

14th April 2026

Eastbourne District General Hospital
Kings Drive
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2UD

Tel: 0300 131 4500
Website: www.esht.nhs.uk

Further to your recent request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, I now set out our answers to your specific questions, and any clarifications sought and provided, as follows:

SECTION ONE: financial breakeven requirements

- Please provide the trust’s in-year deficit or surplus for 2024–25, and its estimated in-year deficit or surplus for 2025–26, 2026–27 and 2027–28. (Where the trust plans to break even, please confirm this. Where a deficit or surplus is projected, please state the estimated value.)**

Financial Year	Surplus / (Deficit) £'000	Data Source
2024/25	Section 21 applied, please see below.	
2025/26	0: Breakeven	Estimate
2026/27	(21,152)	Estimate
2027/28	0: Breakeven	Estimate

I can confirm that we hold the information requested above. However, the information is exempt from disclosure under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is because the information is accessible to you in the Trust’s Annual Report, as it is already in the public domain and can be accessed by the following link:

<https://www.esht.nhs.uk/about-us/corporate-publications/>

This is an absolute exemption and there is, therefore, no requirement to consider the public interest.

SECTION TWO: efficiency, productivity and cost-reduction requirements

- 2a. Workforce reductions and permanently deleted posts**

Please provide the total number of job cuts, redundancies or post reductions that the trust has identified, planned or already implemented as a result of its breakeven duty and associated financial planning. If possible, please provide this information by financial year: 2025–26, 2026–27 and 2027–28.

This should include job cuts or redundancies, and posts that have already been permanently deleted whether or not this resulted in redundancy.

Where possible, and within statutory cost limits, please break this information down by staff group, for example: clinical staff, non-clinical staff, corporate / administrative staff

Please express figures in full-time equivalent (FTE). Where only headcount figures are held, please provide these instead and indicate this.

Sections 36(2)(b)(i), 36(2)(b)(ii) and 36(2)(c) of the FOI Act states that information is exempt from disclosure if, in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person disclosure would, or would be likely to, inhibit the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation. It is the opinion of East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust's (ESHT) qualified person, Jayne Black, that disclosing the information requested would be likely to inhibit staff from expressing themselves openly and fully, or from exploring options when expressing views as part of the process of reviewing proposals/recommendations for future business plans and to make well informed decisions. Disclosure of the information requested could have a detrimental impact in relation to future discussions regarding efficiency, productivity and cost-reduction requirements. A lack of comprehensive and detailed discussions would be likely to impair the quality of decision making by the Trust.

We acknowledge the general public interest in disclosure of information and the need for public bodies to be open and transparent regarding their decisions. However, the matters described above would be likely to affect the internal working of ESHT and therefore the quality of our decisions and effectiveness. This would be contrary to the public interest. In order to be able to perform our duties effectively we must be able to hold free and frank discussions without concern that the detail of those discussions will be disclosed. We must further be able to present information to aid those discussions. Public authorities must be afforded a safe space within which to deliberate and discuss matters before making a decision. If this material were published, it would be likely to restrict the candour and frankness with which similar future discussions would be conducted, as individuals would be concerned about the possibility that those views and discussions would be made public. The result would be to reduce the quality of discussion provided in such cases and have an adverse impact on the ability of ESHT to carry out its functions, which is strongly against the public interest.

Taking these factors into account, we have decided that on balance the public interest favours withholding the information requested.

2b. Method of workforce reduction and post deletion

Where possible, please provide a breakdown of how the workforce reductions and permanent post deletions described in section 2a are being or will be achieved, for example through: compulsory redundancies, voluntary redundancies, non-renewal of fixed-term contracts, natural wastage, vacancy controls or recruitment freezes.

Where data is held, please break this information down by staff group (clinical/non-clinical/corporate, or equivalent categories used by the trust) and by financial year (2025–26, 2026–27, 2027–28).

Sections 36(2)(b)(i), 36(2)(b)(ii) and 36(2)(c) applied, please refer to question 2a.

SECTION THREE: planned service reductions

- 3. Please outline any services, departments or functions that the trust has identified for reduction, reconfiguration or closure as part of its breakeven duty and medium-term financial plan, and indicate in which financial year(s) these changes are planned (2025–26, 2026–27 and/or 2027–28).**

Sections 36(2)(b)(i), 36(2)(b)(ii) and 36(2)(c) applied, please refer to question 2a.

I trust this information is helpful in its detail or explanation however, if you are dissatisfied with the response, then you have the right to request an internal review. If you wish to seek an internal review, please write to the Freedom of Information Team at esh-tr.foi@nhs.net quoting the above FOI reference number, within 40 working days. Please note the Trust is not obliged to accept a request for an internal review after this time period.

Yours faithfully

Freedom of Information (FOI) Team
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
0300 131 4716
Core Hours of Business: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm