

Members' Update - East Sussex County Council - May 2025

Cllr Nick Bennett

Adult Social Care

Website showcases health and social care jobs

Health and social care jobs have been promoted to inspire people to consider a career in one of the county's biggest sectors. Working with NHS and adult social care colleagues, East Sussex County Council's employability and skills team is raising the profile of specific job roles within the sector.

The 'local industries' section on the Careers East Sussex website showcases roles that people may not be aware of, alongside jobs where there are known vacancies such as support worker, healthcare assistant, A&E nurse, general nurse, care assistant, social worker, podiatrist and physiotherapist.

The site offers information about the key skills and tasks needed to work in these roles, the training or qualifications that might be needed, what these jobs could lead onto and a film of people working in each of these roles about their work and their motivation for doing it. As well as sharing the short films on social media, posters with QR codes linking to the website have been sent to every school, college and job centre in the county to encourage people to visit the site and find out more.

Launch of action plan marks Autism Acceptance Month

East Sussex County Council is marking Autism Acceptance Month with the launch of an action plan designed to improve the lives of autistic people living in the county.

The all-age action plan has been developed based on the lived experiences of people with autism, their carers and their families, with input from the NHS and wellbeing, education and employment providers.

The plan focusses on improving three areas;

- health and wellbeing
- access to education and supporting positive transitions to adulthood
- supporting autistic people into employment and helping them sustain employment

Adult numeracy programme

More than 3,000 people have taken part in free classes run through the government funded Multiply programme which aimed to help those who did not already have GCSE Maths at grade C (or equivalent) to upskill their maths knowledge.

A range of innovative courses, embedding maths in subjects ranging from animal care and household budgeting, to forestry and digital skills enabled people to build their confidence with numbers.

The Multiply programme was delivered by the county council and a range of partners, including further education colleges and training providers, charitable and voluntary groups, and employers. The commitment and hard work of the 16 delivery partners was acknowledged at an event in Eastbourne last month.

The initiative has also helped local employment sectors to boost their workforce's skills which can help businesses boost productivity, increase profits, and improve employee retention.

Communities, Economy and Transport

New scheme aims to reduce roadwork disruption

Contractors and utility companies will be charged more to work on East Sussex's busiest roads in a bid to reduce disruption across the county. East Sussex County Council is among the first local authorities to implement a Lane Rental Scheme, which introduce an increased charge for companies carrying out work on the busiest of the county's road network during peak times.

The aim of the scheme is to encourage work to be carried out outside of peak hours and for those working on the roads to explore more efficient ways of working, such as using new technology or working in collaboration with others.

The scheme will operate in addition to the East Sussex Permit Scheme but will only apply to selected roads. A maximum charge of £2,500 a day will be applied to those working during peak hours. Normal permit charges will continue to apply outside of the set hours. Surplus funds raised by the scheme will be available for highway improvements, innovation and measures to improve disruption and congestion caused by projects across the county.

Finance

Capital Programme

- 10 year planned programme supported by 20-year Capital Strategy
- Reviewed and reprofiled in light of revenue position
- Whilst investment has been reduced from that originally planned, the programme to 2034/35 is still investing **£714m**
- Approved programme of **£284.4m** 2024/25 to 2027/28, requiring £34.4m of borrowing

Uncertainties

- Comprehensive Spending Review (June)
- Funding Reform Consultation outcome
- Business Rates Reset Consultation
- Local Government Settlement (Nov)
 - Multi-year settlement
 - Funding redistribution to meet need and deprivation
- Inflation and interest rates
- National Living Wage and Pay Settlements