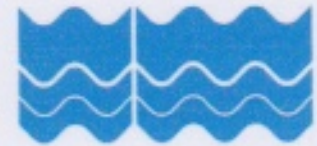


Summary of County Council achievements 2021/22

This summary sets out some of the key achievements of East Sussex County Council (ESCC) in 2021/22 (up to February 2022) under the four strategic priorities of the Council:

www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/about/keydocuments/councilplan/default.htm

The Council Plan for 2022/23 will be on our website from 1st April 2022.



Driving sustainable economic growth

The Council was successful in securing funding for East Sussex through two major national schemes – the **UK Community Renewal Fund (CRF)** and the **Levelling Up Fund**. ESCC will receive over £2.5m from the UK CRF to go towards five projects, including £730,000 for two projects in Hastings and a £700,000 grant to reboot tourism in Lewes district. Some of the target outcomes across East Sussex include the safeguarding of 300 full time jobs and 470 participants engaged in skills and employment support. Our Levelling Up Fund bid to replace the single lane crossing at Exceat with a new two-lane bridge was successful in securing nearly £8m. Overall, around £170m is being invested into East Sussex because of the **East Sussex Economy Recovery Plan**. Through our business support programmes over 170 jobs have been created or safeguarded in the first three-quarters of 2021/22, against a target of 140 jobs.

The **East Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**, which proposes an ambitious network of preferred cycling and walking routes across the county was agreed in September 2021. This first plan focuses on areas where there is the greatest opportunity to increase levels of cycling and walking and to attract external funding, such as the coastal strip and larger market towns. In July 2021, the new Newhaven Port Access Road opened to cyclists and pedestrians, providing access to Tide Mills and the beach, and linking with existing footpaths to create new circular walking and biking routes.

Over 60 **carriageway asset improvement schemes** were delivered in the first three-quarters of 2021/22, to maintain and improve the county's roads. Over 17,000 potholes were also repaired. In autumn 2021, the Council committed a further £5.8m for highways including funding for extra patching work, improving pavements, refreshing lines and road markings, and replacing and updating road signs. Three bidders have been shortlisted to provide highway maintenance and infrastructure services in East Sussex from May 2023 onwards and have been asked to submit detailed tenders.

In October, the Careers hub delivered a live virtual **careers** event 'What's Next Sussex' with over 1,100 students, parents and teachers attending. Over 3,400 pupils are expected to go on work experience placements in this academic year, including through our Virtual Work Experience package developed in response to Covid-19. At the end of 2020/21 ESCC were 9th nationally for yearly outturn figures and joint 7th for cumulative targets for the percentage of **apprentices** employed in the Council, with 1.2% of our workforce being apprentices. In summer 2021 funding of up to £615,000 was agreed for a Supported Apprenticeship programme to create opportunities for some of the county's most vulnerable residents, including those in supported and temporary accommodation and those at risk of homelessness. 94.8% of academic age 16 pupils were participating in **education, training, or employment with training** in December 2021, against a target of 93%. 83% of Looked After Children in the same age group were also participating in education, training, or employment with training, against a target of 80%.

Keeping vulnerable people safe

In November 2020, the Government announced funding to provide **holiday activities and food (HAF)** to young people eligible for free school meals over the Easter, summer, and Christmas holidays in 2021. 34 providers ran provision during Easter with 1,378 young people attending. The summer programme included 71 providers in 85 locations across the county, with places arranged for 3,612 young people. In October 2021, the Government announced the household support fund providing support to **vulnerable households** with the cost of food, energy, and other bills. During the October half-term and Christmas holidays we allocated approximately 36,000 food vouchers.

Residents facing financial pressure because of Covid-19 restrictions were supported with funding of £500,000, announced in June 2021 with one off grants being provided to 11 voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations that offer **financial advice**, support, and practical help.

The Council has been delivering a package of support to all secondary and some special schools focusing on **gangs, peer influence and coercion**, including county lines. A number of workshops and assemblies have also been delivered by kNOwknives and by the Safer East Sussex Team on the risks of knife carrying. An East Sussex **Violence Reduction Action Plan** has also been developed, covering current and planned projects to identify local issues and address them through multi-agency action.

The East Sussex Local Offer website was launched in January 2022, providing a comprehensive range of information and resources aimed at supporting children and young people with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**. The site was designed in collaboration with parents, carers, and professionals. A new Flagship School in Hastings, a special school for children with autism opened in September 2021. The school, opened to meet a recognised gap in provision, initially opened for 24 pupils and will grow to 72 pupils in future years.

Keeping vulnerable people safe continued...

The Domestic Abuse Act came into force in 2021, setting out new obligations for the Council and a Pan-Sussex Domestic Abuse Partnership Board has been established. A new Community Development Officer is working across Sussex to set up a Lived Experience Board to ensure the voices of victims are amplified at a strategic level. Clarion Housing Association was awarded the contract for the provision of refuge services across East Sussex from November 2021 and are providing specialist support in 47 units of safe accommodation across the county for women experiencing **domestic abuse** and violence and their children. This will increase to 56 units over time.

ESCC were successful in securing funding from the national social care recovery grant enabling us to extend our Foundations Services, which works with couples/women who have had children removed and to establish Lifelong Links for **children in our care**, putting them back in touch with adults who have previously been close to them.

Trading Standards were involved in 133 interventions over the first three-quarters of 2021-22 to protect vulnerable people, including installing call blockers to try to prevent people from falling victim to telephone scams. The team also participated in the national Scams Awareness Fortnight in June 2021 highlighting the risks of financial scams.

Helping people help themselves

Reablement services are provided to help people to regain mobility and daily living skills, especially after a hospital stay. Between April and September 2021 91.5% of older people discharged from hospital to reablement or rehabilitation services were at home 91 days after discharge. Frail adults across East Sussex can also receive Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS), to help manage risks and maintain **independence at home**. TECS includes Telecare, which offers a range of products, such as wearable alert buttons, fall detectors or medication dispensers. At the end of 2021, 8,274 people were receiving TECS. In July 2021, the Council's three year Being Digital strategy was launched setting out how 30 **digital solutions** projects will be used to improve and deliver care and support to adults, making it easier for clients and carers to find support and to manage their care online.

Work continued on the further **integration of health and social care**. Work is underway to establish a new Integrated Care System (ICS) made up of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and an Integrated Care Partnership. The ICB for Sussex will be responsible for a health budget of over £2bn and will oversee the commissioning, performance, financial management and transformation of the local NHS. The current focus is on setting out the arrangements between local NHS organisations, Local Authorities and wider partners covering the ICS vision, principles, and governance arrangements. The intention is to complete the governance arrangements and key recruitment campaigns so that the ICB starts operating in shadow form no later than 1 April 2022.

Thirteen **road safety** schemes were completed during the first three-quarters of 2021/22 to improve road safety infrastructure, with a further 13 schemes scheduled for completion before the end of the financial year.

A partnership between Public Health and Hastings Borough Council was successful in securing £2.2m from the Government's Sustainable Warmth Competition. The funding will boost the ESCC Warm Home Check service until March 2023, offering **home energy efficiency improvements** to at least 150 low-income, fuel poor households.

Making best use of resources in the short and long term

The Council's **budget and Council Plan** for 2022/23 were approved at the meeting of Full Council on 8 February 2022. ESCC approved a £453m budget for 2022/23 for the day-to-day provision of services and £753m for capital investment, which includes a commitment to spend an additional £6m to help combat climate change and £31m to maintain and improve roads and pavements over the next decade. The 2022/23 budget also cancels almost £900,000 of savings due to be made from the early help service.

In autumn 2021, Councillors reaffirmed their commitment to become a carbon-neutral authority, setting aside £3.055m (additional to the £6m highlighted above) to be spent on reducing **climate change**. The Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan includes reducing corporate carbon emissions by 13 per cent a year and the additional funding agreed will be spent on replacing ageing boilers, installing solar panels and low energy lighting.

The Council spent £288m with 928 **local suppliers** over 2021, equating to 68.3% of total spend. In addition, during the first three-quarters of the year, 21 contracts which qualified for the **Social Value** Measurement Charter were awarded with a total value of just under £50m with over £3.5 million of social value commitments included.

Strategic Property Asset Collaboration in East Sussex (SPACES) is a partnership of public bodies and other organisations to improve sharing of the property estate, to save property costs and release capital receipts. The SPACES strategy was approved in May 2021 and the programme has now developed an Implementation Plan, including activities around Electric Vehicle infrastructure. The **Property** team was awarded the Outstanding Customer Satisfaction SECBE award for the building of Ropemakers' Academy in Hailsham; a £12.5m build creating a new 80 place social, emotional, and mental health facility for children.

Report from Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green, ESCC

From my perspective, having been elected in May last year, I have spent the past 10 months learning about potholes, speed limits, drainage and road maintenance in general! I hope that residents will begin to see, if they have not already, improvements to the state of roads. I am certainly very vocal about the issues in my division, and we have had the good fortune of a one off payment of £5.8 million for road improvements along with £31 million to be spent over the next ten years.

A latest update regarding Ukraine is that Cabinet will be receiving a report on the 19th April on the Ukrainian situation and that briefing will consider the broader national issues in addition to the local impacts for East Sussex. This update relates to the Homes for Ukraine scheme and the work undertaken to date.

Government is providing initial funding for councils, the sponsors and the refugees arriving in the U.K. Further clarity is being sought to establish the ongoing nature of this funding to ensure we can continue to support the successful implementation of this scheme.

The latest information is that 688 refugees have been matched to sponsors in East Sussex; it is difficult to assess how many refugees will arrive in East Sussex as the scheme is uncapped.

National guidance is being regularly updated and we are uploading the most up to date information we have to this webpage, <https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/your-council/ukraine-crisis>.

Additionally, we are in the process of creating two information 'packs', one for sponsors and one for refugees. These will be available in the very near future. We have emailed all sponsors earlier this week to make initial contact and to advise as to how we can assist.

By Tuesday (5th April) ESCC will be running a dedicated public helpline for Ukrainian refugee issues, this will be with the same organisation who supported our Community Hub work during the COVID pandemic.

We are aware that a potentially large number of refugees will be children of school age and we will of course attempt to provide places locally, if necessary, through the creation of additional capacity using Government funding.

We are supporting the VCSE in employing dedicated support workers in the community who will help refugees integrate into the community. Additionally, we are looking to work with the existing Ukrainian community to help design our support offer.

