

County councillor report to Hadlow Down Parish Council Oct 2023

Council Monitoring

The monitoring report for the 1st quarter was considered by Cabinet last Thursday. 88% of the targets have been met.

As previously reported the pressures on Childrens Services budget remains and in fact has worsened in the reporting quarter. Last year the dept was overspent by £11m and the forecast is for this to increase to £15m. The pressure is mainly from increased LAC in numbers and costs. External residential placements have increased and whilst this is a demand led service there are concerns re the increased pressures.

In qtr. 1 there were additional 26 LAC that needed placements in external accommodation. In addition, 2 children required secure accommodation at £1m a year each.

The rise in interest rates on the council's cash balances will partly mitigate the above costs.

Corporate Peer Challenge

This took place in June but the full report has just been received. The feedback was very positive with ESCC being described as a well run and well managed authority. The full report is online in the Cabinet papers.

The Peer challenge group made a number of observations and recommendations which the council will consider.

Climate Change Emissions Update to Cabinet

Reducing carbon emissions clearly gets harder as the programme moves forward and the low hanging fruit has been harvested. The council has reduced emissions by 32% in the period 2019-20 to 22-23. Whilst significant it is slightly below the original target of 34%.

Foster Carers

There are concerns that as foster carers retire that they are not being replaced. The latest in a number of films promoting foster cares has been launched entitle "Any of Us". If you are aware of any considering being a foster carer, please encourage them to contact East Sussex to learn more details.