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| ESSP new without graphic | **Meeting Notes****Thursday 9 February 2017** **Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes**  |

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| **IN ATTENDANCE** |

**ESSP Members present:**

Cllr. Keith Glazier (Vice-Chair) East Sussex County Council

Steve Manwaring (Chair) SpeakUp Representative

Cllr. Elayne Merry Lewes District Council

David Padwick Sussex Police

Andrea Saunders National Probation Service

Cllr. Bob Standley Wealden District Council

Michael Turner Environment Agency

Gary Walsh East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

**Also in attendance (official observers):**

Gill Cameron-Waller Wealden District Council

Lou Carter (speaker) East Sussex County Council

Sarah Feather East Sussex County Council

Jo Harper Lewes District Council

Beth McGhee East Sussex County Council

Becky Shaw East Sussex County Council

Jane Spice (speaker) East Sussex County Council

Amanda Watson (speaker) East Sussex County Council

**Apologies for absence**:

Peter Archer Federation of Small Businesses

Cllr. Chris Dowling East Sussex County Council

Cllr. Kim Forward Hastings Borough Council

Paul Harwood Highways Agency

Cllr. Carl Maynard Rother District Council

Graham Peters Team East Sussex

Ashley Scarff High Weald, Lewes & Havens CCG

Cllr. Andy Smith Lewes District Council

Carol Studley Rother District Council

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| **NOTES** |

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Steve Manwaring welcomed ESSP members, delegates, observers, guests and speakers to the meeting and apologies were given. Steve thanked Gary Walsh, who will retire from East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) in March, for his dedication to the ESSP and partnership working, which has facilitated strong working relationships across sectors, particularly between ESFRS and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

1. **Urgent items of business**

None.

1. **Notes of the meeting held on 5 December 2016 and Matters Arising**

The minutes, including subsequent amendments, were agreed as an accurate record and an update on actions from the meeting was received.

1. **Update on the Children’s and Young People’s Trust Annual Conference**

Steve introduced Lou Carter, East Sussex County Council (ESCC), to provide an update on the Children’s and Young People’s Trust (CYPT) Annual Conference, which took place in October 2016.

The CYPT Annual Conference was the first meeting of the Trust in this format. Attendees reflected on progress that had been made to achieve the 2014-18 Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) priorities; and considered service user feedback, challenges the CYPT and partners face, particularly financial challenges, and how to mitigate them. The range of work that has been undertaken to make significant progress on the CYPP priorities was noted, as well as other promising future plans. The event received very positive feedback from attendees and it is proposed that the new meeting format is maintained and a similar conference is held later in 2017.

Steve thanked Lou for the update and fed-back that the new i-Rock mental health service for young people in Hastings has been particularly well received and that the service is highly valued. It was noted that the CYPT Conference is an example of how cross-sector partnership working can successfully deliver, and meet local and national challenges.

Steve then introduced Jane Spice, ESCC, who provided an update on the Government’s Early Years Funding Formula (EYFF) review. The new EYFF is regarded as a positive move, as it will increase the amount of funding for childcare in East Sussex, and benefit working families. Although the Government’s policy to provide 30 hours of free childcare will boost the childcare sector when it is implemented, it was recognised that there will always be sustainability problems in the sector, due to fluctuations in demand, which can impact rural providers.

A discussion followed in which Gary Walsh recommended that ESCC consider mapping the location and movement of large employers in the county, such as ESFRS, to plan childcare provision. It was agreed that the Early Years Educational Entitlement service should link up with the ESCC SPACES programme, to ensure the service is aware of any change in location of ESCC services and support planning. The reliance on the private sector to deliver childcare was noted, and ESCC will continue to work with the Voluntary and Community Sector to monitor fluctuations in demand to improve resilience and enable robust planning.

1. **Public Sector Post-Budget Discussion**

Steve introduced Cllr. Keith Glazier, Leader of ESCC, to provide an update on ESCC’s 2017/18 budget and start a discussion on budget setting.

**East Sussex County Council**

ESCC’s 2017/18 budget was agreed by Full Council on Tuesday 7 February. In addition to a 1.99% Council Tax increase, the budget included provision for introduction of the maximum 3% Adult Social Care Council Tax Levy. Councillors voted to introduce the higher Levy to provide maximum funding for the East Sussex Better Together (ESBT) and Connecting 4 You programmes, particularly to ease challenges that may arise in the coming year as the pace of ESBT delivery increases in the move to an Accountable Care model.

The budget also set out the need to make £17m in savings in 2017/18. In January, in response to concerns raised by partners and communities during consultation, ESCC Cabinet made a number of amendments to the original savings proposals, including: deleting planned savings for the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and ESCC Youth Cabinet; increasing investment in a number of areas including highways drainage and pavements (to prevent trips and falls), the Community Match Scheme, and youth services; and introducing a transitional fund for schools in 2017/18 to mitigate changes made to schools funding.

It was noted that although 2017/18’s budget was challenging, future years will be increasingly difficult. The change to a 100% Business Rates retention system to fund Local Government will create particular challenges for East Sussex, as we are currently a net importer of Business Rates and our local environment and infrastructure limits the growth of large businesses to generate increased property-based Rates. It was noted that further information from Government is required on new responsibilities and how Business Rates will be distributed in two tier areas, and that continued lobbying is required to ensure a fair funding deal for East Sussex.

**Wealden District Council (WDC)**

Cllr. Bob Standley fed back that WDC were yet to set their budget, but were planning to increase Council Tax by £5 on a Band D property to cover a decrease in their Revenue Support Grant. Income from WDC’s Housing Company and crematorium will cover the projected funding gap over the period to 2020/21.

A discussion followed, in which the methods of community engagement and consultation organisation’s use to engage with residents were discussed, and the particular challenges in conveying to residents why Council Tax is raised and how it is spent were recognised. Gary Walsh highlighted the issue of pay not keeping up with costs which was impacting on ESFRS staff.

It was suggested that ESSP Members would benefit from joint consideration of the impact of cumulative increases in Council Tax and the introduction of Universal Credit on residents; and tracking issues and concerns that residents are raising in consultations. It was agreedthat an item on methods of consultation and how to engage effectively with residents would be added to the forward plan for a future meeting, which could consider some of the innovation work being developed by the ESBT Communications and Engagement Workstream.

**ACTION: Methods of consultation and how to effectively engage with residents to be added to the forward plan.**

1. **WW1 Update**

Steve introduced Beth McGhee, East Sussex County Council, to deliver a presentation on the ESCC First World War Centenary Project.

Beth provided an update on the work of the WW1 project since it was established in August 2014. The main output of the project is the [www.eastsussexww1.org.uk](http://www.eastsussexww1.org.uk) website, which hosts a range of resources including stories, digitised local newspaper editions from the war, teaching resources, photos, and a database of local WW1 centenary events. The project’s sister project ‘Recording Remembrance’, which aims to build a central database of all war memorials in East Sussex, can also be accessed through the website. Beth emphasised that the website is intended to host as much community generated material as possible and provide a platform for sharing previously untold or unknown stories. Anyone can get involved with the project to share their stories, memories or local events, by going to the ‘take part’ section of the website; and can keep up-to-date with the project, via the @EastSussexWW1 Twitter page.

In partnership with other Local Authorities in East Sussex, the project has also arranged a number of ceremonies to unveil commemorative paving stones for local soldiers that received the Victoria Cross during WW1. Ceremonies have been held in Lewes, Seaford, and Eastbourne and have been attended by the Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, relatives of the soldiers, members of the Royal Sussex Regiment, local Royal British Legion representatives, MPs and members of the public.

As discussion followed in which Steve talked about his positive experience of being involved in the project in publishing a story about Royal Sussex Regiment soldiers that were executed for desertion. He also highlighted the WW1 Twitter feed and encouraged ESSP members to follow the feed to hear about things they never knew about East Sussex. Cllr Glazier and Dave Padwick also commented on the importance of the project for a local commemoration that highlighted stories for the County. Beth informed the ESSP that the project will run until 2018, and will then wind down when the centenary ends. A lot of consideration has been given to the legacy of the project. The website will be archived in The Keep & the British Library so that all of the resources on there will remain for future generations.

1. **New Government Context: Devolution, Sub-National Transport Body and Industrial Strategy**

Steve introduced Becky, Chief Executive of East Sussex County Council, to provide an update on Government policy on devolution and the Industrial Strategy.

Since the referendum decision for the UK to leave the European Union last July, Government has lacked the capacity to take forward any new devolution deals. A formal decision has therefore been made to pause 3SC devolution activity until after the May County Council elections, and we have a clearer understanding of Government’s devolution policy direction. With the publication of the Industrial Strategy Green Paper and Housing White Paper, and publication of a Skills White Paper expected later this year, there will be opportunities for the 3SC partnership to continue to lobby with one voice for the area, influence Government policy and potentially make progress on asks outlined in the 3SC devolution proposals without formally establishing a Combined Authority. Joint lobbying on matters such as full Business Rates Retention will also continue. ESCC will also work with local and regional partners outside of the 3SC partnership to respond to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper.

Becky provided an update on progress to establish a Sub-National Transport Body (STB) for the South East. In January it was agreed that Isle of Wight Council, Southampton City Council and Portsmouth City Council, and the Berkshire Unitary Authorities would be invited to join the STB, to incorporate the South Coast ports in the STB geography and grant access to the M4 corridor and any future investment in the Heathrow Airport area. Next steps will include Leaders considering a governance structure for the Body, that will ensure the STB has the membership necessary to influence Government and statutory bodies while maintaining a strong core Local Authority voice.

A discussion followed in which it was recognised that a specific East Sussex voice has been developed in the 3SC devolution proposals, and the drive to continue to focus on delivery of devolution asks in the new Government context was welcomed.

1. **Any Other Business**

a. Post 16 Area Review of Further Education paper circulated for information

Steve outlined that the paper had been circulated to provide Members with an update on the final Post 16 Area Review recommendations, following the update to the ESSP in May 2016. Steve asked that Members contact beth.mcghee@eastsussex.gov.uk regarding any questions they have about the review.

1. **Future Meetings:**
* Tuesday 25th April 2017, 10am, Venue TBC
* Thursday 6th July 2017, 10am, Venue TBC
* East Sussex Annual Assembly, Tuesday 7th November 2017, 09.30pm-12.30pm, Venue TBC

Annual Assembly – Steve informed ESSP that the Annual Assembly will take place on Tuesday 7th November and asked members to note in their diaries that the Assembly would run from 9.30am-12.30pm. Steve invited ESSP members to forward their ideas for the Annual Assembly to Sarah/Beth.

**ACTION: All ESSP members to note the Assembly date and forward ideas to Sarah/Beth for the content/theme.**

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|  **SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS –**  |
| **Item** | **Action** |
| 3 | An item on methods of consultation and how to engage effectively with residents to be added to the forward plan for a future meeting.  |
| 7 | All ESSP members to note the Annual Assembly will take place on Tuesday 7th November and to adjust their diaries to reflect the 9.30-12.30 timings.All ESSP members to forward any ideas for the assembly to Sarah/Beth for consideration. |

A copy of all the presentations from the meeting can be found on the ESSP website ([http://www.essp.org.uk/Meeting-papers-and-reports](http://www.essp.org.uk/Meeting-papers-and-reports/ESSP/2016)).