduce the average cost per unit of TA placements</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>We have seen significant increases in homeless applications and a need to place in temporary accommodation. The longer term impact of COVID19 is starting to be realised and the increase in the cost of living has meant we have seen more landlords selling their let properties with vacant possession or tenants being unable to afford previously affordable accommodation</p> <p>We have increased staff</p>

Appendix A – Improvement Delivery Plan for Priority 2

	leaving prison within the last 12 months, access accommodation in the private rented sector.				resources to increase the scale of the Rother Tenant Finder Scheme, support temporary accommodation placements as well as created 3 new Prevention Officer posts, harnessing external budgets.
		<p><u>Outcome 7:</u> Improve service level care pathways for all Changing Futures service users with Multiple Complex Needs</p>	25 successful engagements in Year 1	H&C	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>The Changing Futures programme is newly operational and a confirmed nomination procedure is in place to accept clients onto the programme across all East Sussex Districts and Boroughs.</p>
		<p><u>Outcome 8:</u> New ESHOG structure to meet regularly to ensure that partners work closely together across sectors</p>	Quarterly meetings to be held	H&C	<p>Target to be monitored</p> <p>The East Sussex Housing Partnership Executive has been created, with its own dedicated lead officer, to replace the former East Sussex Housing Officer Group (ESHOG). A number of subgroups have been created to take a whole-system approach to developing solutions to homelessness throughout East Sussex.</p>

					<p>The Anti-poverty Strategy is adopted by the Council and is overseen by the Local Strategic Partnership, ensuring greater coordination of local support services and community groups to better alleviate the symptoms of poverty.</p> <p>RSI Board has been reinstated.</p>
<p>2.3 Reduce Homelessness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review options that improve access to the private rented sector through closer partnership working with private landlords, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guaranteed Rent Scheme ○ Loans for rent in advance and deposit ○ Leasing • Improve the accessibility of the Housing Needs Service and its integration with related services through greater co-location, home visits and improved referral pathways under Duty to Refer • Deliver effective social housing allocations through the implementation of a revised Housing Allocations Policy for Rother and by adjusting Rother Local Plan to prioritise the type of affordable housing delivered for those in Band A. • Develop a mediation service to 	<p><u>Outcome 2:</u> Performance review of new prevention measures completed and recommendations for future initiatives made by Nov 2022</p>	<p>To deliver 100 tenancies per annum increasing to 200 tenancies per annum by 2024.</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Additional Targets to be monitored:</p> <p>In September 2022, Rother Leasing was launched and we have secured our first property. We are now promoting this scheme through the Hastings & Rother Landlord Forum. We are working with comms team to design promotional material.</p> <p>The Rother Tenant Finder service continues to prevent homelessness. April – October 2022 – we delivered 55 tenancies through the Rother Tenant Finder and are on-track to achieve over 100 by yearend.</p>

Appendix A – Improvement Delivery Plan for Priority 2

Page 71	sustain tenancies				
		<p><u>Outcome 3:</u> Home visits carried out post-COVID-19 March 2022</p>	<p>To increase the levels of home visits</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>Home visits are undertaken within DFG, UKRS, RTF but capacity in Housing Needs service is too low presently. We have three new 'prevention' posts starting in 2023 which will increase capacity for Housing Needs to complete these and complete early interventions to prevent homelessness</p>
		<p><u>Outcome 6:</u> Homelessness prevention rates increase</p>	<p>To prevent evictions through positive interventions</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>We have three new 'prevention' posts starting in 2023 which will increase capacity for Housing Needs to complete these and complete early interventions to prevent homelessness.</p>

Appendix A – Improvement Delivery Plan for Priority 2

		<p><u>Outcome 7:</u> New Allocations Policy is operational</p>	<p>Reduce the Rother Housing list from 1600 (as at December 2019) to 1200 by end 2023</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>A new Policy is going to public consultation.</p> <p>At the DLUHC visit in Summer 2022 they advised to relook at our current and new allocations policy which we have done and taken the view that given changes in legislation and best practice we will re-draft a policy, still with the aim to go live by end of 2023.</p>
		<p><u>Outcome 8:</u> New mediation service commissioned by November 2022</p>	<p>Consulting with partners to commission mediation service</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>A mediation service has been commissioned through Homes for Ukraine funding as an indication of the take-up of this service in East Sussex, with particular focus on Rother.</p>

...

<p>2.4 Reduce rough sleeping through the development of a countywide rough sleeping accommodation pathway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the voluntary sector to explore options for creating a street homelessness centre/hub in Bexhill, which improves the accessibility of services to rough sleepers, with outreach available to all areas of Rother • Work across local authority boundaries with housing, health and social care partners to expand the East Sussex Rough Sleeping Initiative, delivering services targeted at those experiencing multiple complex needs who are rough sleeping or at high risk of rough sleeping 	<p><u>Outcome 3:</u> Recommission Safe Space in April 2023</p>	<p>50 people with multiple complex needs accessing housing needs and assessments through the hub per year from 2021/22</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Target to be monitored annually</p> <p>Each quarter approximately 30 individuals pass through the Safe Space</p>
		<p><u>Outcome 4:</u> Secure 3-year funding agreement for the RSI from DLUHC April 2022</p>	<p>30 individuals prevented or relieved from rough sleeping during 2021/22 with the target reviewed annually relative to demand.</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Target to be monitored annually</p> <p>We successfully secured a 3 year funding agreement for the RSI, and a new provider has been commissioned from October 2022.</p> <p>51 former rough sleepers were accommodated during 2021/22 (Target was 30)</p> <p>29 former rough sleepers accommodated in the first half of 2022/23, which seven are in RDC Rough Sleeper accommodation (RSAP/NSAP).</p>

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<p>2.5 Improve the delivery and accessibility of support and advice services to better meet housing needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve staff training, to ensure front line officers, partners and Members are aware of the range of support available as part of the Anti-Poverty Strategy aim to improve the promotion of services. • Continue to improve the triage of homeless applicants to enable greater levels of self-service and improve service accessibility • Put in place interventions that increase household incomes and improve tenancy access through raising the training and employment aspirations of those on low incomes - particularly those of young people and single parent households. • As part of the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy development improve the accessibility of housing and homelessness advice services to local people 	<p><u>Outcome 4:</u> The new Housing Needs triage service is operating within the customer service team March 2022</p>	<p>Ensure 100% of enquiries are processed and appropriate support given in line with legislation</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Target to be monitored annually</p> <p>The Customer Service pilot has been completed and the Housing Needs team now fund 1 FTE to triage and advise homeless cases</p>
		<p><u>Outcome 5:</u> Review remote access pilots in The Pelham and Rye Food Bank March 2022</p>	<p>Have six remote access points in place by November 2022</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>Rye Foodbank and The Pelham remote access has been piloted. A 3rd access point is going into Bexhill Foodbank in January. And a further three are being looked into in Battle, Rye and Bexhill</p>

...

<p>2.6 Support households to meet their housing aspirations – in particular, home ownership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place new initiatives which support households to access suitable and affordable housing, whether that be affordable rented, sub-market rent, shared ownership or other home ownership options 	<p><u>Outcome 1:</u> Research feasibility of provision of a mortgage scheme to assist households into home ownership</p> <p><u>Outcome 2:</u> Action plan setting out additional tenure access initiatives</p>	<p>Action plan in place by November 2022</p>	<p>H&C</p>	<p>Action to achieve target in progress</p> <p>We are working alongside Rent Plus on a development site in Battle to enable tenants to have the opportunity to purchase the properties they are letting at varying intervals of their tenancy.</p>
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SUMMARY OF ALL TARGETS ACHIEVED

PRIORITY 2: ROUGH SLEEPING, HOMELESSNESS AND MEETING HOUSING ASPIRATIONS			
OBJECTIVE	TARGET ACHIEVED	YEAR	SERVICE AREA
2.1 Reduce homelessness by improving the provision of housing related support.	<u>Outcome 1</u> : Relevant support services available to those in temporary accommodation.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 2</u> : Employability and tenancy readiness initiatives set up in place for those in temporary accommodation.	20/21	H&C
	<u>Outcome 3</u> : Work with East Sussex County to recommission appropriate floating housing support service.	20/21	H&C
	<u>Outcome 4</u> : Increase the number of adaptations made to the homes of disabled people to support them to sustain their accommodation through the provision of DFGs.	2022	H&C
	<u>Outcome 6</u> : The present level of floating support in East Sussex is sustained or increased.	2022	H&C
2.2 Reduce homelessness through closer joint working.	<u>Outcome 1</u> : Local multi-agency forum in place with the objective of delivering and monitoring deliver of the strategy.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 2</u> : Rough sleeping support services in place (through Health & Wellbeing Centres and floating support where possible).	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 3</u> : Revised countywide accommodation pathway delivered with ESHOG partners.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 4</u> : Eviction protocols in place with main social landlords and lettings agents.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 8</u> : New ESHOG structure to meet regularly to ensure that partners work closely together across sectors.	2022	H&C

PRIORITY 2: ROUGH SLEEPING, HOMELESSNESS AND MEETING HOUSING ASPIRATIONS

OBJECTIVE	TARGET ACHIEVED	YEAR	SERVICE AREA
2.3 Reduce Homelessness.	<u>Outcome 1</u> : Social Lettings Agency in place.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 2</u> : Performance review of new prevention measures completed and recommendations for future initiatives made.	20/21	H&C
	<u>Outcome 3</u> : Home visit procedure in place.	20/21	H&C
	<u>Outcome 4</u> : Duty to refer protocol in place.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 5</u> : Co-location options explored and proposals agreed.	20/21	H&C
2.4 Reduce rough sleeping through the development of a countywide rough sleeping	<u>Outcome 1</u> : Agree proposals for street homelessness hub.	20/21	H&C
	<u>Outcome 2</u> : New rough sleeper pathway delivered with health and social care partners.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 4</u> : Secure 3-year funding agreement for the RSI from DLUHC April 2022.	2022	H&C
2.5 Improve the delivery and accessibility of support and advice services to better meeting housing needs.	<u>Outcome 1</u> : Communications plan in place.	20/21	H&C
	<u>Outcome 2</u> : New self-service Housing Needs Service triage system in place June 2019.	19/20	H&C
	<u>Outcome 2</u> : Project plan for 'raising aspirations' initiative and funding agreed by March 2020.	20/21	H&C
	<u>Outcome 6</u> : Live, Work Thrive project continues to be funded by RDC via the CHART Programme.	2022	H&C
	<u>Outcome 7</u> : Develop an Anti-Poverty Strategy and deliver with LSP partners December 2022.	2022	H&C

Rother District Council

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 23 January 2023

Title: Key Performance Targets 2023/24

Report of: Ben Hook – Director of Place and Climate Change

Ward(s): N/A

Purpose of Report: To consider the proposals for measuring the Council’s Corporate Performance for 2023/24.

Officer

Recommendation(s): It be **RESOLVED:** That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the current performance targets as set out in Appendix A and that new KPIs are agreed and recommended to Cabinet.

This report is to agree the set of measurements that will help the Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitor the performance and delivery of key plans and make appropriate recommendations for actions and amendments to Cabinet, when necessary.

Introduction

1. Managing performance to deliver the best outcomes within the resources available is a core function for Rother District Council. Members are requested to select a small set of corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and agree their target levels of performance for the next financial year. The purpose of the reported KPI set is to manage the performance of the authority at a focused and prioritised level.

Current KPIs

2. The current KPIs are themed into five areas reflecting key priorities from the corporate plan. The themes are:
 - **Housing and Communities:** four indicators to monitor delivery of the Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
 - **Finance Performance:** three indicators to monitor significant non-tax income as a part of the Council’s revenue streams and a cost from the housing strategy.
 - **Economic Development and Poverty:** three indicators to monitor the impact of the pandemic on household incomes, council tax and business rates collection.
 - **Environment:** two indicators to monitor the proportion of household waste collected that is sent for reuse, composting and recycling.
 - **Planning:** two indicators to monitor the processing times of applications.

When relevant, other indicators are used to inform the qualitative narrative. This gives the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Members the ability to scrutinise more effectively and pass on any recommendations they have as a result to Cabinet.

3. Aside from the above measurements to be reported quarterly, other indicators informing Heads of Service, Directors and the Chief Executive of performance would be reported by exception to the OSC where they are exceeding or significantly missing their target.
4. The current KPIs have been criticised by a range of Members, both of this Committee and others, as being more reflective of performance of the district rather than the performance of the Council and matters that are within the Council's direct control.

Re-focus on performance

5. In response to this criticism, this report recommends a wholesale shift of performance monitoring back towards corporate operations and service delivery. It is important that Members remain reassured that the various departments of the Council providing core services are functioning effectively, have sufficient resources, and delivering within expected parameters.
6. The proposed indicators, while greater in number than previous monitoring years, offer a more holistic overview of Council performance. Given the ever-tightening financial position it is increasingly important that this Committee are able to properly scrutinise the deployment of resources throughout the Council.
7. 26 KPIs are being proposed and are broken down into eight service areas as listed below (full details of the proposed KPIs can be found at Appendix A) :
 - Environmental Health
 - Housing
 - Customer Services
 - Neighbourhood Services
 - Estates
 - Corporate Core
 - Planning Development Management
 - Revenues and Benefits

State of the District

8. It is recognised that the current KPIs are not without value and offer an indication of the impact of the Council's strategy and performance. As such, it is proposed that an annual State of the District report is provided to the OSC. This report will be wide ranging and will seek to ensure that Members are kept informed of changes to the profile, demographic, and housing and economic landscape of the district.

Environment Strategy

9. The Rother Environment Strategy (2020-2030) was adopted in September 2020. This sets out the activities and actions that are being taken in response

to the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration of 2019. It has been agreed, through the Climate Change Steering group, that an updated Environment Strategy is required. Whilst it had been intended that changes to the Council's carbon baseline be reported quarterly, it is now recommended that an annual figure be recorded as part of the State of the District report, whilst narrative on the works being undertaken as part of the strategy is reviewed by this Committee every six months.

Conclusion

10. This report sets out the proposed 26 performance indicators for 2023/24. Members of the Committee will need to consider if they feel that these indicators are sufficient for the effective monitoring of Council operations and whether all of the proposed eight areas should be included.
11. The Committee should agree the themes and KPIs they wish to monitor in the financial year 2023/24 and recommend these to Cabinet.

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

Chief Executive:	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact Officer:	Ben Hook, Director – Place and Climate Change
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Appendices:	A – Proposed Performance Indicators 2023/24
Relevant Previous Minutes:	N/A
Background Papers:	N/A
Reference Documents:	N/A

Proposed KPIs

Service Area	KPI Information	23/24 proposed targets
Environmental Health	% of planned food inspections carried out:	90%
	% of service requests resolved on time:	90%
Housing	No. Homelessness Prevention/Relief	120 per annum
	Average cost per TA placement	£1,200 per month
Customer Services	Calls received per month	Reduced on current
	First Contact Resolution - number of enquiries that are resolved at first point of contact	85%
	Average call wait time	Reduced on Current
	Customer Satisfaction - how satisfied customers are with our services	85%
	Total Contact - total customer contact including Digital	Monitor
Neighbourhood Services	Waste collections missed bins/100,000	62/100,000
	% of public land found with unacceptable levels of litter	2.50%
	% of public land found with unacceptable levels of detritus	7%
	Fly tips recorded on public land/month	Average below 70
	NES - Fly Tip Fines	Monitor
Estates	Total income from investment properties	£2,429,510
Corporate Core	Sickness Monitoring.	Maximum 6.5 days lost to sickness per year per FTE
	FOI - % answered in 20 Days	95%
Planning Development Management	% Major Planning Applications within statutory timescale or agreed extension	80%
	% Non-Major Planning Applications within statutory timescale or agreed extension	80%
	% Major Planning Appeals Allowed	10%
	% Non-Major Planning Appeals Allowed	30%
Revenues and Benefits	Council Tax Collection Rate	98.30%
	NDR (Business Rates) Collection Rate	98.30%
	Average Days to Process New Housing Benefits Claims	20 Days
	Average Days to Process Existing Housing Benefits Claims	14 Days

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2022 – 2023		
DATE OF MEETING	SUBJECT – MAIN ITEM IN BOLD	Cabinet Portfolio Holder
23.01.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Revenue Budget Proposals 2023/24 • Review of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 (Part A) • Review of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 (Part B) • Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy • Key Performance Targets 2023/24 	Jeeawon Byrne Timpe
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 • Recommendations of the Off-Street Car Parks Task & Finish Group • Recommendations of the Health & Well-Being Task & Finish Group • Recommendations of the Bexhill Town Centre Conservation Task and Finish Group • Recommendations of the Anti-Poverty Task & Finish Group 	Jeeawon Field
24.04.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call-in and Urgency Procedures • Draft Annual Report to Council 	
WORK PROGRAMME 2023 - 2024		
05.06.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Report: Fourth Quarter 2022/23 • Annual Work Programme • Housing Allocations Policy 	
10.07.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Outturn 2022/23 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring – Quarter 1 2023/24 	
11.09.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Report: First Quarter 2023/24 	
16.10.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2028/29 	
20.11.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Report: Second Quarter 2023/24 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring – Quarter 2 2023/24 • Annual Review of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024) 	
22.01.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Revenue Budget Proposals 2024/25 • Key Performance Targets 2024/25 	

<p>18.03.24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and Disorder Committee: to receive a report from the Community Safety Partnership • Performance Report: Third Quarter 2023/24 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring – Quarter 3 2024/24 	
<p>22.04.24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call-in and Urgency Procedures • Draft Annual Report to Council 	

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Regeneration inc. Leisure Centre, Fountains, Skate Park and Accessibility of Green Spaces across the district
- 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 – date TBC
- Impact of Airbnb and second homes in Rye/Winchelsea/Camber
- Effectiveness of 'MyAlerts'
- Update report from the Local Strategic Partnership
- Update report from the Health and Well-Being Board
- Corporate Plan review – to be referred back by Cabinet – date TBC
- Review of the Financial Stability Programme – date TBC
- A review of Mental Health across the district – date TBC
- Progress on the Environment Strategy (2020)