

ESCC agreed a balanced budget on 9th February at Full Council. There have been no further savings this year (beyond those identified a year ago) and core services are protected. The county council is fully aware of the pressures on many families, individuals, and businesses. Council tax for services provided by the county council will increase by 1.99% plus a 1.5% social care dividend which amounts to £1 per week for a band D property from April.

Community support is still available and is being continued this year. If you need help to get food, medicines or essentials, or you are lonely or isolated, you can contact your Community Hub in Bexhill.

East Sussex is holding local elections on May 6th 2021 for county councillors and some district/borough councillors, and the PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner). Polling stations will open as normal but people are being encouraged to vote by post. Apply for a postal vote [GOV.UK\(www.gov.uk\)](http://GOV.UK(www.gov.uk)) or contact the electoral office at RDC.

Older residents (over 60) in Rye and Robertsbridge and surrounding villages, are being asked to share their experiences of rural life.

Healthy Ageing through Innovation in Rural Europe (HAIRE) is a research and community action project, funded by Interreg 2 Seas and the EU's European Regional Development Fund. This is a community research project that enables older people to define what support they need in rural areas in order to reduce loneliness and improve Health and Wellbeing.

Please contact Sue Dunkley, Project Support Officer, HAIRE,
07783847944

Sue.dunkley@eastsussex.gov.uk project runs till 2022

Organisations and businesses are being invited to submit proposals for a holiday food and activity programme set to launch across East Sussex at Easter. ESCC is requesting interested providers to submit proposals by Friday March 5th. This is a government funded scheme for the Easter break, which will be free for disadvantaged children (children receiving free school meals, or who are on income related benefits). Priority areas include Bexhill, Eastbourne, Hailsham, Hastings Newhaven and Peacehaven. **The Holiday Food and Fun programme** will run for 6 weeks across Easter, summer, and the Christmas holidays for children and young people up to the age of 16. Interested providers should contact ESCC via:

haf@eastsussex.gov.uk

Or submit proposals on

<https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrens-services/haf-expression-of-interest-application-form-easter/>

Deadline for Easter is March 5th, and for summer and Christmas proposals Friday April 23rd.

A free mobile app aimed at protecting children against online dangers has been launched in East Sussex. The **Safer Schools app** will provide information and advice for maintained schools and families about sexting, bullying, mental health, media literacy, gaming, and sexual exploitation online. Police received 92 reports in April 2020, 40% more than the same period in 2019.

Visit www.oursaferschools.co.uk

Two road safety intervention projects have started to show promising results. Pilot schemes have been designed to inspire a change in driver behaviour which have started to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. Using one off funding from East Sussex Public Health, county has worked with the Behavioural Insights Team, Sussex Police, and other partners from the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership to try to address high rates of serious collisions which result in injury or death. New national figures show that 9 in 10 incidents are caused by driver behaviour. Three different pilots were set up. Analysis of results will be available later in 2021.

Attacks on officers enforcing parking regulations in Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, and recently Rother, have become more common and serious. Council bosses have called for an end to unacceptable behaviour towards enforcement officers. Incidents have risen since the end of January, with 2 officers requiring hospital attention in one week alone. Last year there were 22 incidents requiring police involvement, including 8 physical assaults, as well as 18 separate incidents where an officer needed urgent help from a colleague. Civil enforcement officers play an important role in ensuring that people park safely and sensibly. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.

www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadandtransport/parking

Angharad Davies

East Sussex County Councillor Northern Rother