

# Public Document Pack

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Director of Law and Assurance

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22 November 2023

## **Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

A meeting of the Committee will be held at **2.15 pm** on **Thursday, 30 November 2023** at **County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.**

**The meeting will be available to watch live via the Internet at this address:**

<http://www.westsussex.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.

**Tony Kershaw**

Director of Law and Assurance

### **Agenda**

- 2.15 pm
1. **Declarations of Interest**  

Committee members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt please contact Democratic Services before the meeting.
  2. **Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee** (Pages 5 - 8)  

The Committee is asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023 (cream paper).
  3. **Urgent Matters**  

Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances, including cases where the Committee needs to be informed of budgetary or performance issues affecting matters within its terms of reference, which have emerged since the publication of the agenda.

4. **Responses to Recommendations** (Pages 9 - 14)

The Committee is asked to note the responses to recommendations made at previous meetings of the Committee.

2.20 pm

5. **Performance Report Quarter 2**

(a) **Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 2** (Pages 15 - 40)

Report by the Chief Fire Officer.

The report provides a context to the Performance and Assurance Framework for the purpose of future scrutiny of the Executive's approach to performance.

(b) **End of September 2023 (Quarter 2) Quarterly Performance and Resources Report** (Pages 41 - 60)

A report by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Support Services setting out the corporate performance, finance, workforce, risk and capital programme positions as at the end of September 2023.

The Committee is asked to examine the data and supporting commentary for the Performance and Resources report and make any recommendations for action to the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue.

3.20 pm

6. **Council Plan and Draft Budget Proposals 2024/25** (Pages 61 - 84)

Report by Director of Finance and Support Services.

The Committee is asked to review the County Council's budget pressures, proposed budget reductions and Capital Programme for 2024/25 within the remit of this Committee.

Feedback from the Committee will be considered by Cabinet in preparing the final draft budget and Capital Programme 2024/25 that will be presented to County Council for approval in February 2024.

- 3.50 pm 7. **Community Risk Management Plan Update** (Pages 85 - 100)

Report by the Chief Fire Officer.

This report provides an update on the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan 2023.

The Committee is asked to review the progress of the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan 2023.

- 4.30 pm 8. **Work Programme Planning and Possible Items for Future Scrutiny**

The Committee is asked to review its current draft work programme taking into account the Forward Plan of Key Decisions and any suggestions from its members for possible items for future scrutiny.

- (a) **Forward Plan of Key Decisions** (Pages 101 - 104)

Extract from the Forward Plan dated 20 November 2023 – attached.

An extract from any Forward Plan relevant to the Committee's portfolio published between the date of despatch of the agenda and the date of the meeting will be tabled at the meeting.

The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to enquire into any of the forthcoming decisions within its portfolio.

- (b) **Work Programme** (Pages 105 - 108)

The Committee to review its draft work programme taking into consideration the checklist at Appendix A.

- 4.40 pm 9. **Requests for Call-in**

There have been no requests for call-in to the Scrutiny Committee and within its constitutional remit since the date of the last meeting. The Director of Law and Assurance will report any requests since the publication of the agenda papers.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 1 March 2024 at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester. Probable agenda items include:

- Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report
- Quarterly Performance and Resources Report
- Recruitment of Retained Duty Staff

Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda for the meeting must notify the Director of Law and Assurance by 15 February 2023.

**To all members of the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

**Webcasting**

Please note: this meeting is being filmed for live and subsequent broadcast via the County Council's website on the internet. The images and sound recording may be used for training purposes by the Council.

Generally the public gallery is not filmed. However, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

## **Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

14 September 2023 – At a meeting of the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee held at 2.15 pm at County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

Present: Cllr Boram (Chairman)

Cllr Pendleton, Cllr Bence (left at 15.08), Cllr Chowdhury, Cllr Duncton and Cllr Albury

Apologies were received from Cllr Joy and Cllr Patel

Also in attendance: Cllr Crow, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton (Chief Fire Officer), Mark Andrews (Deputy Chief Fire Officer) and Peter Rickard (Assistant Chief Fire Officer)

### **12. Declarations of Interest**

12.1 None.

### **13. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee**

13.1 Resolved – that the Committee agrees the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023 and that they be signed by the Chairman.

### **14. Responses to Recommendations**

14.1 Resolved – that the Committee notes the responses.

### **15. Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 1**

15.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Fire Officer (copy appended to the signed minutes).

15.2 Summary of responses to members' questions and comments: -

- 'Very High Risk' and 'High Risk' Safe & Well visits are defined by customer vulnerability criteria established by a questionnaire conducted by the Service's prevention team, the more dependencies a person has, the more they could be at risk from fire
- Fire fighters who fail the fitness test are helped back to the standard required by physical training instructors and the use of gym equipment at fire stations
- CM17 'Average time between Joint Fire Control Room receiving the emergency call and the station being notified' target may be reviewed and may change as a result
- The outcomes of relevant conferences, such as the recent staff conferences held by the Fire & Rescue Service (FRS) will be included in the annual statement of assurance, where appropriate
- Fire fighters who have witnessed traumatic events or incidents receive psychological support from trained FRS staff,

occupational health and the employee assistance programme. The Service monitors offers of help to pick up on staff that decline

- There is a national working group looking into the safety of Battery Energy Storage Systems. The FRS is not a statutory planning consultee, but acts proactively with planning authorities to highlight risks and make sure it has the appropriate plans to deal with any incidents that could arise from problems with these storage systems
- There was a query as to the diversity of the latest intake of new fire fighters **Action:** The Chief Fire Officer to report back to the Committee
- The FRS expects 100% of adequate crewing on all immediate response frontline fire engines. Problems can occur when last minute changes due to sickness or other absence lead to the reported figure showing less than 100% when in fact all these short term absences are covered at the station but on occasion do not get recorded on the system.
- The CM10 target 'percentage of Fire Safety Order regulated buildings having received an audit' is higher than the national average and concentrates on those buildings most at risk

15.3 Resolved – that the Committee: -

- i. Asks the Fire & Rescue Service to consider whether a breakdown of the figures contained in Core Measure 17 could be provided to the public
- ii. Supports information from key events, such as the Proud to Serve conference, being part of the Statement of Assurance
- iii. Requests that a diversity breakdown be provided on the recently appointed wholetime firefighters

## **16. End of June 2023 (Quarter 1) Quarterly Performance and Resources Report**

16.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Fire Officer (copy appended to the signed minutes).

16.2 Summary of responses to members' questions and comments: -

- The Community Risk Management Plan covers flood defences to protect infrastructure susceptible to flooding and the Service also holds regular team meetings that discuss weather related risks

16.3 Resolved – that the Committee: -

- i. Officially thanks Wilmot Dixon for its significant contribution to the Horsham Fire Station and Training Centre and for completing the project early
- ii. Asks the Fire & Rescue Service to continue to consider weather related risks in relation to its work

**17. Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

17.1 Resolved – that the Committee notes the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

**18. Work Programme**

18.1 The Committee considered its draft Work Programme and made the following suggestions: -

- To consider use of equipment/apparatus as part of the member session scheduled for February 2024
- For the Chairman of the Committee to consult with the Chief Fire Officer on available budgets and work relating to flooding by the Fire and Rescue Service
- For the retained firefighters item scheduled for the November 2023 meeting to consider work from a national perspective

18.2 Resolved – that the Committee agrees its draft Work Programme.

**19. Date of Next Meeting**

19.1 The next meeting of the Committee will take place on 30 November 2023 at 2.15pm.

The meeting ended at 3.29 pm

Chairman

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<b>Topic</b>	<b>Meeting (date raised)</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Officer/ Member</b>	<b>Follow up</b>	<b>Response/Progress/ Deadlines</b>	<b>Status</b>
Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 1	14/09/23	Asks the Fire & Rescue Service to consider whether a breakdown of the figures contained in Core Measure 17 (CM17) could be provided to the public			All performance is shared via the Council's Website and the explanation of how CM17 is constructed can be found within the Quarter 1 2023/24 report. This also includes reference to how we are performing against the national average. In addition as part of our Community Risk Management Plan commitment we are reviewing our emergency response standards and this will allow us to share more detail with our local communities.	Completed for 30/11/23
Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 1	14/09/23	Requests that a diversity breakdown be provided on the recently appointed wholetime firefighters			Please find below* a breakdown of all recruits courses including W/T and Retained Duty Staff since the recent W/T course in Jan 23. A	Completed for 30/11/23

Topic	Meeting (date raised)	Recommendation	Responsible Officer/ Member	Follow up	Response/Progress/ Deadlines	Status
					<p>number of individuals have chosen not to declare their ethnicity and this does only give a partial snapshot of our recruitment. We will provide further detail in the Statement of Assurance as agreed.</p>	
<p>End of June 2023 (Quarter 1) Quarterly Performance and Resources Report</p>	<p>14/09/23</p>	<p>Asks the Fire &amp; Rescue Service to continue to consider weather related risks in relation to its work</p>			<p>West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service works closely with colleagues in the Resilience and Emergencies Team and The Sussex Resilience Forum to monitor and mitigate weather related risks as part of its day to day activity.</p> <p>In addition, the service has a dedicated Risk team that undertakes activities such as horizon scanning as well as working with partners such as the Climate Change team</p>	<p>Completed for 30/11/23</p>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Meeting (date raised)</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Officer/ Member</b>	<b>Follow up</b>	<b>Response/Progress/ Deadlines</b>	<b>Status</b>
					within the wider County Council to ensure future Community Risk Management Plans consider how weather related risks may impact the delivery of its statutory obligations.	
Work Programme	14/09/23	To consider use of equipment/apparatus as part of the member session scheduled for April 2024			The next member session will be held at Horsham Training Centre and the Service is working with colleagues in Democratic Services to prepare an agenda that will consider the use of equipment and apparatus.	Completed for 30/11/23
Work Programme	14/09/23	For the Chairman of the Committee to consult with the Chief Fire Officer on available budgets and work relating to flooding by the Fire and Rescue Service			No response required	Completed for 30/11/23
Work Programme	14/09/23	For the retained firefighters item scheduled for the November 2023 meeting to			Area Manager Ball who is leading the work in service regarding the	Completed for 30/11/23

Topic	Meeting (date raised)	Recommendation	Responsible Officer/ Member	Follow up	Response/Progress/ Deadlines	Status
		consider work from a national perspective			retained is also leading this work nationally under the National Fire Chiefs Council and this will ensure any national work can be considered locally within West Sussex.	

\*

Female	12.50%	4
Male	87.50%	28
15 - 24	31.25%	10
25 - 34	34.38%	11
35 - 44	28.13%	9
45 - 54	6.25%	2
Blank	34.38%	11
Chinese	3.13%	1
Prefer not to say	6.25%	2
Unknown	3.13%	1
White British	50.00%	16
White Irish	3.13%	1

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## **Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

**30 November 2023**

### **Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 2 2023-24**

#### **Report by Chief Fire Officer**

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#### **Summary**

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) monitors and reports on organisational and operational performance against a Performance and Assurance Framework (PAF) which includes review and scrutiny by the elected Members at the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee (FRSSC).

The PAF includes monitoring of service performance against core measures that provide a strong indication of organisational performance directly aligned to the delivery of the Strategic Commitments i.e. Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This ensures the service is intelligence and evidence led and enables the service to react early when performance is not to the required level.

Appendix A of the report is the quarter 2 Strategic Performance Report for the purpose of scrutiny of the Executive's approach to performance. This report covers data from the period of 1 July 2023 – 30 September 2023.

#### **Focus for Scrutiny**

Members of the Committee are invited to consider and comment on the Core Measures detailed in Appendix A, designed to provide assurance concerning the delivery of the statutory functions of the Fire Authority. Key lines of enquiry include:

- Whether the report provides all the information necessary to enable effective and efficient scrutiny
  - Identify any issues needing further in-depth scrutiny relevant to the committee's portfolio area of responsibility
  - Identification of any specific areas for action or response by the relevant Cabinet Member
-

## **Proposal**

### **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 West Sussex County Council is the Fire Authority and is responsible for making sure West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) performs efficiently and in the best interest of the public and communities it serves.
- 1.2 WSFRS was inspected in November 2021 by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in the second round of full inspections. The full Inspection Report for the service was published on 27 July 2022. The report found that WSFRS has improved since its 2018 inspection, noting the increased funding to expand its prevention and protection teams. The report also highlighted improvements in keeping people safe and secure from fires and other risks, but there are areas where the service needs to improve. These include making sure firefighters carry out enough prevention activity, doing more to reduce unwanted fire signals, and continuing to make sure staff behaviour aligns with organisational values.
- 1.3 There is one cause of concern within the report which relates to people. The report states that 'The service hasn't done enough since the last inspection to improve how staff understand and display its expected values and behaviours'.
- 1.4 The Inspectorate has requested an updated action plan that demonstrates:
  - how we work with our staff and provides feedback in relation to issues involving values and behaviours; and
  - ensure that staff act in line with our values and are trained to identify and deal with non-compliance. The Service has now provided an action plan to respond to the cause of concern.
- 1.5 On behalf of residents, Members are responsible for ensuring that WSFRS delivers excellent services and achieves outcomes as efficiently and effectively as possible. This involves the West Sussex County Council Fire Authority (WSCCFA):
  - setting a high-level policy agenda (Strategic Objectives) for what the WSFRS should do and the outcomes it should achieve
  - setting a budget to fund delivery of the policy agenda
  - securing assurance that the budget is being spent wisely on delivering the policy agenda set by the authority.
  - Ensuring outcomes are delivered
- 1.6 In order to secure assurance, it is necessary for effective scrutiny to be an integral component of WSCCFA governance arrangements. Scrutiny is there to hold the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue to account concerning the decisions taken relating to WSFRS.
- 1.7 The role of scrutiny is also to contribute to the development of solutions and ideas to support continuous service improvement. The Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee may need to be flexible in the way it scrutinises the service and the Executive's decisions. On occasions, Members may wish to 'drill down'



on certain specific issues but still at a strategic level with the focus being the interests of all West Sussex residents and businesses.

## **2 Proposal details**

- 2.1 The proposal information for this item for scrutiny is set out in the attached appendix (listed below). As it is a report dealing with performance management the assessments and implications are not required.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton  
**Chief Fire Officer**

**Contact Officer:** Sabrina Cohen-Hatton, Chief Fire Officer

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report Quarter 2 2023/24

### **Background papers**

None

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# West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report Quarter 2 2023/24

Deputy Chief Fire Officer  
Mark Andrews

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# Strategic Performance Board Quarterly Report

## Quarter 2 2023-2024

The aim of the Quarterly Performance Report is to summarise how West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service/Directorate has performed over the previous three months, and to capture how performance contributes cumulatively to the year-end performance outcomes.

The report retrospectively presents information from the Performance and Assurance Framework (PAF) including the core measures and targets for the year which are current at the time of publishing. The report contains performance across the four elements of the PAF, namely Service Provision, Corporate health and where appropriate, Priority Programmes and Risk.

The explanations, mitigations and actions contained within this report are those endorsed by the Service Executive Board (SEB).

This report covers data from the period of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

# Cabinet Member Summary



Early this quarter Platinum House, the WSFRS Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station, became operational. This was a momentous landmark for the Service which will unlock new opportunities for training and exercising for both Fire and wider County colleagues and support the council's aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

In September the Service also took delivery of its new Welfare Unit – a new and innovative addition to West Sussex Fire and Rescue. The introduction of the new vehicle to the fleet marks a significant milestone in our efforts to prioritise the welfare of staff. The Welfare Unit has been specifically designed to provide enhanced support and facilities for staff during operational incidents.

I am really pleased to see continued good performance against the performance indicators this quarter. This demonstrates that the recommendations and interventions applied by the service are having a real and sustained effect.

# Chief Fire Officer Summary



As we reach the midway point for our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) we have launched two new projects in line with our proposals on Emergency Response Standards and a Specialist Capability Review. These crucial projects will continue to support improvement in our core measures by matching risk and resource and ensuring we have the right specialist equipment available to protect our community. We expect to see initial proposals from this work emerge in quarter 4 of this year.

In our CRMP is a commitment to review our Retained Duty System (RDS). Initial work commenced in July where we conducted a staff survey and a series of focus groups to capture the ideas on what we need to focus on first within the project. The project formally starts in Q4 of this year but this early engagement will help establish the scope and begin to help address some of the performance issues we are experiencing in the RDS core measure.

Also this quarter, the Fire and Rescue Service welcomed its latest new retained duty system firefighters. These new colleagues will provide further resilience to key retained stations to help improve our core measures and wider retained availability. A mixture of the excellent rural prevention activity and the wet weather resulted in fewer rural and wildfire incidents than expected with the most notable operational incident of the summer occurring in Littlehampton in August. This was a large fire at the Harvester Restaurant on the seafront where 12 fire engines were required to deal with the incident that attracted significant press interest.

# Performance Summary

At the end of Quarter 2 2023-24 the following performance against 30 core measures was recorded:

25 measure had a GREEN status, 4 were AMBER and 1 was RED.

Of the 3 comparable measures that were RED or AMBER last quarter, there were no changes in status, with all 3 measures showing a decline.

Of the 19 comparable measures that were GREEN last quarter:

- 5 measures showed a decline and 4 an improvement
- 2 measures moved to an AMBER status



# Performance Summary for all core measures at the end of Quarter 2 (1 of 2):

CM1: ADFs



CM2: Accidental Dwelling Fire Fatalities



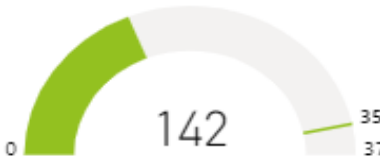
CM3: Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties



CM4: Deliberate Primary Fires



CM5: Deliberate Secondary Fires



CM6: Safeguarding - % created within 24 hours



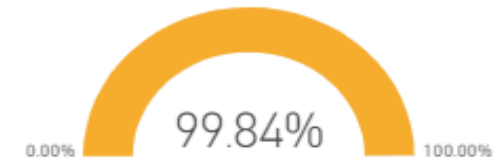
CM7: Safe and Well Visits



CM8: Very High Risk Safe & Well on Time



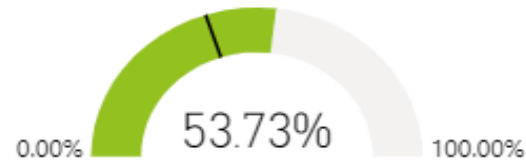
CM9: High Risk Safe & Well on Time



CM10: Fire Safety Audits



CM11: Unsatisfactory Inspections



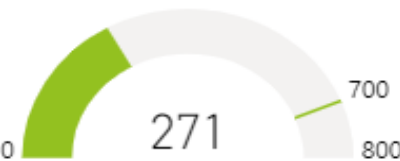
CM12: Prosecutions Successful



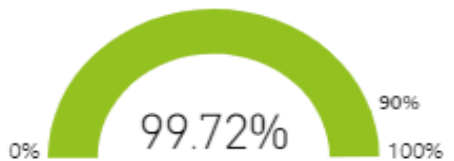
CM13: Satisfactory Fire Safety Consultations



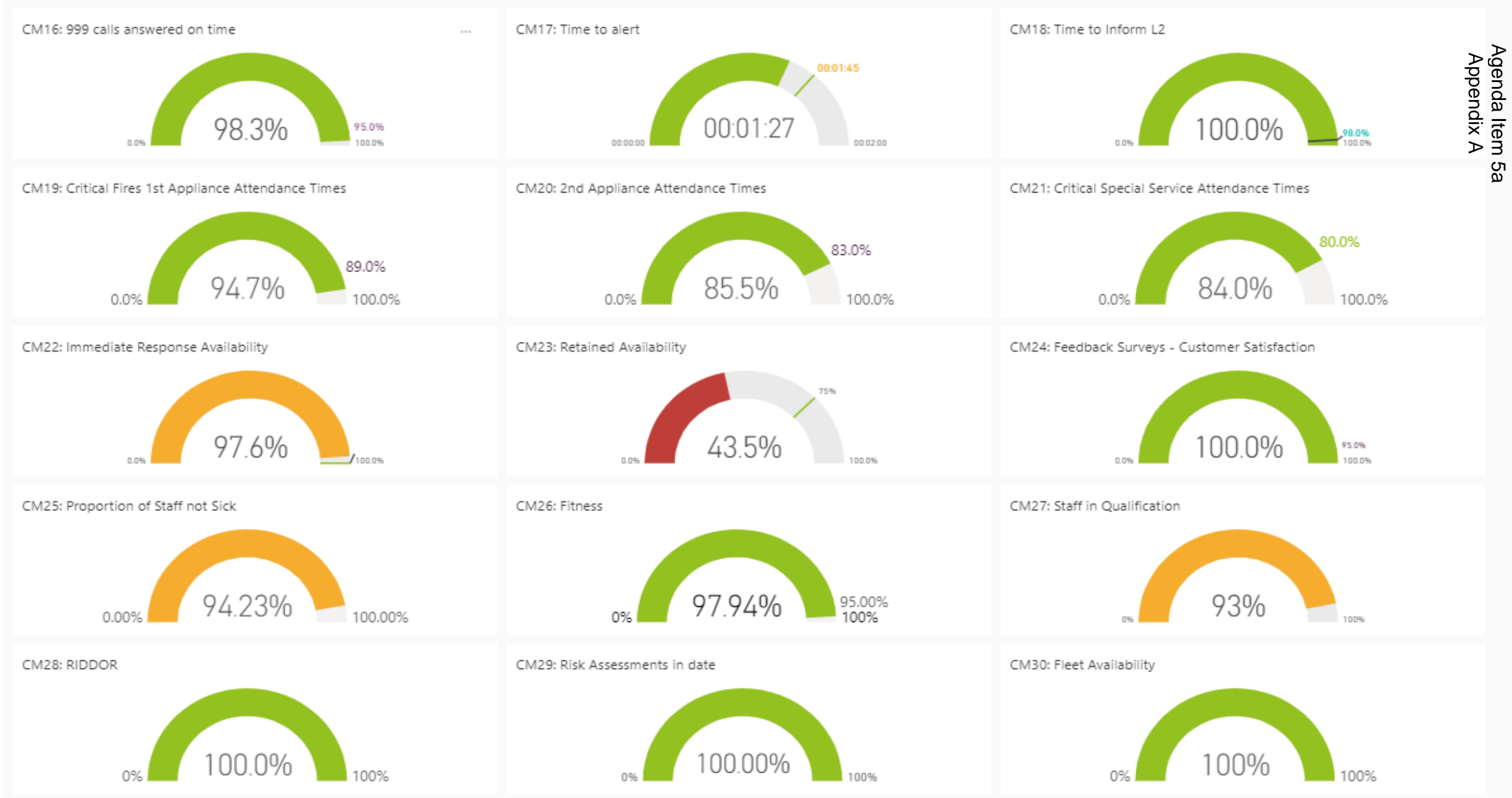
CM14: Unwanted fire signals



CM15: Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI)



# Performance Summary for all core measures at the end of Quarter 2 (1 of 2):



# Areas of Significant Improvement and Success

Quarter 2

(1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023)

# Significant Improvement and Success

The Performance and Assurance Framework of which this report is a part of, has continued to demonstrate fire and rescue service performance and provide assurance to members and the public.

Quarter 2 saw sustained good performance in many areas, with the following measures showing particular success:

- CM4: Deliberate Primary Fires in West Sussex over a year period starting in April
- CM7: Number of Safe and Well Visits delivered to those households containing at least 1 person with at least 1 vulnerability or risk factor
- CM10: Number of FSO regulated buildings having received an audit over a year period starting from April
- CM16: Time taken to answer the 999 call by Surrey/West Sussex Joint Fire Control Room
- CM19: Critical Fires - First Appliance Attendance

# Core Measure 4: Deliberate primary fires in West Sussex over a year period starting from April

**47 Deliberate fires this FY (2023-24)**

**Year End Forecast GREEN**

Primary fires involving property such as buildings and vehicles. This is the total number of primary fires, where the cause has been identified that the fire was started deliberately through the criminal act of arson.

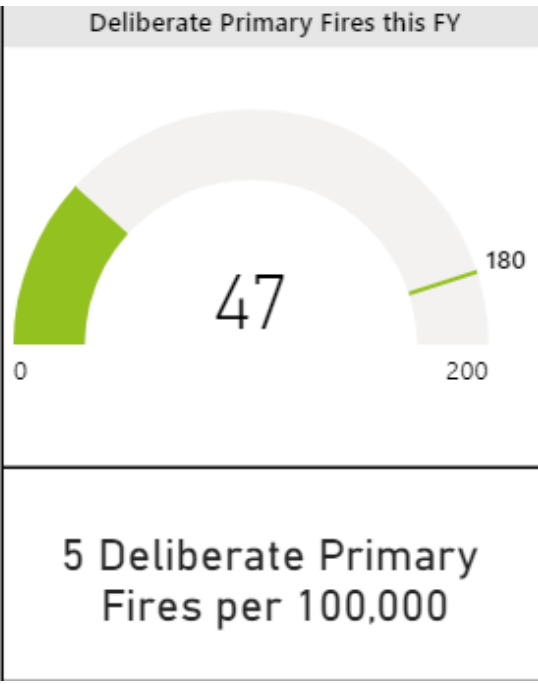
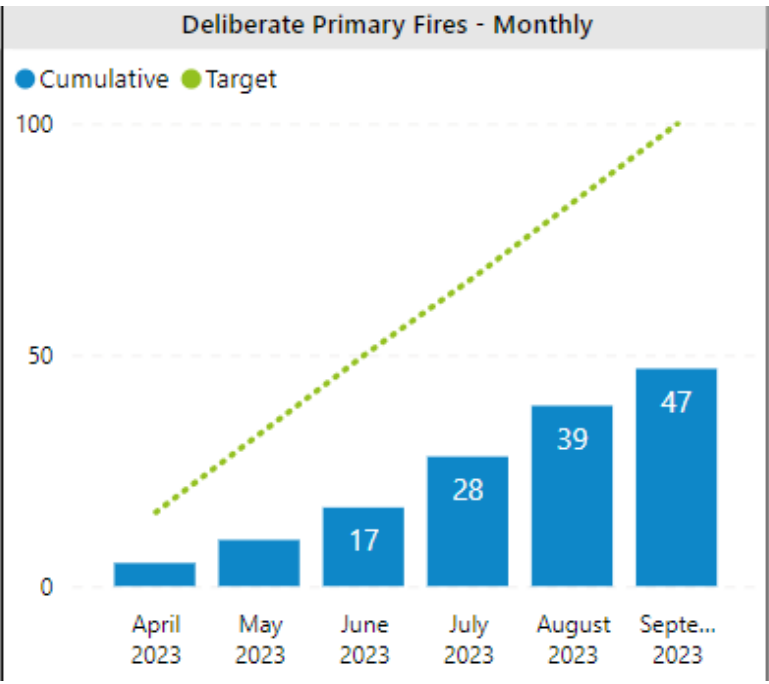
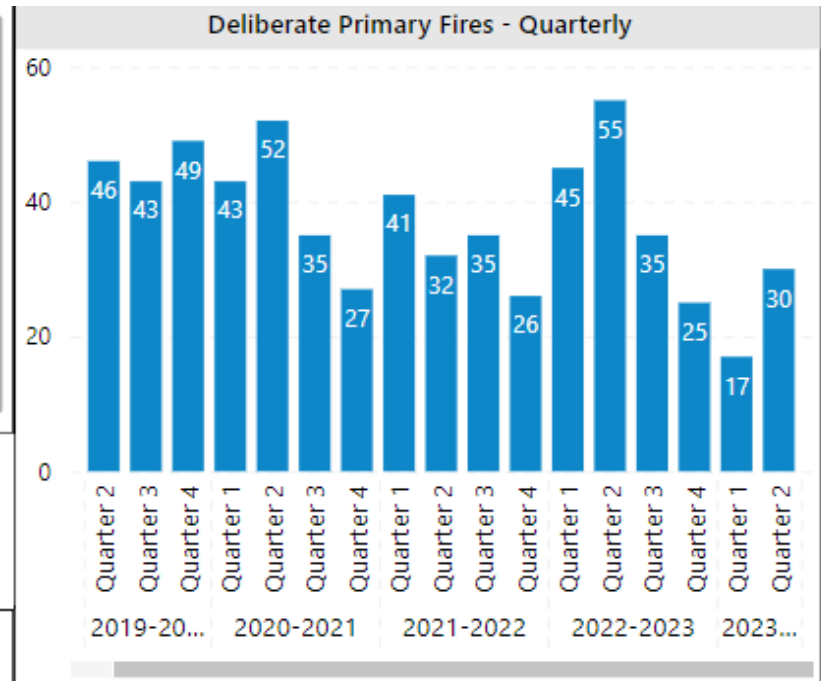
**Annual Target:**  
 <180 Green  
 181-199 Amber  
 >200 Red

Service Owner:  
**Nathan Cross**  
 Area:  
**Incidents**

Financial Year	Fires	Rate per 100,000
2014-2015	208	23
2015-2016	178	20
2016-2017	208	23
2017-2018	209	24
2018-2019	178	20
2019-2020	184	21
2020-2021	157	18
2021-2022	134	15
2022-2023	160	18

**National Average: 28 deliberate primary fires per 100,000 in 21/22**

**Additional Insights**



**Commentary**  
 This is the lowest Q2 figure for deliberate primary fires in the last four years. Almost half of the fires were focussed on the urban areas of Crawley and Horsham. 40% of deliberate primary fires were set in non-residential premises, which is notably higher than other property types.

**Actions**  
 Treat: We will continue to scrutinise the data and address trends wherever they emerge. The most effective way to respond to arson is to work with local partners and to have a presence in areas where arson is taking place. We use social media and a variety of other comms channels to raise awareness of the implications of setting fires.

Agenda Item 5a Appendix A

# Core Measure 7: Number of safe and well visits (S&WV's) delivered to those households containing at least 1 person with at least 1 vulnerability or risk factor.

**2622 delivered by end of Q2 2023-24**

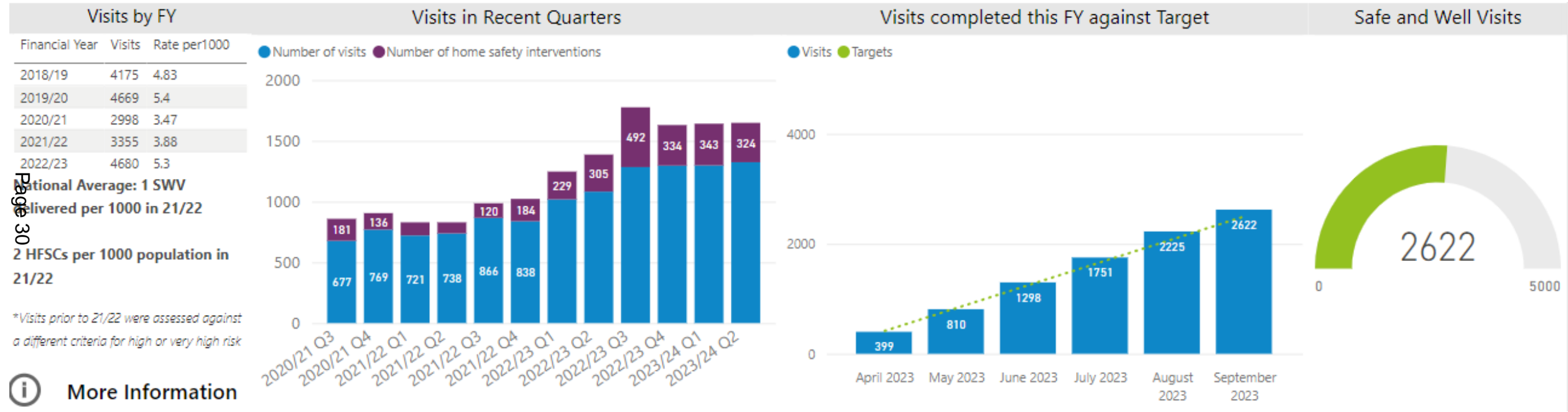
**Year End Forecast GREEN**

Agenda Item 5a  
Appendix A

**Annual Target:**  
 <5000 Green  
 4800-4999 Amber  
 >4800 Red

Service Owner:  
**Nathan Cross**  
 Area:  
**Prevention**

Number of S&WV's delivered to those who are at risk of dying or being injured in the event of a dwelling fire over a year period starting from April. This includes very high, high and medium risk individuals and those low risk individuals with a vulnerability or a fire risk. Home safety interventions are shown here for information and include all low risk safe and well visits where there are no vulnerabilities and instances where we have supplied/fitted equipment.



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**More Information**

**Commentary**  
 In quarter 2 we completed 1,324 Safe and Well Visits (SWVs) and 324 home safety interventions. This continues to be a significant increase on the number of SWVs delivered in previous years. At the end of quarter 2 last year we had completed 2100 SWVs and have completed 522 more during the same period this year, a total of 2622 visits. We are on track to meet the target of 5,000 SWVs this year.

**Actions**  
 Tolerate and monitor: We continue to support referrals and requests for Safe and Well Visits through our partnerships and through local initiatives promoting them. We use data to target those who are most at risk of being injured or dying in a fire.

# Core Measure 10: Percentage of FSO regulated buildings having received an audit

**515 completed by end of Q2 2023-24**

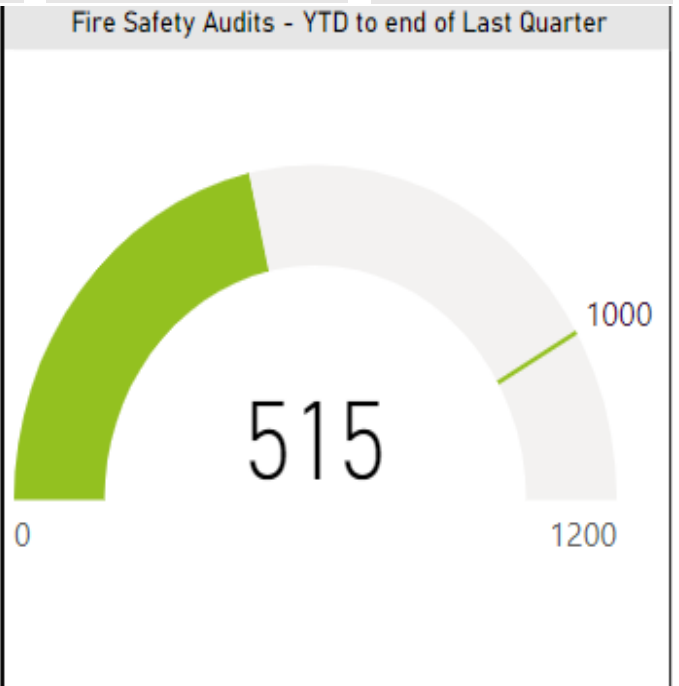
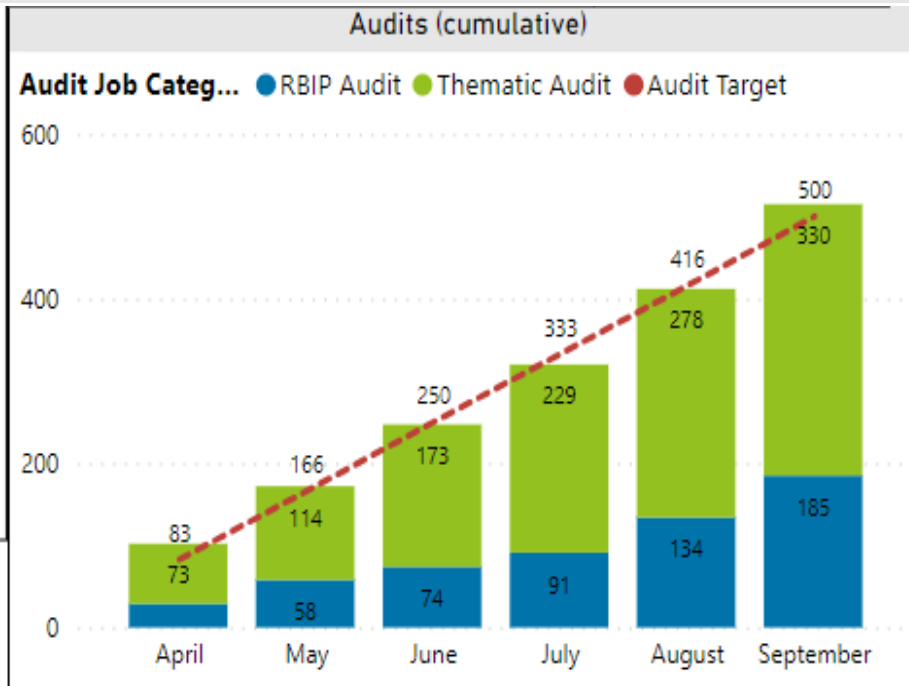
**Year End Forecast GREEN**

There are approximately 35,000 Fire Safety Order regulated buildings in West Sussex. This measure examines the total number of audits of these buildings undertaken in a year starting in April, under the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). The RBIP is a combination of the activities on specific risk premises, thematic risks and IRMP work and at the core of the RBIP is a regular inspection program for known sleeping risks.

**Annual Target:**  
1000 Green  
850-999 Amber  
>850 Red

Service Owner:  
**Dave Bray**  
Area:  
**Protection**

Financial Year	Audits	Fire Safety Checks	Audits per 100 premises
2020/21	132		0.0
2021/22	802	182	2.3
2022/23			
Q1	210	23	0.6
Q2	236	182	0.7
Q3	277	99	0.8
Q4	282	220	0.8



**National Average: 2 Audits per 100 premises in 21/22**

Last Refresh Date: 17/10/2023

[More Information](#)

**Commentary**

Our Fire Safety Regulators have maintained a good level of performance during quarter 2. We are on target to meet our target for the year, being ahead of where we would expect to be at this half year stage (515 audits out of an annual target of 1000). In comparison to our 6 monthly performance through quarters 1 and 2 of 2022/23 we have achieved 13% more fire safety audits so far this year.

**Actions**

Tolerate: It is pleasing to see that the level of performance is starting to increase and is representative of the expectation now that more of our Fire Safety Regulators have concluded their development training. There is still further development being undertaken, however it is hoped that this will have a slightly lower impact upon our day-to-day output.

# Core Measure 16: Time taken to answer the 999 call by Surrey/West Sussex Joint Fire Control Room

**98.3% for Q2 2023-24**

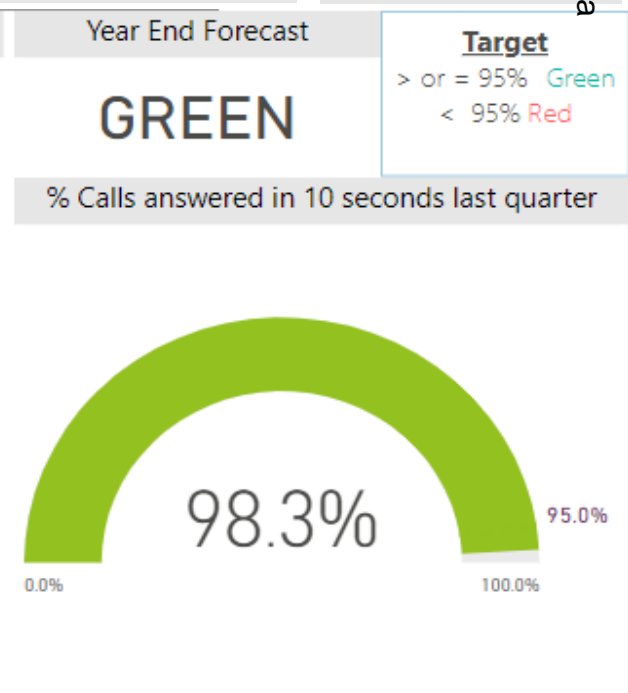
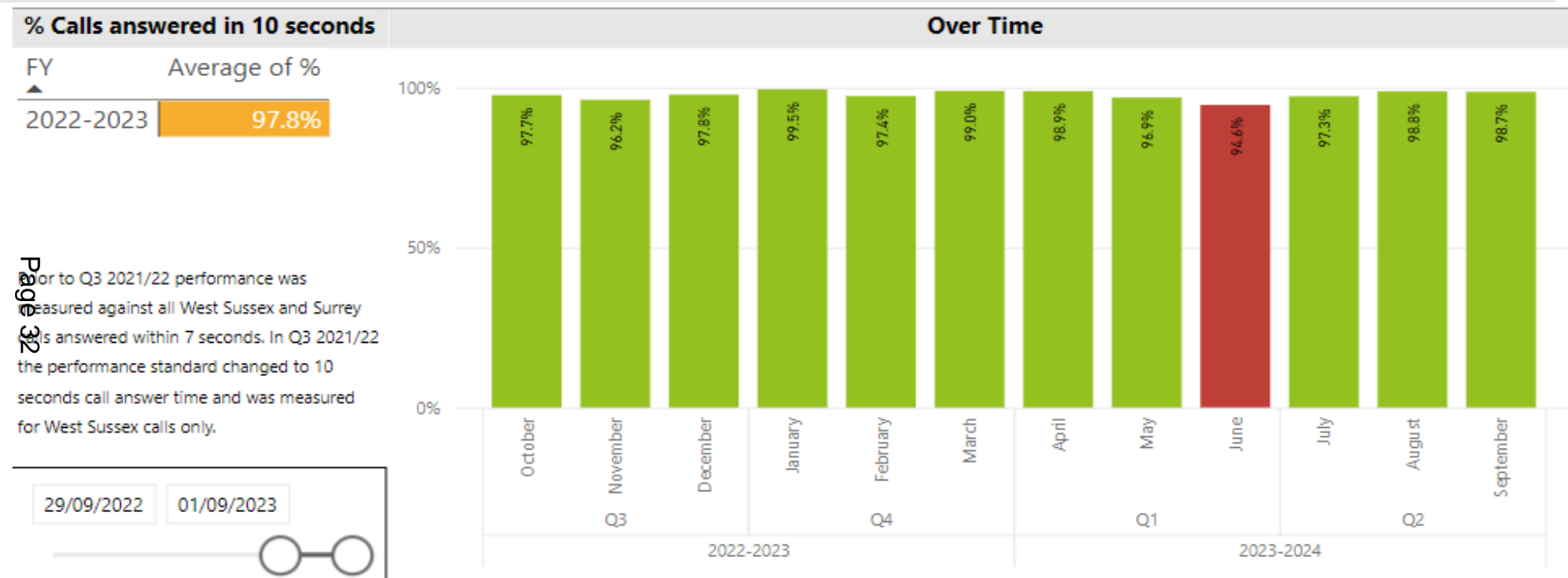
**Year End Forecast GREEN**

Agenda Item 5a Appendix A

This measure looks at the time taken from when the Fire Control Room Operator answers the phone when a 999 call is received by the Fire Control Room. The target is 95% of calls answered within 10 seconds.

**Annual Target:**  
> Or = 95% Green  
<95% Red

Service Owner: **Dave Bray**  
Area: **Protection**



Page 32  
 compared to Q3 2021/22 performance was measured against all West Sussex and Surrey calls answered within 7 seconds. In Q3 2021/22 the performance standard changed to 10 seconds call answer time and was measured for West Sussex calls only.

29/09/2022 01/09/2023

**Commentary**  
 Our Joint Fire Control achieved an average of 98% of all 999 calls received being answered within 10 seconds, which is ahead of target. This is better than the performance during Quarter 1, and better than the same period last year.

**Actions**  
 Tolerate: we will continue to monitor Joint Fire Control closely to ensure that our 999 calls are answered as quickly as possible.



# Core Measure 19: Critical Fires – First Appliance Attendance

**94.7% for Q2 2023-24**

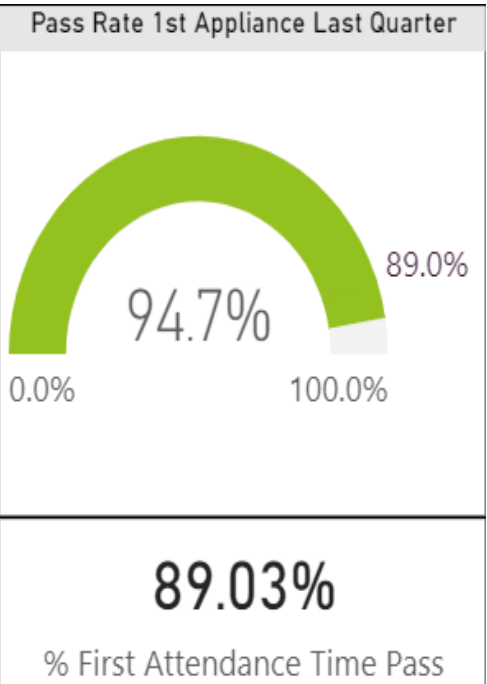
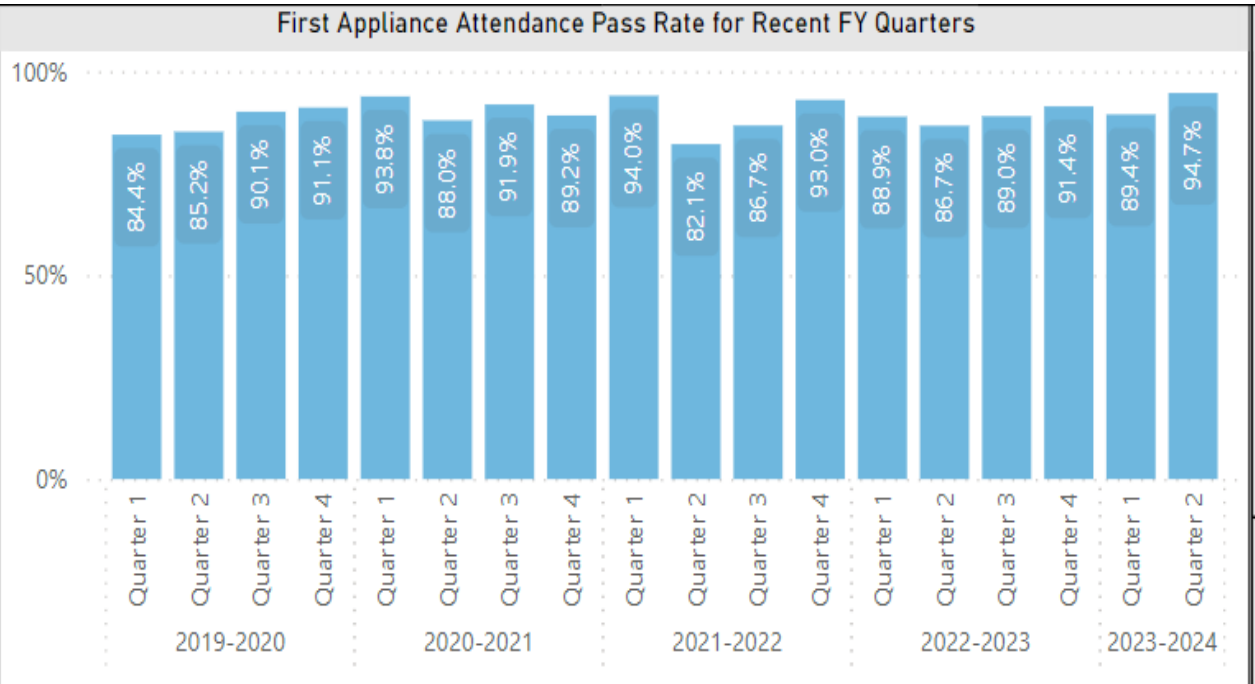
**Year End Forecast GREEN**

West Sussex FRS categorises risk into four types being Very High, High, Medium and Low. It has also set a different attendance time target against each risk type. This measure examines the number of occasions where the first fire engine arrives at an emergency incident within the target number of minutes from the time the emergency call was answered.

**Target:**  
8 min to a very high risk, 10 to a high, 12 to a medium and 14 to a low.  
89% Target for Green

Service Owner:  
**Gary Ball**  
Area:  
**Service Delivery**

Financial Year	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Total
2015-2016	100.00%	86.27%	86.39%	90.11%	<b>88.10%</b>
2016-2017	75.00%	87.88%	84.84%	90.08%	<b>87.08%</b>
2017-2018	0.00%	100.00%	89.19%	89.49%	<b>90.09%</b>
2018-2019	0.00%	93.10%	89.96%	86.82%	<b>88.67%</b>
2019-2020	0.00%	100.00%	87.69%	86.32%	<b>87.60%</b>
2020-2021	0.00%	92.31%	88.46%	92.66%	<b>90.71%</b>
2021-2022	0.00%	100.00%	88.70%	89.08%	<b>89.03%</b>
2022-2023	0.00%	100.00%	88.68%	89.11%	<b>89.03%</b>
2023-2024	0.00%	100.00%	93.98%	90.35%	<b>91.92%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>78.57%</b>	<b>92.47%</b>	<b>88.12%</b>	<b>89.32%</b>	<b>88.88%</b>



**i** Table of Incidents **i** Map & Station Group

**Commentary**  
Performance for the fourth consecutive quarter remains green and above target. Fire Stations are continuing to mobilise quickly, responding to incidents in their communities. By continuing to embed our professional standards in Service Delivery we have been able to maintain this level of performance. In addition to this we have seen our crews increasingly engage with their communities through fire safety initiatives, meaning they are off station more and working in high risk areas ready to respond quicker. We are capturing this activity through our Local Risk Management Plans. Joint fire control also continue to utilise the dynamic cover tool to ensure our resources are in the right areas at the right times ready to meet our response standards.

**Actions**  
Tolerate: We will continue to monitor and review the performance data locally at our stations through our Local Risk Management Plans via our Service Delivery Governance meetings, seeking continuous improvements.

# Selected Measures (Red and Amber Status)

Quarter 2

(1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023)

# Selected Measures (Red and Amber Status)

The following red and amber measures have been selected for examination by the Scrutiny Committee:

- CM9: High Risk SWVs contacted on time
- CM22: Immediate Response crewing availability
- CM23: Retained Duty System crewing availability
- CM25: Staff Sickness
- CM27: Eligible Operational Staff in Qualification

# Core Measure 9: High Risk safe and well visit referrals contacted within 7 working days

**99.8% Q2 2023-24**

**Year End Forecast AMBER**

The percentage of safe and well visit referrals for individuals assessed as high risk of dying or being injured in the event of a dwelling fire, contacted within 7 days.

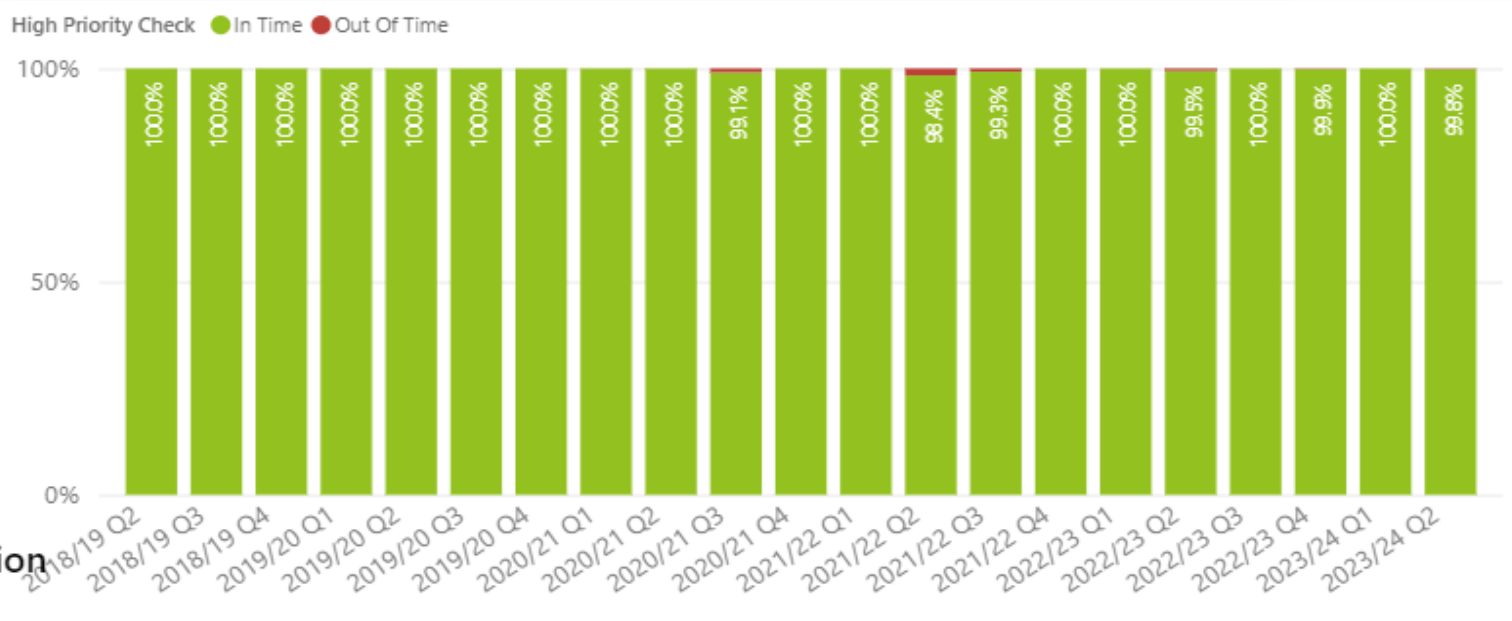
**Annual Target:**  
100% Green  
98%-99.9% Amber  
<98% Red

Service Owner: **Nathan Cross**  
Area: **Prevention**

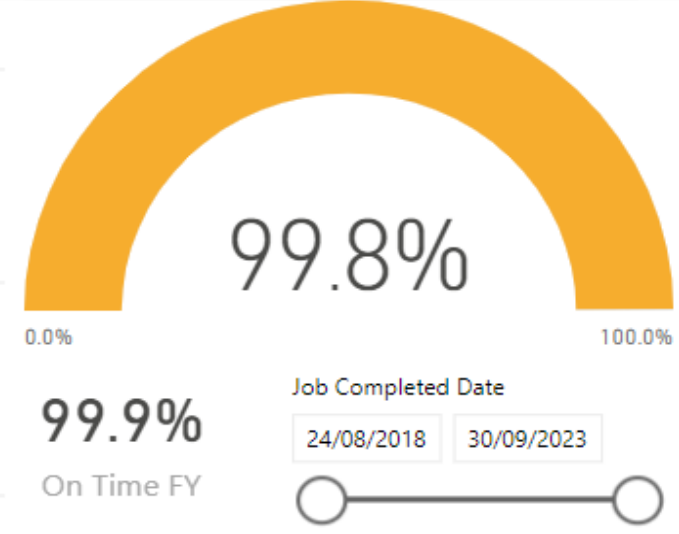
Agenda Item 5a Appendix A

## Visits By FY In/Out of Time Visits by Risk Level

Financial Year	On Time Visits
2018/19	100.00%
2019/20	100.00%
2020/21	99.85%
2021/22	99.40%
2022/23	99.83%



## High Risk Safe & Well on Time Last Quarter



[More Information](#)

**Commentary**  
In Q2 there were 627 customers who were assessed as having a high level of fire risk. All were contacted within 7 days and offered a visit. However, one customer was unable to receive a visit due to being in hospital. The case was correctly deferred on the system, however the 1st Attempted Contact date was not entered which triggered the job as out of time.

**Actions**  
Treat: Additional training has been provided to the individual who made the administrative error to prevent future incidences. We will continue to monitor this as part of our ongoing quality assurance.

# Core Measure 22: Full shifts where there is adequate crewing on all immediate response frontline fire engines

**97.6% at the end of Q2 2023-24**

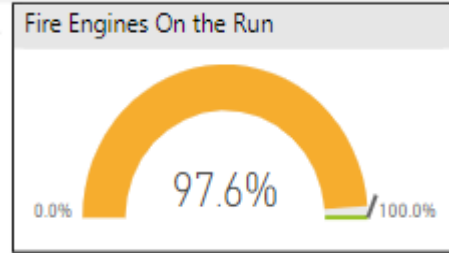
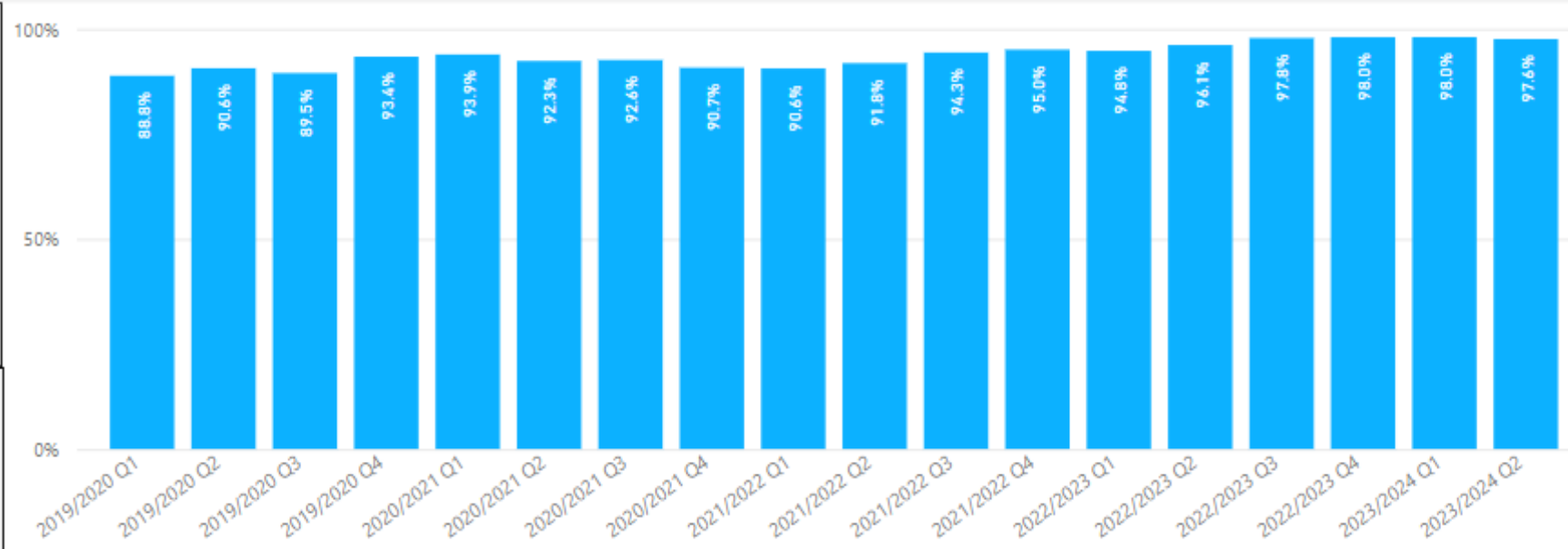
**Year End Forecast AMBER**

An immediate response frontline fire engine is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Four qualified people are required on a frontline fire engine to ensure safety. This measure examines the percentage of shifts (day or night) where there are sufficient minimum qualified fire fighters (4 personnel) on all immediate response fire engines.

**Target:**  
100% Green  
95% - <100% Amber  
<95% Red

Service Owner:  
**Gary Ball**  
Area:  
**Service Delivery**

Immediate Response Fire Engines On The Run by Quarter



Financial Year to Date  
**97.8%**

Date Range: 01/04/2019 to 30/09/2023

Financial Year	Total
2019/2020	90.6%
2020/2021	92.4%
2021/2022	92.9%
2022/2023	96.8%

More Information

**Commentary**  
We have experienced a slight drop in performance during quarter 2. We continue to ensure correct recording of availability is maintained on our Firewatch systems. During this quarter we have also experienced some data input errors that inadvertently could show an appliance inaccurately unavailable on our fire watch system.

**Actions**  
Treat: We continue to ensure human errors with data input are reduced through our masterclass training sessions and Service Delivery Governance meetings. We are also continually improving and resolving interface issues between Firewatch and vision systems that display available fire engines and other resources.

Agenda Item 5a  
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# Core Measure 23: Adequate crewing on all retained frontline fire engines (based on 24/7 crewing)

**43.5% at the end of Q2 2023-24**

**Year End Forecast RED**

**Target:**  
75% - 100% Green  
65% - 74% Amber  
<65% Red

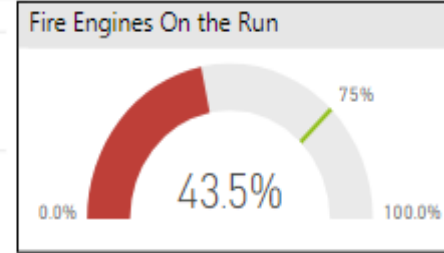
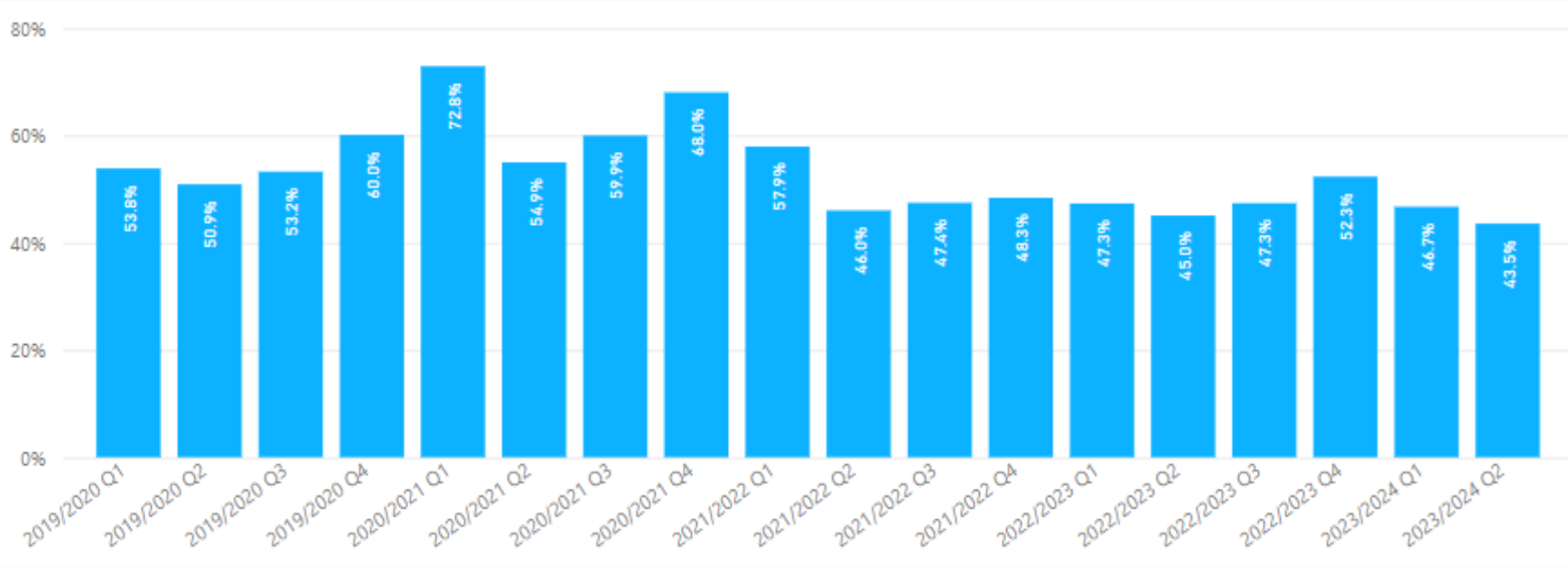
Service Owner: **Gary Ball**  
Area: **Service Delivery**

Agenda Item 5a  
Appendix A

Retained frontline fire engines are crewed mainly by on-call fire fighters who are based at stations in more rural locations and, when they receive the call via their pagers, leave their place of work or home and attend emergencies from the local retained station. Four qualified people are required on a frontline fire engine to ensure safety. This measure examines the percentage of hours where there are sufficient minimum qualified fire fighters (4 personnel) on retained fire engines.

Retained Fire Engines On The Run by Quarter (including current quarter to date)

Financial Year	Total
2019/2020	54.5%
2020/2021	63.9%
2021/2022	49.9%
2022/2023	48.0%



Financial Year to Date  
**45.1%**

Date Range  
01/04/2019 30/09/2023

**More Information**

**Commentary**  
We have seen a slight decrease in our RDS availability this quarter which is consistent with historical patterns over the busy leave period. Compared to last year in Q2 this equates to a 1.6% decrease. Some additional wholetime staff we have previously been able to redeploy have been required to remain on their host station ensuring our wholetime fire engines remain available during the summer months. Our day crewed stations now available 7 days a week has enhanced our response times across the county, however this has subsequently meant retained availability at these stations during day time has seen some impact contributing to the drop in performance.

**Actions**  
Treat: The sustainability of the Retained Duty System is a national issue and work across the sector chaired by our Area Manager for Service delivery has begun to gained traction. In Q3 we have commissioned an Audit on the Retained Duty System to highlight further areas requiring improvement. Specific retained surveys and focus groups with our staff have concluded and the results will filter into the Community Risk Management Plans operational response model design to maximise retained availability which will become a live project January 2024. Recruitment activity has been heightened with our support teams, targeting areas with an immediate need.

# Core Measure 25: The proportion of staff not sick across all staff groups

**94.2% at the end of Q2 2023-24**

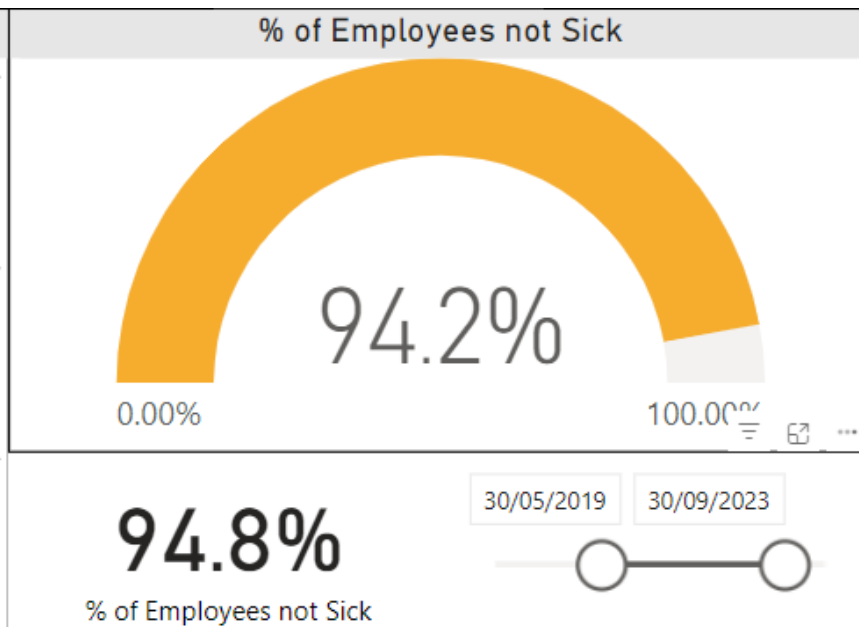
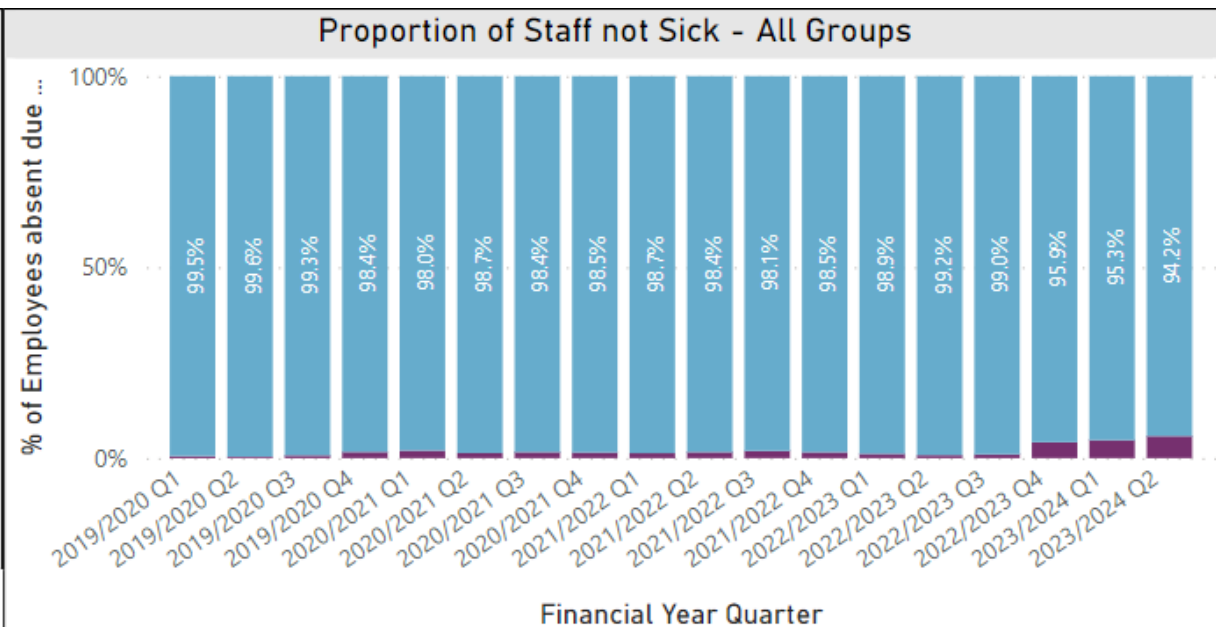
**Year End Forecast AMBER**

This measure examines the average percentage of staff who are not sick. All FRS employees are included in this measure, including support staff. Staff that are sick benefit from being managed in line with the Sickness Absence policy, ensuring the appropriate wellbeing and support is in place and medical advice is obtained as necessary.

**Annual Target:**  
 >95% Green  
 90%-95% Amber  
 <90% Red

Service Owner:  
**Catherine Walker**  
 Area:  
**DOT**

Financial Year	% of Employees not Sick
2019/2020	99.11%
2020/2021	98.41%
2021/2022	98.43%
2022/2023	98.26%
2022/2023 Q1	98.89%
2022/2023 Q2	99.24%
2022/2023 Q3	99.03%
2022/2023 Q4	95.85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>98.52%</b>



**Additional information**

**Commentary**  
 The sickness target of 95% attendance has dipped into amber this quarter, which reflects both the sickness picture across WSCC and also the national absence rates, as reported by the CIPD in Sept 23. The CIPD noted that this is the highest level they have reported in over a decade and two days more than the pre-pandemic rate. Analysis of the WSFRS top sickness reasons in comparison to the national sickness reasons also shows the same correlation, where in both instances, absences are due to Musculo-skeletal and mental ill-health reasons. Managers and HR continue to support colleagues with strong levels of communication and pastoral support when they are unwell and we continue to build a culture whereby staff engage with the absence management processes to return to work in a safe and timely manner.

**Actions**  
 Treat: Greater emphasis on 'Return to work' interviews being placed by HR team, and an improvement signposting to this process in the 'booking sick' eform is being implemented, alongside work to include the 'return to work' widget in Firewatch.  
 The leadership programme modules are providing further support. In October 2023 modules are on 'Managing Absence' to remind managers of the policy and their responsibilities. In Nov 23, modules are on 'Managing team's wellbeing', to remind and share expertise and experience on supporting colleagues. All sickness cases continue to be reviewed monthly by managers and HR to ensure these are being progressed in a timely manner and staff are able to return to work safely and with the appropriate support/adjustments.

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# Core Measure 27: Eligible operational staff in qualification

**93% at the end of Q2 2023-24**

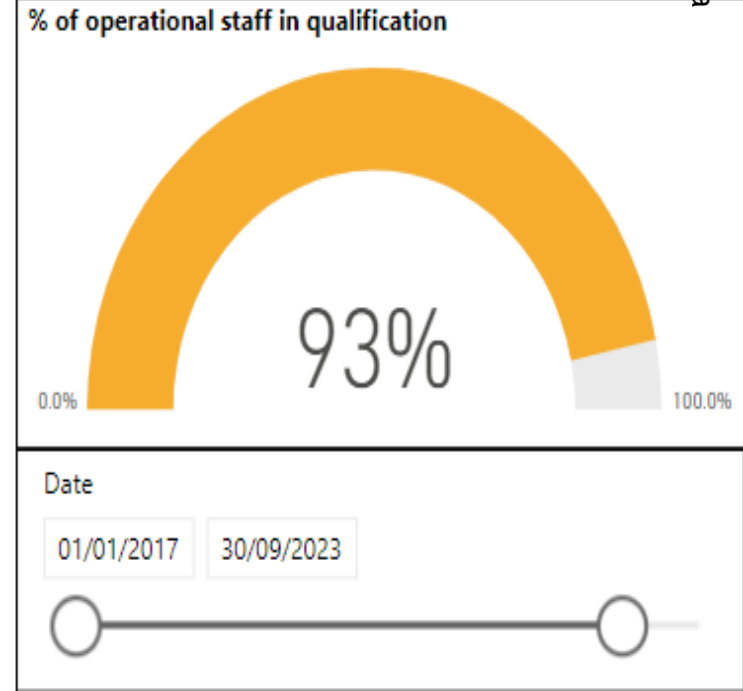
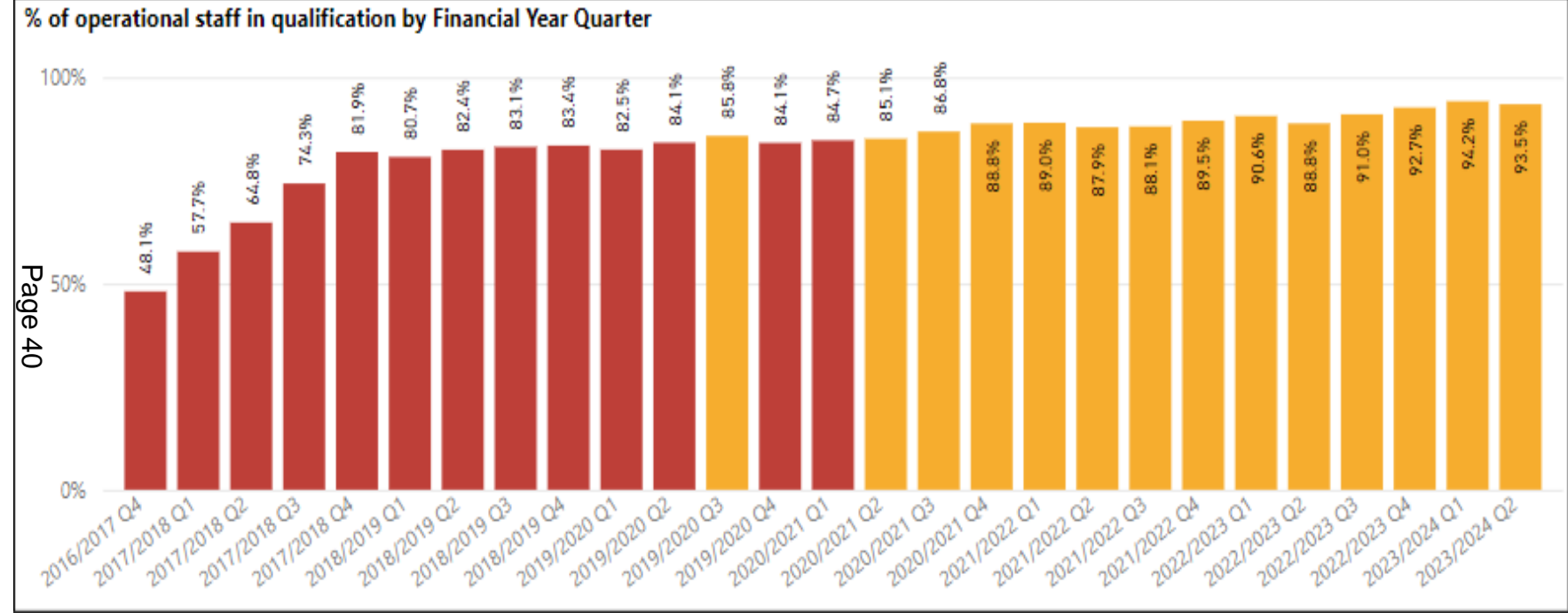
**Year End Forecast AMBER**

**Annual Target:**  
 >95% Green  
 85% - 95% Amber  
 <85% Red

Service Owner: **Catherine Walker**  
 Area: **DOT**

Agenda Item 5a Appendix A

This measure examines the average percentage of operational staff (Station Managers, Watch Managers, Crew Managers and Firefighters) who have current qualifications in the use of breathing apparatus, emergency response driving and incident command (outlined in the 8 core areas of the Fire Professional Framework) as required by their role. This measure includes Retained firefighters who are in training, but who have not yet completed their Breathing Apparatus qualification. TRU staff and staff who are long term sick, on secondment, maternity leave, compassionate leave, unpaid leave or alternative duties are excluded from this measure.



**Commentary**  
 Work and support continues with station management teams to improve this, from both Operational Training & Service Delivery Support, and to ensure data is accurate and up to date.  
 This measure includes Retained Firefighters who are in training and have not yet undertaken their Breathing Apparatus training. These individuals account for 2% of this measure.

**Actions**  
 Treat: Service Delivery continue to embed the monthly training plan, Firewatch master classes and continued communications with specific Station Managers whose stations are under-performing.  
 Further improvements continue to be made to improve the data held on individuals.



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## **Report to Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

**30 November 2023**

### **End of September 2023 (Quarter 2) Performance and Resources Report – Focus for Scrutiny**

**Report by Director of Law and Assurance**

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#### **Summary**

The Quarterly Performance and Resources Report (PRR) is the Council's reporting mechanism for corporate performance, finance, savings delivery, risk and workforce. It has been designed to reflect the priorities, outcomes and measures included in the Council Plan. The report is available to each scrutiny committee on a quarterly basis and each committee will consider how it wishes to monitor and scrutinise performance relevant to their area of business.

The report (Appendix B) reflects the position at the end of September 2023 and reports the Quarter 2 2023/24 position.

Of the four performance measures, 100% of measures are reporting as 'green', 0% as 'amber' and 0% as 'red'. The number of red rated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has remained at zero since the last quarter.

As at the end of September 2023, the forecast against the Community Support, Fire and Rescue budget is a projected overspend of £0.325m, an increase of £0.040m when compared to the June position.

The PRR includes information which is specifically relevant to the portfolio responsibilities of the scrutiny committee which includes Platinum House becoming operational in July, the service reaching the midway point of the Community Risk Management Plan, a commitment to review the Fire Service Retained Duty System, the new innovative Welfare Unit, and an update on rural prevention activity.

The current Risk Register (Appendix C) is included to give a holistic understanding of the Council's current performance reflecting the need to manage risk proactively.

#### **Focus for scrutiny**

In reviewing the PRR, the Committee's role is to monitor performance, finance and risk at a strategic level for its portfolio areas. Its focus should be on key performance indicators that are identified as red or amber as well as any budget variations.

Key lines of enquiry include:

- What is being done to address areas of under-performance (KPIs currently showing as red or amber)

- The effectiveness of measures being taken to manage the revenue and capital budget position, specifically in relation to any budget variations, non-delivery of the capital programme or agreed savings.
- Whether concerns raised previously by the committee been addressed?
- To assess key corporate risks set out in the Risk Register relating to the Committee's areas of responsibility and plans to mitigate these
- Using the information on performance and finance does the service being delivered meet the objectives in the Council Plan and does it provide value for money
- To identify any issues for further in-depth scrutiny to include in the Committee's future work programme (where scrutiny may influence outcomes/add value)
- Identify any specific areas for action or response by the relevant Cabinet Member or for further scrutiny by one of the other scrutiny committees

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

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## **1. Background and context**

- 1.1 The Performance and Resources Report (PRR) is designed to be used by all scrutiny committees as the main source of the County Council's performance information.
- 1.2 Appendix A – How to Read the Performance and Resources Report, provides some key highlights on the structure, content and a detailed matrix of the sections of the report which are expected to be reviewed by the different scrutiny committees.
- 1.3 The County Council is focused on delivering the four priorities as set out in the Council Plan: keeping people safe from vulnerable situations, a sustainable and prosperous economy, helping people and communities fulfil their potential and making the best use of resources, all underpinned by tackling climate change.
- 1.4 In the first quarter, the measures relevant to this committee reported:
  - 100% (3 measures) as 'Green'
  - 0% (1 measure) as 'Amber'
  - 0% (0 measures) as 'Red'
- 1.5 The background and context to this item for scrutiny are set out in the attached appendices (listed below). As it is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only the Equality, Human Rights, Social Value, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessments are not required.

**Tony Kershaw**

Director of Law and Assurance

**Contact Officer**

Rachel Allan, Senior Advisor (Democratic Services), 0330 222 8966

**Appendices**

**Appendix A** – How to Read the Performance and Resources Report

**Appendix B** – Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio - Summary

**Appendix C** – Corporate Risk Register Summary - September 2023

**Background Papers**

None

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## How to Read the Performance and Resources Report

The Performance and Resources Report is in three parts:

**a. Summary Report** – An overall summary of the quarter including:

- Performance highlights for delivery of the County Council's priorities,
- Overview of the revenue and capital financial outlook,
- Key corporate risks with a severity graded above the set tolerance level,
- The latest workforce overview.

The summary explains where further detail and explanation can be found in the portfolio reports. It does not seek to include any of this detail.

**b. Portfolio Reports (Sections 1-9):** organised alphabetically by Cabinet Portfolio.

- Section 1 – Adults Services
- Section 2 – Children's and Young People, Learning and Skills
- Section 3 – Community Support, Fire and Rescue
- Section 4 – Environment and Climate Change
- Section 5 – Finance and Property
- Section 6 – Highways and Transport
- Section 7 – Leader
- Section 8 – Public Health and Wellbeing
- Section 9 – Support Services and Economic Development

Each portfolio section is prepared as a stand-alone report and includes:

1. Updates of the performance KPIs in the Council Plan and the action being taken.
2. The KPI measures compare the last three periods - quarterly, annually or other depending on how data. Details include:
  - The last three periods and RAG status,
  - Black arrows show the direction of travel compared to the previous quarter.
3. Overview of the revenue financial position, risks and issues and savings update.
4. Overview of the capital performance and financial position.
5. Details of the corporate risks with a direct impact on the portfolio.

**c. Supporting Appendices** – for additional background and context:

- Appendix 1 – Performance by Priority - KPI Summary Table
- Appendix 2 – Revenue Budget Monitor and Reserves
- Appendix 3 – Revenue Portfolio Grant Listing
- Appendix 4 – Capital Monitor
- Appendix 5 – Corporate Risk Register Summary
- Appendix 6 – Workforce Information

## Scrutiny Committee Documents

Relevant elements of the PRR are presented to Scrutiny Committees.

A matrix of the PRR's Sections and Appendices by Scrutiny Committee is below.

The dark green indicates the Scrutiny Committee's area of responsibility and the light green areas included for context and consideration where appropriate.

### PRR Matrix – Documents for Scrutiny Committees

		CYPSSC	HASC	CHESC	FRSSC	PFSC
Summary Report						✓
Section 1	Adults Services Portfolio		✓			✓
Section 2	Children and Young People, Learning and Skills Portfolio	✓				✓
Section 3	Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio			✓	✓	✓
Section 4	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio			✓		✓
Section 5	Finance and Property Portfolio					✓
Section 6	Highways and Transport Portfolio			✓		✓
Section 7	Leader Portfolio					✓
Section 8	Public Health and Wellbeing Portfolio		✓			✓
Section 9	Support Services and Economic Development Portfolio					✓
Appendix 1	Performance by Priority - KPI Summary Table					✓
Appendix 2	Revenue Budget Monitor and Reserves					✓
Appendix 3	Revenue Portfolio Grant Listing					✓
Appendix 4	Capital Monitor					✓
Appendix 5	Corporate Risk Register Summary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Appendix 6	Workforce					✓

KEY:
Specific Committee Responsibility
To Be Included In Committee Papers

## Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio - Summary

### Performance Summary

1. Performance highlights this quarter:

#### Fire and Rescue Service

- **Platinum House, the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station** became operational in July. After six weeks of successful commissioning and testing, the site was ready to be handed over to operational crews and training colleagues. This was a momentous landmark for the Fire Rescue Service which will unlock new opportunities for training and exercising for both fire and wider County colleagues and support the County Council's aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
- The service is reaching the midway point of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and in line with proposals, two new projects were launched on **Emergency Response Standards and a Specialist Capability Review**. These crucial projects will continue to support improvement in KPIs by matching risk and resource and ensuring the Council have the right specialist equipment available to protect the community. Initial proposals from this work are expected to emerge during quarter four of this year.
- Also in the CRMP is a commitment to **review the Fire Service Retained Duty System (RDS)**. Initial work commenced in July when a staff survey was conducted and a series of focus groups to capture the ideas on what we need to focus on first within the project. The project formally starts in quarter four of this year, but this early engagement will help establish the scope and begin to help address some of the performance issues being experienced in the RDS core measure.
- In September, the service took delivery of its new innovative **Welfare Unit**. This is a new vehicle which has been specifically designed to provide enhanced support and facilities for staff during operational incidents. The introduction of the Welfare Unit to the fleet marks a significant milestone in our efforts to prioritise the welfare of staff.
- This quarter, the Fire and Rescue Service **welcomed its latest new retained duty system firefighters**. These new colleagues will provide further resilience to key retained stations to help improve our core measures and wider retained availability.
- A mixture of the excellent rural prevention activity and the wet weather resulted in **fewer rural and wildfire incidents** than expected. The most notable operational incident of the summer occurred in Littlehampton in August with a large fire at the Harvester Restaurant on the seafront. The incident led to 12 fire engines attending the scene which attracted significant press interest.

## Community Support

- This summer 11,500 children joined the **Summer Reading Challenge** in West Sussex libraries, with over half completing the challenge to read six or more books over the summer holidays. Library staff provided training and support to 248 volunteers, who in turn gave over 3,500 hours of their time talking with children about the books they had read and celebrating their achievement. Running the Challenge at all libraries for eight weeks over the summer means libraries had their busiest period in July and August, with customer visits 12% above the monthly average. Evidence shows families reading for pleasure is a keyway for children to maintain attainment levels over the longest school holiday period.
- **Worthing Library** passed the two years open since refurbishment milestone this quarter. Visitor footfall data shows an average of 16,150 customers use the building every month, accessing library, family, health, and registration services. It is projected that customer reach will have grown 7% by year-end.
- Libraries reported 36 incidents of **anti-social or disruptive behaviour** from customers during the summer period, with emergency calls to the police on 17 occasions. This represents a one-third reduction in incidents from last quarter but remains eight-fold magnitude above baseline (pre-pandemic) norm.
- **A new small ceremony room in Worthing Library** has been made available for by the Registers Service for ceremonies from September. This room is offered every Tuesday as a low-cost option in the South of the County and is proving a very popular venue.
- Online safety remains a key priority for the Community Safety and Wellbeing Team and during this quarter, 1,794 young people, residents and professionals have participated in **digital safety focused training/engagement activities**. The Digital Safety Team engaged with students and teachers at the Freshers Fair Event at Chichester College about how to stay safe online and avoid falling victim to online scams.
- Since September 2021, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Team have been running **safeguarding training webinars for taxi drivers** across West Sussex and beyond, providing awareness raising and information around the main aspects of safeguarding, including vulnerabilities, indicators, and methods of reporting concerns. To date, approximately 2,000 drivers have been trained in various District and Boroughs across West Sussex and also, Rother and Wealden, in the East. For the period July to September 2023, seven webinars were held on the new Eventbrite platform, providing training to 95 drivers in this period.
- The Countering Extremism Team continue to offer a **range of support to reduce the risk of people being drawn into or supporting terrorism**. This includes statutory Prevent Duty training for internal and external partners, as well as inputs on recognising racism and the impact of hate crime in relation to extremism. Mandatory Prevent training has been approved for all County Council Children, Young People and Learning staff which will be delivered over the next year, and as part of the County Council's community engagement strategy, the team will be delivering training to infrastructure organisations in






the voluntary and community sector. Facilitating and chairing the West Sussex Channel Panel remains a key responsibility as part of the statutory Channel Duty, alongside organisational compliance with the national benchmarks introduced over the past year by the Home Office.


## Our Council Performance Measures

### Fire and Rescue Service Performance Measures




2. The following section provides KPI updates comparing performance over the last three periods (each measure will explain the reporting period).

Fire and Rescue		2023/24 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT	Year End Forecast
3	<p><b>Measure:</b> Fire Safety Order regulated buildings in West Sussex having received an audit under the Risk Based Inspection Programme. Measured cumulatively in each financial year, from 1st April.</p> <p>Reporting Frequency: Quarterly</p>	1,000	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23		G
			G	A	G		
			1,004	247	515		
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: The services Fire Safety Regulators have maintained a good level of performance during Q2 and are on track to meet the target for the year, being ahead of profile at this half year stage. (515 audits out of an annual target of 1,000). In comparison to the six-monthly performance through Q1 and Q2 of 2022/23, the team have achieved 13% more fire safety audits so far this year.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> The level of performance is starting to increase and is representative of the expectation now that more Fire Safety Regulators have concluded their development training. There is still further development being undertaken, however it is hoped that this will have a slightly lower impact upon our day-to-day output.</p>							
10	<p><b>Measure:</b> Number of Safe and Well Visits delivered to households with at least one vulnerability or risk factor. Measured cumulatively in each financial year, from 1st April.</p> <p>Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Accumulative.</p>	5,000	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23		G
			G	G	G		
			4,680	1,298	2,622		
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: 1,324 Safe and Well Visits (SWVs) and 324 home safety interventions were completed in Q2. There continues to be a significant increase from the number of SWVs delivered in previous years. At the end of Q2 2022/23, the team had completed 2,100 SWVs; whereas at Q2 2023/24, 2,622 visits have been accomplished - 522 more than the previous year. This measure is on track to meet the target of 5,000 SWVs this year.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> The service continues to support referrals and requests for Safe and Well Visits through partnerships and local initiatives promoting them. Data is used to target those most at risk of being injured or dying in a fire.</p>							
42	<p><b>Measure:</b> Percentage of 'critical fires' where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard</p> <p>Reporting Frequency: Quarterly.</p>	89.0%	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23		G
			G	G	G		
			92.1.%	89.4%	94.7%		
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: Performance for the fourth consecutive quarter remains above target. Fire Stations are continuing to mobilise quickly, responding to incidents in their communities. By continuing to embed our professional standards in Service Delivery the team have been able to maintain this level of performance. In addition to this, crews have been increasingly engaged with their communities through fire safety initiatives, meaning they are off-station more and working in high-risk areas ready to respond more quickly. This activity is being captured through our Local Risk Management Plans. Joint fire control also continues to utilise the dynamic cover tool to ensure our resources are in the right areas at the right times ready to meet our response standards.</p>							

Agenda Item 5b  
Appendix B

Fire and Rescue		2023/24 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT	Year End Forecast
<b>Actions:</b> Monitoring and reviewing the performance data locally at stations through the Local Risk Management Plans via Service Delivery Governance meetings will continue, whilst seeking continuous improvements.							
43	<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of 'critical special service incidents' where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard  Reporting Frequency: Quarterly.	80.0%	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23		G
			G	G	G		
			80.8%	82.2%	84.6%		
<b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: Performance remains high for a fourth consecutive quarter, providing assurances that the established use of the Dynamic Cover Tool (which provides data on response times broken down to district/local level displayed to control room operators) is now embedded in the services' ways of working when mobilising fire engines to calls.  <b>Actions:</b> Working with partner agencies has helped to improve the time taken to transfer calls and information, enabling control staff to mobilise quicker. Work also continues to be undertaken at fire stations to ensure everything is being done to enable quick responses to incidents, as well as maximising the availability of retained fire engines at times of the day when these incidents are most likely to occur using the Crewing Optimisation Group.							

### Community Support Performance Measures

Community Support		2023/24 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT	Year End Forecast
4	<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of interventions to identified West Sussex residents that demonstrate an increase in ability for resident to deal with scams.  Reporting Frequency: Quarterly	90.0%		Jun-23	Sep-23		G
				G	G		
			<b>New Measure – No Data</b>	91.0%	94.0%		
<b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: No anticipated issues in meeting year-end target.  <b>Actions:</b> The service continues to work with partners to keep residents safe.							
33	<b>Measure:</b> Use of virtual/digital library services by residents  Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Accumulative	5.45m	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23		G
			G	G	G		
			6.30m	1.69m	3.72m		
<b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: Increased use driven by new ebook provision (ULibrary) which has increased choice and availability for customers. The summer period sees peak usage across all library services, driven by the annual Summer Reading Challenge.  <b>Actions:</b> Continue to support growing demand though investment in eLibrary platforms and production of virtual and online library events content.							
34	<b>Measure:</b> Community Hub provides positive outcomes for residents at first point of contact.  Reporting Frequency: Quarterly	95.0%		Jun-23	Sep-23		G
				A	G		
			<b>New Measure – No Data</b>	92%	100%		

Community Support	2023/24 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods	DoT	Year End Forecast
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: Currently achieving 100% for Q2, The Community Hub continues to deliver a high-quality service to the residents of West Sussex providing information and guidance signposting practical support focusing on Cost of Living and Household Support Fund enquiries.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Continuing to regularly review the streamlining of processes as Household Support Fund moves us to a more digital focus.</p>				

## Finance Summary

### Portfolio In Year Pressures and Mitigations

Pressures	(£m)	Mitigations and Underspending	(£m)	Year end budget variation (£m)
Community Support – Additional coroner costs projected following continued increase in the number of excess deaths since the pandemic.	£0.365m	Community Support – Additional ceremonies income projected.	(£0.100m)	
Community Support – Transfer of Coroner Officers from Sussex Police	£0.160m	Libraries and Archives – Staffing vacancies	(£0.080m)	
		Edes House – Addition income generation from external functions	(£0.020m)	
<b>Community Support, Fire &amp; Rescue Portfolio - Total</b>	<b>£0.525m</b>		<b>(£0.200m)</b>	<b>£0.325m</b>

### Financial Narrative on the Portfolio's Position

- As at the end of September, the forecast against the Community Support, Fire and Rescue budget is a projected overspend of £0.325m, an increase of £0.040m when compared to the June position.

### Community Support

- As previously reported, the pressure on the Coroner's Service has continued into 2023/24 largely as a result of the continued increase in excess deaths since the pandemic which is being seen nationally. Currently £0.365m of additional costs associated with increased pathology, body storage, histology and coroner time are included within the overall projection.
- In addition, the Coroner's Service has also welcomed the transfer of Coroner Officers from Sussex Police from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The projected costs associated with the transfer have increased by £0.040m from the £0.120m reported in June to £0.160m. Staff terms and conditions are still being finalised.
- Additional income forecast to be generated from the Registration Service has been reduced from £0.2m reported in June to £0.1m. This projection has been revised down following a review of ceremonies planned in 2023/24. This

reduction has been offset by £0.080m of projected staffing vacancies within the Libraries and Archives services alongside an additional £0.020m of income generation from external functions at Edes House.

## Savings Delivery Update

7. There are £0.670m of planned savings to be delivered within the Portfolio. Details are shown in the table that follows:

Saving Activity	Year	Saving to be delivered in 2023/24 (£000)	September 2023		Narrative
Community Support - Optimise Use of Grants	2023/24	£0.200m	£0.200m	<b>G</b>	
Resilience and Emergency Team - Structural Review	2023/24	£0.100m	£0.100m	<b>G</b>	
Staffing vacancy increase in vacancy factor from 5% to 6%	2023/24	£0.370m	£0.370m	<b>G</b>	Staffing budgets currently assume a vacancy factor of 5% but over the last few years, this has averaged 6% across the organisation and is expected to remain at this level for 2023/24.

### Savings Key:

**R** Significant Risk    **A** At Risk    **G** On Track    **B** Delivered

## Capital Programme

### Summary - Capital

8. The Community Support, Fire and Rescue capital programme; as approved by County Council in February 2023, agreed a programme totalling £9.089m for 2023/24. Budget of £4.864m originally profiled to spend in 2023/24, was accelerated into 2022/23, revising the capital programme to £4.225m.
9. Since this time, the profiled spend has decreased overall by £1.220m, to give a current year end projection for 2023/24 of £3.005m.
10. The portfolio's capital programme contains six projects. Five of the projects are in delivery and one is practically complete and is in its retention phase whilst snagging and cosmetic works are completed. The performance and financial details for each are reported below.

	Community Support, Fire Rescue Capital Projects	Performance RAG Status			Total Project Budget	Previous Years Expenditure To 2022/23	2023/24 Expenditure to Date	In Flight Remaining Project Budget
		Time	Quality	Cost				
1	<b>Project:</b> Fire and Rescue Equipment Block Programme - Block	G	G	G	£0.263m	N/A	£0.263m	£0.000m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> On-Going			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Block funds have been spent. Scoping of future projects underway.							
2	<b>Project:</b> Fleet Replacement Programme - Block	G	G	G	£4.072m	N/A	£0.078m	£3.994m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> On-Going			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Projects are going through the governance process.							
3	<b>Project:</b> Live Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station	G	G	G	£25.608m	£23.935m	£0.958m	£0.715m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> July 2023			<b>Project Phase:</b> Practically Complete – In Retention				
	<b>Narrative:</b> The new building and site has been handed over to the service. The site became operational on Monday 10th July 2023. Funding remains for final invoices and retention payments.							
4	<b>Project:</b> Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Programme	G	G	G	£1.852m	£-	£-	£1.852m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> TBC			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Business Case being created by Service and is expected in October 2023.							
5	<b>Project:</b> Worthing Community Hub	G	G	G	£2.852m	£2.693m	£-	£0.159m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> May 2022			<b>Project Phase:</b> Practically Complete - In Retention				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Works complete.							
6	<b>Project:</b> Libraries Digital Asset	G	G	G	£0.030m	£-	£0.006	£0.024m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> TBC			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> West Sussex Library Service were successful in obtaining a grant of £30k from LibraryOn, a project led by the British Library working in consultation with Arts Council England, to pay for a suite of new digital assets including films about library activities to go on the library webpages.							

11. A summary of the latest Capital Programme Budget Monitor is reported in **Appendix 4** and full details of all individual schemes are set out in the Budget Report published in February 2023.

## **Risk**

12. There are no corporate risks assigned to this portfolio. Risks allocated to other portfolios are specified within the respective portfolio sections. Further detail on all risks can be found in **Appendix 5** - Corporate Risk Register Summary.
13. Full details of the latest Risk Register, including actions and mitigations can be found under the County Council's [Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee Agenda](#) website.

## Corporate Risk Register Summary - September 2023

### CR11

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
25	8	20	Unchanged 

#### Risk Description

As a result of skill shortages across various sectors, and less attractive employment offers in comparison to other organisations and locations (amplified by the current cost of living situation), there is a risk that we will not be able to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of qualified/experienced staff to manage and deliver quality services.

#### Date Risk Raised

01/03/2017

#### Risk Owner

Director of Human Resources & Org Dev

#### Risk Strategy

Treat

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Benchmarking of salaries against peers across neighbouring LA's focussed on attracting and retaining talent for key areas, and consider activates to address outcomes.	Ongoing
Conduct planning session with HR team to review current recruitment practices, and meet with key stakeholders to develop comprehensive plan to address areas needing improvement.	Ongoing
Developing alternative arrangements to attract candidates for hard to recruit to roles including the use of specialist third party search agencies.	Ongoing
Development and regular communication of comprehensive employee value proposition to support recruitment and retention.	01/01/2024
Development of strategic workforce planning approach in collaboration with services, to identify cross organisational skills, capacity and capability risks and requirements (current and future) and work with services to establish action plan for high risk and priority areas and roles.	01/09/2023
Longer term strategies for addressing recruitment issues e.g. apprenticeships, growing our own.	Ongoing
Restructure of HR Resourcing function to ensure it better fits how recruitment now needs to be undertaken	01/04/2024

### CR39a

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
25	16	20	Unchanged 

#### Risk Description

Cyber threat is an evolving, persistent and increasingly complex risk to the ongoing operation of County Council. There is a risk of a successful cyber attack directly from external threats; or indirectly as a consequence of members or staff falling prey to social engineering or phishing attacks. The potential outcome may lead to significant service disruption and possible data loss.

#### Date Risk Raised

01/03/2017

#### Risk Owner

Director of Finance & Support Services

#### Risk Strategy

Treat

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Transition to a controlled framework for process and practice.	Ongoing
Regular review, measurement and evaluation of corporate (technological/process) / organisational (behavioural) response to current and emerging cyber threats, where applicable to undertake pertinent actions to mitigate risks identified.	Ongoing
Provide capacity & capability to align with National Cyber-Security centre recommendations.	Ongoing
Maintain IG Toolkit (NHS) & Public Service Network security accreditations.	Ongoing
Improve staff awareness of personal & business information security practices & identification of cyber-security issues. Continued actions due to evolving threats.	Ongoing
Ensure that cyber-attack is identified early, that reporting & monitoring is effective, and recovery can be prompt.	Ongoing
Conduct tests including penetration, DR and social engineering. (conducted 6 monthly)	Ongoing

# CR58

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
20	9	25	Unchanged 

## Risk Description

The care market, and in particular the Lifelong Services and Mental Health market is experiencing significant fragility. This is anticipated to be related to factors such as but not limited to cost pressures, changing requirements and expectations, and workforce challenges. There is a risk of failure of social care provision which will result in funded and self-funded residents of West Sussex being left without suitable care.

Date Risk Raised  
**05/09/2018**

Risk Owner  
**Director of Adults and Health**

Risk Strategy  
**Treat**

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Annual review of fees paid to providers to support financial sustainability.	Ongoing
Continue to risk assess services against CQC criteria/requirements to manage impact on pipeline activity.	Ongoing
Financial analysis of high risk provision - due diligence checks.	Ongoing
In the event of an incident, ensure the consistent implementation of Emergency Response Plans, including a full de-brief and lessons learned.	Ongoing
Provision of regular support and communication to market providers to monitor financial sustainability.	Ongoing
Review capacity of residential and non-residential services to ensure service availability and to support identification of contingencies if needed.	Ongoing

# CR22

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
20	12	16	Unchanged 

## Risk Description

The financial sustainability of council services is at risk due to uncertain funding from central government and economic conditions (mainly inflation and interest rates) impacting on service delivery, and/or failure to make the required decisions to ensure the budget is balanced. This has been compounded further with the COVID-19 pandemic and the now cost of living crisis which is making economic conditions uncertain, and impacting on the cost of council services and demand for services.

Date Risk Raised  
**01/03/2017**

Risk Owner  
**Director of Finance & Support Services**

Risk Strategy  
**Treat**

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Continue to lobby for fairer funding for Local Government through annual settlements, the Fair Funding Review, Levelling Up Agenda and Business Rates reset.	Ongoing
Financial Planning sessions with ELT and Cabinet taking place to ensure officers and Members understand and own the financial challenge.	Ongoing
Monitor the use of additional funds made available to improve service delivery.	Ongoing
Monthly monitoring of the financial position in 2022/23 and 2023/24 and reported to ELT and Cabinet Member for Finance to ensure pressures are visible and mitigating action put in place. This includes reporting on the delivery of savings in year.	Ongoing
Publication of annual MTFS (Revenue and Capital) across a five year planning period aligned to the Council Plan. The budget gap for 2024/25 remains challenging - currently estimated at £40 to £50m over the medium term that will require a long term approach to financial planning and a different approach to identifying cost reductions and income generation (aligned to the Council Plan and priorities limited resources).	Ongoing



# CR73a

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Unchanged</b> ➡

## Risk Description

Climate Change Mitigation - If there is a failure to adequately prioritise, finance, resource and embed into BAU our efforts to decarbonise in alignment with the commitments made in the Council's Climate Change Strategy, there is a risk that there will be insufficient capacity and capability to fully deliver the necessary actions within the stated timeframes. This will lead to additional resource strain, higher demand on capital programmes and threaten organisational reputation.

## Date Risk Raised

01/01/2022

## Risk Owner

Director for Place Services

## Risk Strategy

Treat

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Align pipeline of projects for existing and future funding opportunities	Ongoing
Built into county-wide Business Planning and budgeting process	Ongoing
Clear prioritisation of CC Strategy delivery within Our Council Plan	Ongoing
Recruitment and training policy to ensure all staff & elected members are suitably informed on climate change issues & that specialist skills are embedded through recruitment & training to enable delivery	Ongoing
SMART programme of actions based on clear definitions and metrics	Ongoing

# CR73b

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Unchanged</b> ➡

## Risk Description

Climate Change Adaptation - West Sussex faces the high risk of increasing impacts of climate change including extreme heat, severe storms, flooding and sea level rise, among others. Without proactive consideration of and preparation for these impacts, WSCC assets, service delivery and West Sussex residents are at increased risk of damage, disruption and injury. This will lead to protracted service disruptions, dangerous conditions and increased reliance on emergency services. In the longer term this could lead to displacement of residents and businesses in vulnerable, lower lying areas.

## Date Risk Raised

01/01/2022

## Risk Owner

Director for Place Services

## Risk Strategy

Treat

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Clear prioritisation of CC Strategy delivery within Our Council Plan	Ongoing
Existing assets and service delivery made climate change resilient & future developments designed to be as low carbon & climate change resilient	Ongoing
Recruitment and training policy to ensure all staff & elected members are suitably informed on climate change issues & that specialist skills are embedded through recruitment & training to enable delivery	Ongoing

# CR76

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Unchanged</b> ➡

**Risk Description**

Natural England issued a Position Statement on 14 September 2021 that affects all planning applications not granted before that date within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. This has essentially halted all WSCC plans and projects in the water supply zone until water neutrality can be demonstrated. There are number of impacts on and, potentially, opportunities for WSCC arising. The principal corporate risk is that the council will be unable to provide sufficient school places in the water neutrality area.

Date Risk Raised	01/06/2023
Risk Owner	Director of Place Services
Risk Strategy	<b>Treat</b>

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Direct instruction and ongoing regular engagement with all schools (including academies) regarding entering into off-setting negotiations independently of WSCC.	01/11/2023
Produce centralised offsetting register that captures potential offsetting opportunities across WSCC estate.	01/11/2023
Regular engagement with Local Planning Authorities.	Ongoing
Resource a robust set of centralised controls and initiatives to ensure identified offsetting opportunities are supported and secured in legal agreements.	01/11/2023
Resources made available to support offsetting activities.	Ongoing

# CR61

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Unchanged</b> ➡

**Risk Description**

A 'serious incident' occurs resulting in the death or serious injury of a child where the Council is found to have failed in their duty to safeguard, prevent or protect the child from harm.

Date Risk Raised	01/06/2019
Risk Owner	Director of Children, Young People and Learning
Risk Strategy	<b>Tolerate</b>

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Implementation and monitoring of Continuous Practice Improvement Plan (CPIP).	Ongoing
Provide proactive improvement support to services to assure effective safeguarding practices.	Ongoing

# CR69

Current Score  
**10**

Target Score  
**5**

Initial Score  
**25**

Risk Change  
**Unchanged**  
➡

## Risk Description

Children's Services have now been moved out of special measures as a result of the recent Ofsted inspection, however ILACS have outlined areas that require further development. If the council stall in their efforts to implement the planned improvements, there is a risk that the service will fail to progress all areas to a 'good' rating within a suitable timeframe.

Date Risk Raised  
**01/03/2020**

Risk Owner  
**Director of Children, Young People and Learning**

Risk Strategy  
**Treat**

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Continue to work with Hants CC as a partner in practice to improve the breadth of children's service.	Ongoing
Deliver Children First Improvement Plan.	Ongoing
Implement the Children First Service transformation model	Ongoing

# CR39b

Current Score  
**9**

Target Score  
**9**

Initial Score  
**20**

Risk Change  
**Unchanged**  
➡

## Risk Description

Data protection responsibilities. The Council is a Data Controller and has obligations and responsibilities arising from that role. Council needs resources, skills, knowledge, systems and procedures to ensure obligations are met.

Date Risk Raised  
**01/03/2017**

Risk Owner  
**Director of Law & Assurance**

Risk Strategy  
**Tolerate**

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Adopt ISO27001 (Information Security Management) aligned process & practices.	Ongoing
Enable safe data sharing, including using appropriate data standards & appropriate anonymization techniques.	Ongoing
Maintain and refresh systems of control to ensure that access to sensitive data and information is controlled.	Ongoing
Maintain IG Toolkit (NHS) & Public Service Network security accreditations.	Ongoing
Review IT systems implemented prior to 25 May 2018 to confirm compliance with updated regulations.	Ongoing
Secure additional capacity for data protection team to further reduce risk of non-compliance with statutory deadlines.	01/01/2024
Test the effectiveness of DPIA	Ongoing

# CR50

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Unchanged</b> ➡

**Risk Description**

WSCC are responsible for ensuring the HS&W of its employees and residents/customers. If WSCC staff/services and maintained schools fail to comply with H&S statutory duties, responsibilities and processes (in accordance with WSCC governance arrangements), there is a risk that it will lead to a serious health, safety and wellbeing incident occurring.

Date Risk Raised
01/03/2017
Risk Owner
Director of Human Resources & Org Dev
Risk Strategy
<b>Treat</b>

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Develop and introduce a more comprehensive risk profile approach and front line service based audits.	Ongoing
Incorporate HS&W information/performance measure onto new online audit tool.	01/12/2023
Purchase, develop and introduce an interactive online H&S service led audit tool.	01/12/2023
Regular engagement with other LA's on best practice and lessons learned.	Ongoing
Regular engagement with services to ensure H&S responsibilities continue to be fully understood and embedded in BAU activities.	Ongoing

# CR7

Current Score	Target Score	Initial Score	Risk Change
<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Decreased</b> ⬇️

**Risk Description**

There are governance systems which are not used fully and to best effect, and some which do not fit well together. This inhibits effective performance and delivery and frustrates those involved. Skills and knowledge of systems are patchy and excessive effort required for sound decisions and outcomes.

Date Risk Raised
01/12/2019
Risk Owner
Director of Law & Assurance
Risk Strategy
<b>Tolerate</b>

Risk Control/Action	Target Date
Audit plan focussing reviews on key corporate support systems to identify areas in need of improvement.	Ongoing
Examples of non-compliance used to inform Directors to enforce compliance with standards.	Ongoing
Regular monitoring and active corporate support to establish better practice.	Ongoing
Training focused on CMT and senior officers involved in decision governance.	Ongoing

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## **Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

**30 November 2023**

### **Council Plan, Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Preparations for 2024/25 Draft Budget**

**Report by Director of Law and Assurance**

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#### **Summary**

During November 2023 all scrutiny committees have the opportunity to review the budget proposals which support the Council Plan. This includes consideration of pressures faced by services and plans to manage those and to deliver a balanced budget. The proposals were endorsed for scrutiny and public consultation at the meeting of Cabinet on 17 October.

The attached Cabinet report sets out proposals for the full budget to ensure each committee considers those relevant to its portfolio areas in a whole Council context. The relevant portfolio plans for contributing to the need to ensure a balanced budget are set out in the appendix to the attached report as are any proposed capital programme changes.

Scrutiny committee comments will be reported to the Cabinet for consideration alongside feedback from public consultation on the budget being carried out in the autumn. Final proposals will be settled in January for consideration by the Cabinet after scrutiny by Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee.

#### **Focus for scrutiny**

The Committee is asked to scrutinise the budget proposals in the context of the Council Plan commitments and service pressures relating to its areas of responsibility and within the context of the overall budget position of the Council.

Key lines of enquiry for scrutiny include:

- (1) To consider and test out the information about service pressures and the plans to address them; whether these are realistic and achievable
- (2) To examine the savings proposals and understand what may be the impact on residents, communities and service users
- (3) To establish whether and which other options have been or could be considered to deliver a balanced budget
- (4) To review the Capital Programme in terms of its deliverability; to consider the impact of proposed changes
- (5) To establish how public consultation partner engagement will be carried out and how feedback will inform the further development of budget plans both generally and for specific proposals.

The Chairman will summarise the debate for consideration by the Committee.

## **Details**

The attached report was agreed at Cabinet on 17 October 2023 and includes the following information:

- Priorities for the Council Plan and the financial position of the County Council over the next four years
- Proposals for the draft 2024/25 revenue budget and preparations for the updated Capital Programme ahead of County Council in February 2024
- Steps to be taken for public and partner engagement
- At Appendix A – details of known service spending pressures
- At Appendix B – balancing the budget (details of the proposals for reducing or realigning funding to council priorities and known pressures) and including plans for any consultation, engagement or equality impact assessment.

### **Tony Kershaw**

Director of Law and Assurance

### **Contact Officer**

Rachel Allan, Senior Advisor (Democratic Services), 0330 222 8966

### **Contact for financial implications**

Taryn Eves, Director of Finance and Support Services, 033 022 22087

### **Attachment**

Cabinet Report on Council Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy

### **Background papers**

None

**Key decision: No  
Unrestricted  
Ref: N/A**

## **Report to Public Cabinet (updated for Scrutiny Consideration)**

**17 October 2023**

### **Update on Council Plan, Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Preparations for 2024/25 Draft Budget**

#### **Report by Director of Finance and Support Services and Director of Law and Assurance**

**Electoral division(s): All**

#### **Summary**

1. In July 2023, Cabinet received a report providing an update on the Council Plan, national and local context, and the medium-term financial forecast for the next five years. The report showed a budget shortfall of £171m over the five years, of which £45m was expected in 2024/25 before any increase in Council Tax.
2. This report provides an update on the national context and the medium-term forecast. It advises Cabinet on the preparations for refreshing the Council Plan, sets out proposals for the draft 2024/25 revenue budget and preparations for the updated Capital Programme before further review ahead of recommending to County Council in February 2024. It explains the further steps to be taken for public and partner engagement and consultation and for engaging scrutiny committees during November 2023.
3. The budget for 2024/25 will be developed within the context of the Council Plan and the Council's spending plans will be targeted to ensure that priorities in the plan continue to be delivered.
4. Further analysis of the service demand and cost pressures and impact of economic conditions has been undertaken over the summer. Service pressures remain a key concern, particularly social care and an additional £53m is proposed to be built into next year's budget to enable the County Council to continue to provide services to the most vulnerable requiring extra support and help to manage risk and prevent escalation of need.
5. It is assumed that pay inflation will be around 4% in 2024/25 and spend through contracts is based on the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecasts of 5.4% and 8.1% for CPI and RPI respectively. Income collected through fees and charges is assumed to increase on average by 8.1% but a full report on the proposed fees and charges for 2024/25 will be available for scrutiny in January 2024 before being recommended by Cabinet to County Council as part of the 2024/25 budget in February 2024.

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6. The forecast, taking into account this latest information shows a budget shortfall of between £44.9m and £16.2m for 2024/25 depending on the level of Council Tax increase.
7. The final position is very much dependent on the outcome of the Local Government Finance Settlement expected to be published week commencing 18 December 2023. All the assumptions driving the financial forecast will remain under review during the run up to setting next year's budget in February 2024.
8. Setting a balanced budget for 2024/25 is considered challenging but achievable. However, the longer-term position is much more concerning and further details are set out in Section 7.
9. Achieving reductions in spend of this scale requires a more fundamental consideration of services provided and how they are provided. Work is already underway to prepare options for addressing these challenges. In addition, the County Council, together with district and boroughs, the South East 7 group and the County Council Network will continue its proactive approach to lobbying Government to recognise the funding constraints and rising demand impacting on the sector. There is clear evidence of the need for increased Government funding across many services if the sector is going to remain financially sustainable and continue its vital support to resident and local communities.

### **Recommendations**

Cabinet is asked to:

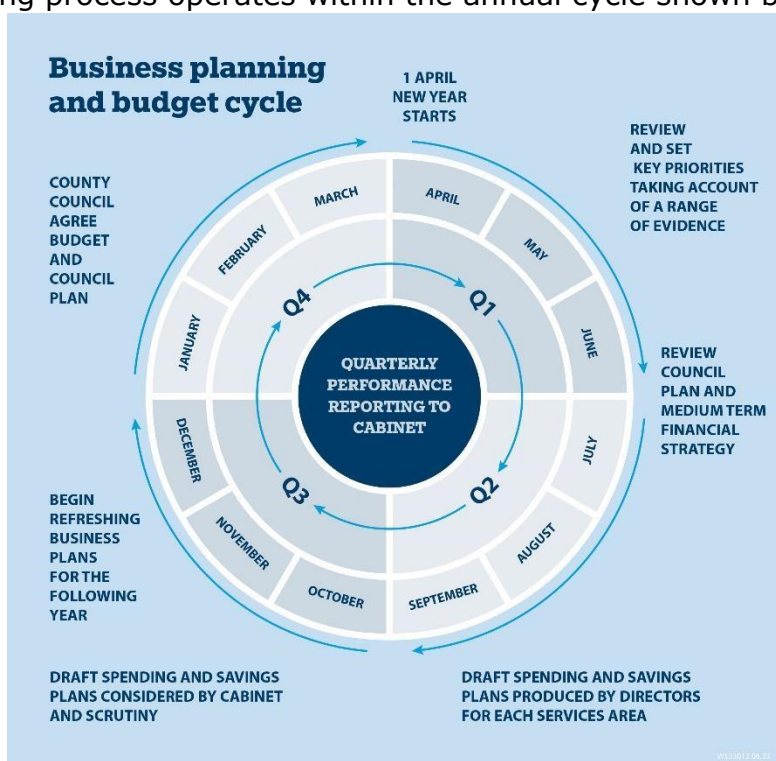
1. Agree that the overall approach to the Council Plan refresh and budget setting be prepared for the public engagement process set out in Section 13 of the report.
2. Note the risks and uncertainties referenced in Section 15 of the report and that these may further impact on the budget for 2024/25 and the Council's medium term financial forecast.
3. Note the timetable for the remainder of the budget process as set out in Section 11 of the report.
4. Continue its proactive collaborative approach to lobbying Government to recognise funding constraints and rising demand that is impacting many services and the impact on the financial resilience of the Local Government sector.



## Proposal

### 1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Council’s integrated business planning and budget process brings together business planning, financial planning and risk management. The process informs decision making to ensure focus on priority outcomes, making the best use of resources, tracking delivery and value for money. It enables considered choices in a changing environment and against resource and demand challenges and other uncertainties.
- 1.2 The Council is legally required to set a balanced budget each year. This report provides an update on the different elements of the budget, including budget pressures and how funding can be realigned to address these pressures.
- 1.3 The consequential budget adjustments for 2024/25 set out in this report are for consideration with a view to presenting them for public engagement in October and November 2023. Cabinet will consider the feedback on the proposals for the Council Plan and approach to budget setting before recommending the Council Plan and 2024/25 budget to County Council in February 2024.
- 1.4 This report relates to the financial position on the Council’s General Fund. An update on schools funding will be included in the full budget report to Cabinet in January 2024.
- 1.5 The Business Planning process operates within the annual cycle shown below:



- 1.6 At this stage of the cycle the County Council is bringing forward draft spending plans for consideration. In terms of the financial position, there remains much uncertainty in four main areas – Government reforms on the horizon, macro-economic conditions, demand pressures and future funding for Local Government. This makes forecasting costs and opportunities challenging but the Council is committed to longer term planning for financial sustainability. The

assumptions made throughout the report are based on the latest information and best estimates.

- 1.7 Government announced its decision in August 2023 to transfer functions from Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to upper tier authorities from April 2024. The Council will take on the Business Representation, Strategic Economic Planning and Growth Hub LEP functions. The Council has already taken on the Career Hub function from the LEP with the launch of the `West Sussex Careers Hub` on 1 September 2023.
- 1.8 As part of the Council Plan refresh, objectives will be updated to reflect the transferred LEP functions and continued economic instability and KPIs will be aligned to latest strategies and improvement plans. All targets will be reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and reflective of ambitions, capacity and resources, making relevant comparisons to other councils where possible.
- 1.9 The increasingly challenging operating environment, for example the market for children's services placements, funding constraints and rising demand, makes lobbying more important. The County Council will work with district and boroughs, local MPs, South East 7, County Council Network (CCN) and others and continue to collaborate with partners to ensure priorities are advocated at a local, regional and national level.

## **2 Draft Budget 2024/25**

- 2.1 The remainder of this report builds on the report that was presented to Cabinet in July 2023 on the County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and focuses on updates of the various elements that must be considered in developing the draft budget for 2024/25.

## **3. Current Financial Forecast**

- 3.1 The starting point of any preparations for the next year's budget is the current year financial position. In February 2023, the County Council set a balanced budget for 2023/24. The first monitoring of spend and forecast against this budget was reported to Cabinet on 12 September [Q1 Summary Report PRR](#) and showed an overspend of £18.2m on services, mainly on Children's Services and SEND but also underlying pressures within Adult Social Care and some other services. These have been reviewed in the context of identifying any which are expected to continue into 2024/25 and future years and a review of other assumptions underpinning the financial position has been undertaken.

## **4. Funding**

- 4.1 Setting a balanced budget each year means that expenditure must not exceed levels of funding. A full analysis of the different sources of funding available to the County Council was set out in the report to Cabinet in July 2023 [Sources of Funding](#) and these largely remain unchanged. In 2024/25, total funding is estimated at £730m.
- 4.2 The next fiscal update from Government (Autumn Statement) has been announced for 22 November 2023 but as in previous years, this is expected to

be high level and any implications for Local Government will not be known until the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25 is published the week commencing 18 December 2023.

- 4.3 The policy paper published as part of the 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2022 gave an indication on Government funding levels for 2024/25 and the Council Tax thresholds (maximum levels of increase) and the budget for 2024/25 is being prepared on that basis.
- 4.4 Government funding and retained business rates are estimated at £104m and general non-service specific grants of £52m.
- 4.5 The Government guidance on the Business Rates Pool has been published and discussions are currently underway between the County Council and the district and boroughs on the arrangements for the pool in 2024/25. Expressions of interest had to be submitted to Government by 10 October 2023 and details will be published as part of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2023.
- 4.6 Council Tax remains a key source of funding (around 80%). The referendum threshold for 2024/25 is 3% plus an additional precept of 2% for those authorities with adult social care responsibilities. Every 1% increase equates to approximately £5.7m of additional income to support service pressures. Although referendum thresholds are set by Government, any increases in Council Tax remains a decision for County Council and will be considered in February 2024. From 2025/26, the referendum threshold is assumed to be 1.99% and no adult social care precept.
- 4.7 The proposed increase in fees and charges for 2024/25 is 8.1% in line with the estimates of the Retail Price Index as at September 2023. Work is underway to review all fees and charges against this assumption and details will be available for scrutiny in January 2024 before Cabinet makes its recommendation to full Council as part of agreeing the 2024/25 budget in February 2024.

## **5. Spending Pressures**

- 5.1 Each year the budget will include extra provision for pressures that are known and can be quantified. These are largely focussed around increases in service demands, people living longer and with increasing complexity of need, also the increase in the cost of service provision. These were set out in detail in the report to Cabinet in July 2023 [Spending Pressures](#).
- 5.2 Over the summer these have been subject to review based on the latest evidence and information. Many of the known pressures for next year have increased and new pressures have emerged as a result of this exercise, which is now estimated as £52.5m in total, including £3.1m of one off spending. All known pressures must be funded to ensure that the budget set for 2024/25 is robust and achievable.
- 5.3 Details of the specific service pressures for 2024/25 that have been identified are summarised in Table 1 and set out in full in Appendix A. These exclude increased costs from inflation which are outlined separately later in the report.

**Table 1 Service Pressures**

	<b>Ongoing Pressures £'m</b>	<b>One off £'m</b>	<b>2024/25 Total £'m</b>
Adults Services	12.3	-	12.3
Children and Young People, Learning and Skills	30.6	0.6	31.2
Community Support, Fire and Rescue	0.6	-	0.6
Environment and Climate Change	0.1	0.5	0.6
Finance and Property	0.4	2.0	2.4
Highways and Transport	5.0	-	5.0
Support Services and Economic Development	0.4	-	0.4
<b>Total Pressures</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>52.5</b>

5.4 In addition, there are some budget pressures which are more Council wide.

**Pay Inflation**

5.5 The County Council’s staffing costs for delivering its services are around £270m each year. Financial Plans for 2024/25 currently assume £13.8m for pay increases based on a 4% increase and a provision for 2023/24 based on the latest pay offer. However, pay increases for 2023/24 remain subject to negotiations with the trade unions and therefore 2024/25 pay increases are also unconfirmed at this stage.

**Price Inflation**

5.6 The rate at which prices are rising remained at 6.7% in the year to September, down from 7.9% in June. The Bank of England has a target to keep inflation at 2%, but the current rate is still well above that and will remain so for some time. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), which assesses the government’s economic plans, previously predicted inflation would fall back to 2.9% by the end of the year. The Bank of England has predicted inflation will drop to 5% by the end of 2023. The County Council uses the forecasts by the OBR when setting its budget and inflation forecasts and the impact on next year’s budget will be reviewed when an update is published as part of the Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023.

5.7 Inflation levels are a key driver for the cost of services. The County Council’s spend with third party organisations is around £531m, either through contracts, grants, or other commissioning arrangements. Many of these will be subject to inflation increases and linked to different indices, including CPI, RPI and industry specific indices.

5.8 In total, the current assumption is that an additional £23.0m will be needed for 2024/25 in relation to price inflation increases across all services. However, this will remain under close review over the coming months.

## 6. The Overall Financial Position

- 6.1 The current Council Plan 2021 to 2025 is subject to its annual review and details will be presented to Cabinet in January 2024 alongside the draft budget for 2024/25 which will be used to deliver the County Council's priorities. The expectation is that the Council's priorities and the outcomes it seeks for residents and communities will remain largely unchanged.
- 6.2 Financial plans already include £6.7m of reductions in 2024/25 that were agreed at County Council in February 2023 [Budget Report 2023/24](#).
- 6.3 Taking into account the information in the sections above, the Council is expected to spend approximately £1.9bn (net of income £775m), including schools to deliver its services and respond to these budget pressures.
- 6.4 This means there is a budget gap of £44.9m before any Council Tax increase or £16.2m if the full 4.99% increase in Council Tax is introduced.

**Table 2 – Financial Position 2024/25**

	<b>2024/25 £'m</b>
<b>Funding</b>	
Council Tax income – based on 0% increase	573.9
Government Funding - Settlement Funding Assessment/ Business rates	104.3
Non-Service Specific Government Grants	51.6
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>729.8</b>
<b>Opening Expenditure</b>	<b>708.8</b>
Previously Approved Savings	(6.7)
Inflation Pressures	36.8
Service Pressures	52.5
Contribution from Reserves	(8.1)
Other corporate changes	(8.6)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>774.7</b>
<b>Budget Gap (before Council Tax increases)</b>	<b>44.9</b>
<b>Additional income from 4.99% Council Tax increase</b>	<b>28.7</b>
<b>Budget gap after Council Tax of 4.99%</b>	<b>16.2</b>

- 6.5 A balanced budget must be set each year and over the summer, all services have been considering opportunities to re-align the funding available to council priorities. This has resulted in budget reductions in some areas, through reduction in costs, opportunities to reduce demand or increasing income levels.
- 6.6 New budget reductions are planned across all services totalling £11.8m for 2024/25 and £4.5m for 2025/26. Full details of the proposals are set out in Appendix B by Cabinet Member portfolio and summarised in Table 3.

**Table 3 – Budget Reductions**

<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	<b>2024/25 £'m</b>	<b>2025/26 £'m</b>
Adults Services	3.9	0.5
Children and Young People, Learning and Skills	4.4	3.0
Community Support, Fire and Rescue	0.2	-
Environment and Climate Change	0.2	0.2
Finance and Property	0.3	-
Highways and Transport	1.6	0.7
Support Services and Economic Development	1.2	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>4.5</b>

- 6.7 Cabinet is asked to agree for the current Council Plan priorities and the proposed budget approach to be presented for public and partner engagement in line with the approach set out in Section 13.
- 6.8 If all the budget proposals are supported following consultation and engagement, there remains a budget shortfall of between £33.1m and £4.4m depending on the level of Council Tax increase as set out in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Forecast Budget Shortfall (after proposed new reductions)**

	<b>2024/25 £'m</b>
<b>Budget Gap (before Council Tax increases)</b>	<b>44.9</b>
Proposed Budget Reductions	(11.8)
<b>Budget Gap (before Council Tax increases and after proposed budget reductions)</b>	<b>33.1</b>
<b>Estimated income from max Council Tax increase</b>	<b>(28.7)</b>
<b>Budget Gap (after Council Tax increases and after proposed budget reductions)</b>	<b>4.4</b>

## **7 Approach to Longer Term - 2025/26 Onwards**

- 7.1 Despite the level of uncertainty in economic conditions and Government funding, which are not yet confirmed, officers are confident that a balanced budget can be set for 2024/25.
- 7.2 Table 5 shows the five year financial position and for 2025/26 to 2028/29, there remains a budget shortfall of between £140m and £87m depending on the level of Council Tax increase. With so many risks and uncertainties there is a high probability the shortfall in funding to continue the delivery of all services could be higher and full details were set out in the report to Cabinet in July 2023 [Risks and Uncertainties](#).
- 7.3 Budget reductions through general efficiencies alone will not be sufficient to meet this financial challenge and will require a more fundamental review of services. Every service must provide good value for money for residents, be cost effective and contribute to Council Plan priorities. Work has commenced and savings of £4.5m have been identified for 2025/26 as set out in Table 3 but further work is required over the next six months to identify savings of the scale needed to balance for 2025/26.

- 7.4 Going forward into 2025/26, the desire is to move away from one year budget setting to planning the finances over the longer term which is critical to maintain the good financial resilience and sustainability of the County Council.
- 7.5 The County Council will continue to lobby Government to recognise the growing demand pressures on Local Government but at this stage it is not anticipated that there will be any additional funding. Therefore, balancing the budget over the next five years will require the County Council to consider the services it provides and how they are provided.
- 7.6 The report to Cabinet in July 2023 gave an indication on the areas of focus for delivering longer term changes and opportunities are being considered, of which £4.5m has been identified to date. It is likely that further prioritisation of limited financial resources will be needed to ensure statutory responsibilities for supporting the most vulnerable continue to be met. A further update on progress will be provided to Cabinet in January 2024 alongside the draft 2024/25 budget.

**Table 5 – Five Year Financial Position 2024/25 to 2028/29**

	<b>2024/25 £'m</b>	<b>2025/26 £'m</b>	<b>2026/27 £'m</b>	<b>2027/28 £'m</b>	<b>2028/29 £'m</b>
<b>Funding</b>					
Council Tax - based on 0%	573.9	580.8	587.8	594.8	602.0
SFA / Business rates	104.3	106.3	106.3	106.3	106.3
Non-Portfolio Specific Grants	51.6	48.4	48.4	48.4	48.4
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>729.8</b>	<b>735.5</b>	<b>742.5</b>	<b>749.5</b>	<b>756.7</b>
<b>Opening Expenditure</b>	708.8	729.8	735.5	742.5	749.5
Previously Approved Savings	(6.7)	-	-	-	-
Inflation Pressures	36.8	13.6	15.5	11.2	15.7
Service Pressures	52.5	22.4	17.1	22.8	22.8
Contribution from Reserves	(8.1)				
Other corporate changes	(8.6)	9.4	11.7	4.9	4.9
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>774.7</b>	<b>775.2</b>	<b>779.8</b>	<b>781.4</b>	<b>792.9</b>
<b>Budget Shortfall (before any reductions)</b>	<b>44.9</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>36.2</b>
New reductions proposed	(11.8)	(4.5)	-	-	-
<b>Budget Shortfall (after proposed reductions)</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>36.2</b>
<b>Cumulative Budget Shortfall (after proposed budget reductions)</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>68.3</b>	<b>105.6</b>	<b>137.5</b>	<b>173.7</b>
<b>Estimated income from max Council Tax Increase</b>	<b>(28.7)</b>	<b>(12.5)</b>	<b>(13.0)</b>	<b>(13.6)</b>	<b>(14.1)</b>
<b>Shortfall after Council Tax increase</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>22.1</b>
<b>Cumulative Budget shortfall</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>91.8</b>



## 8 Capital Programme

- 8.1 An annual review of the capital programme has been underway to ensure that all schemes within the programme are aligned to Council Plan priorities and that the timescales for delivery and the estimated costs are accurately reflected within the five year programme. Consideration has also been given to any new capital investment that will be required. The proposed changes to the programme are detailed in table 6 below and feedback from the Scrutiny Committees in November 2023 will be considered before the final Capital Programme is presented to Cabinet in January 2024 and recommended to full County Council in February 2024.
- 8.2 The changes include new schemes proposed to be added to the programme and additional cost of existing schemes, additional funding required for a further year of the block allocations and schemes proposed to be moved to the pre-pipeline. Schemes in the pre-pipeline will not have committed funding and will not be part of the Capital Programme that will be agreed in February 2024. Further consideration will be given as part of future budget setting processes.

**Table 6: Proposed changes to the Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29**

	<b>£m</b>
<b>Scheme proposed to be moved to pre-pipeline:</b>	
Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Programme*	-1.9
Faygate - Leachate Treatment*	-0.8
Reduction in Invest to Save budget	-19.9
Reduction in Capital Improvements Programme	-7.8
<b>Total Schemes proposed to be moved to pre-pipeline</b>	<b>-30.4</b>
<b>Future Years to be added (2028/29):</b>	
Fire and Rescue Equipment	0.4
Fleet	3.5
Extensions and adaptations to foster carer properties	0.2
Gypsy and Travellers Improvements Programme	0.3
Staff Capitalisation - Property	1.2
Structural Maintenance	2.3
Staff Capitalisation - Highways	1.9
Investment in Technology	2.3
<b>Total Future Years to be added (2028/29)</b>	<b>12.1</b>
<b>Additions to the five-year Programme:</b>	
Additional funds for protecting the environment	10.0
Additional Highways Maintenance	20.0
Repairs and maintenance of the operational estate	6.8
Inflight project with additional costs to complete (A29 Phase 1)	14.2
<b>Total Additions to the Programme</b>	<b>51.0</b>
<b>Total value of changes / funding shortfall</b>	<b>32.7</b>

\*Pre-pipeline schemes are not part of the approved capital programme and are not funded

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- 8.3 The above proposed changes show an additional £32.7m would be required over the next five years. Options for funding this increase are currently being considered, including sales of surplus assets, new external funding or borrowing. A review of all schemes in the programme is currently underway to ensure that the phasing reflects the current delivery timescales. The full capital programme and funding will be presented to Cabinet in January 2024 following review by Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee. Additional borrowing would have an impact on the revenue budget and every £10m of borrowing equates to approximately £600,000 in additional borrowing costs. The latest profiling suggests that borrowing would not be required until at least 2025/26.
- 8.4 The full current Capital Programme and Approved pipeline that was agreed by County Council in February 2023 is set out in Appendix C.

## **9 Schools Funding**

- 9.1 The underlying pressure on the General Fund is driven by the increase in number of pupils with an EHCP and the statutory duty to provide transport for pupils who are eligible. Approximately one third of pupils with an EHCP require transport to and from school.
- 9.2 To help meet this increased demand the County Council has expanded the use of its internal fleet, but despite this expansion the average daily cost of providing external taxis and minibuses still increased from £64,000 per school day in April 2022 to an average of £80,000. With further annual growth in SEND passenger numbers expected, the daily cost of providing external taxis and minibuses is expected to increase to over £90,000 per school day by March 2024.

## **10 Reserves Strategy**

- 10.1 Reserves are an important part of the Council's approach to financial planning and a full update was included in the report to Cabinet in July 2023 together with a five year forecast. Reserves and contingency provide a mitigation for the many uncertainties and risks facing the Council and must be maintained at a prudent level and are a key indicator of strong financial standing and resilience.
- 10.2 Reserves can be used in year for one off unforeseen expenditure, for exceptional pressures or for invest to save opportunities but any use will need to be replenished over the medium term to maintain the County Council's financial resilience. With the exception of the £3.1m to fund the one off pressures set out in Table 1 and the £5m additional investment into highways maintenance, there are no plans to use reserves to balance the budget for 2024/25 or over the medium term. The annual review of reserves is underway and an update will be reported to Cabinet in January 2024 when the Section 151 Officer will report on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves.

## **11. Budget Timetable**

- 11.1 The process for setting the 2024/25 budget has commenced as set out in this report. The key dates between October 2023 and February 2024 when the draft

budget, capital programme, capital strategy and treasury management strategy will be agreed by full Council is set out in Table 7.

**Table 7 – Budget Timetable**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>What</b>
17 Oct 23	Public Cabinet	Update on Capital Programme, Budget gap/savings including discussion on priorities and Council Plan
<b>18 Oct 23</b>	<b>Member Day</b>	<b>Council Plan and Budget Proposals (Revenue and Capital)</b>
November 23	Scrutiny Committees	Council Plan and Budget Proposals (Revenue and Capital)
Early December 23	Stakeholder Engagement	Council Plan and Budget (Revenue and Capital) stakeholder consultation
December 23	DHLUC	Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25 published
<b>19 Jan 24</b>	<b>Member Day</b>	<b>Council Plan and Budget Proposals (Revenue and Capital)</b>
24 Jan 24	PFSC	Review draft Council Plan and Budget Proposals (Revenue and Capital). Comments to feed into 30 January Cabinet meeting.
30 Jan 24	Public Cabinet	Council Plan and Budget Papers. Verbal feedback from all Scrutiny Committee Chairmen.
<b>16 Feb 24</b>	<b>County Council</b>	<b>To approve Council Plan and Budget 2024/25 and the updated MTFS (2024/25 to 28/29)</b>

## **12 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)**

12.1 An options analysis was undertaken as part of the overall financial planning approach and the proposals as set out this report.

## **13 Consultation, engagement and advice**

13.1 The MTFS, annual budget and Capital Programme provide the financial framework for delivering the Council Plan and provides assurance that spending plans are aligned to the Council's priorities which are underpinned by a cross cutting theme of tackling climate change:

- Keeping People Safe in Vulnerable Situations
- A Sustainable and Prosperous Economy
- Helping People and Communities Fulfil their Potential
- Making Best Use of Resources

13.2 Best Value is a statutory duty placed on all local authorities to demonstrate how resources are used to greatest effect and efficiency and how the authority ensures it achieves continuous improvement in service delivery and its systems of control accountability and corporate governance.

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- 13.3 The Government plans new statutory guidance on Best Value Standards and Intervention. The Council has taken the opportunity to review its approach to engagement and consultation to ensure it meets the proposed guidance.
- 13.4 The draft guidance says: *"Best value authorities ... are also required to consult on the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the Best Value Duty. The annual process of setting the authority's budget, the corporate plan and the medium-term financial plan provides a key opportunity to conduct such consultation. This is the stage at which consultation will best assist the authority in deciding how to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement."*
- 13.5 The draft guidance is not prescriptive on how consultation and engagement should be undertaken, other than to suggest it should be inclusive, open and fair – and so there is significant discretion to tailor the approach to meet local circumstances. The proposal for West Sussex is:
- To provide information for the context of budget planning including demand pressures; inflationary pressures; population growth and aging; what money is currently spent on and where it is raised from.
  - A high-level summary of the financial position and planned approach for balancing the budget.
  - A set of high level questions about the relevant priority respondents place on council services and approach to balancing the budget.
  - Invite basic information about the respondent to help analyse the responses across the community.
- 13.6 In order to be able to discharge its continuing commitment to best value and its commitment to transparency in its work for the community of West Sussex it is proposed that the Council designs and runs this public consultation online during October/November 2023. The responses will feed into Cabinet and County Council decisions on the refreshed Council Plan and budget in early 2024.
- 13.7 All Scrutiny Committees during November will have the opportunity to review their relevant budget pressures and proposed budget reductions as set out in the appendices of this report. There will also be an opportunity to review any changes in the Capital Programme. The feedback will be considered by Cabinet in preparing the final draft budget and capital programme for 2024/25 that will be presented to County Council for approval in February 2024. Feedback from the public consultation exercise will also be available for the January meeting of Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee.
- 13.8 In January 2023 the Council ran a stakeholder session on the refresh of the Council Plan and the budget. Feedback from partners was that the session was welcomed because it helped them understand the context in which the County Council was operating, and the rationale for spending choices. Given this positive feedback, the Council will also propose to run a similar stakeholder engagement session early in December.
- 13.9 Should there be any proposals which, if they are to proceed, will require additional consultation, further consideration and specific consultation plans will

be devised to enable proper consideration of feedback before proposals are to be determined or implemented.

- 13.10 Should there be any proposals which will have an impact on particular staff groups, further consideration to staff engagement and consultation will be undertaken before proposals can finally be determined or moved into operational delivery. Engagement with relevant trade unions will also be needed in these cases.
- 13.11 All proposals will need to be considered in the broader context of the Council's statutory obligations, notably ensuring that decision-makers are able to consider equality impact assessments to ensure the public sector equality duty is discharged. All proposals will be tested against the Council's policy and procedures for equality impact and this will identify proposals requiring more focused equality impact assessments to inform final decisions.

## **14 Financial Implications**

- 14.1 The financial implications are as set out throughout the report.

## **15 Risk implications and mitigations**

- 15.1 Full details of the County Council's financial risks were reported in the Council Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy report in July 2023 and remain largely unchanged. [Risks and Uncertainties](#)

## **16 Policy alignment and compliance**

- 16.1 The report sets out the approach for updating the Council Plan and for setting a balanced budget for 2024/25 in accordance with the County Council's statutory duty.

**Taryn Eves**  
**Director of Finance & Support Services**

**Tony Kershaw**  
**Director of Law and Assurance**

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## **Appendices**

Appendix A 2024-25 Forecast Budget Pressures

Appendix B Proposals for budget reductions in 2024-25 and 2025-26

Appendix C Current Approved Capital Programme

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This appendix sets out details of the known service spending pressures that can be quantified.

Cabinet Portfolio	Ongoing	One off	Description	Scrutiny Committee
	£'000s	£'000s		
<b>Community Support, Fire and Rescue</b>				
Fleet Supplies	100		The cost of supplies and maintenance of vehicles is increasing. This pressure is being managed through careful consideration of expenditure and the establishment of a Fleet Steering Group to support the prioritisation of expenditure and vehicle replacement to mitigate the increased costs.	FRSSC
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>		

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This appendix sets out details of the budgets which will be reduced to realign funding to council priorities and known pressures. Shows the proposals relating to the scrutiny committee, the full list of budget proposals are included within the 17th October Public Cabinet report.

Cabinet Portfolio	Current Budget £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	Total £'000	Type of saving	Description	Director and Service Area	Consultation/EQIA required?	Reason and proposed approach
<b>Community Support, Fire and Rescue</b>									
Fire and Rescue - Additional income from Horsham Training Centre	N/A	150		150	Income generation	<p>The new fire and rescue service training centre in Horsham can be utilised to generate income by providing external training opportunities for neighbouring services and across the country. A syllabus and prospectus is being prepared and marketing opportunities will be developed.</p> <p>The key risks are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Demand for the new facilities is lower than expected as training requirements for other FRS may be more than available capacity, work is ongoing to look at a more flexible offer to support other services around their existing arrangements.</li> <li>2) Capacity if not sufficient to meet the demand of external requirements - work is being undertaken in the planning of training and use of the facilities to understand the capacity available so that this is maximised.</li> <li>3) Costs incurred cannot be fully covered - there is a known level of fixed and variable cost outlaid to enable the commercial use of the facility. This has been considered and factored into the cost of hire to ensure this is understood.</li> </ol>	Chief Fire Officer Service area: Fire and Rescue Service	Consultation and EQIA not required.	no impact on service users or residents.
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>150</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150</b>					

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**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 - 2027/28**

2022/23 £000	CAPITAL PROGRAMME (Expenditure)	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Subsequent £000	Total £000
127	Adults Services	0	945	955	300	0	0	2,200
1,268	Children and Young People	5,401	3,784	1,160	1,660	160	0	12,165
10,266	Community Support Fire and Rescue	9,089	7,276	10,194	5,612	3,950	0	36,121
5,565	Environment and Climate Change	12,182	23,859	27,490	25,445	7,602	0	96,578
8,579	Finance and Property	7,427	27,562	29,057	19,727	30,093	0	113,866
48,507	Highways and Transport	48,202	54,313	49,754	33,748	26,307	33,215	245,539
7,093	Leader	2,683	1,989	2,937	4,687	5,000	0	17,296
36,960	Learning and Skills	34,051	41,941	58,328	29,529	29,361	0	193,210
12,155	Support Services and Economic Development	5,848	12,786	8,050	2,238	1,350	0	30,272
<b>130,520</b>	<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>	<b>124,883</b>	<b>174,455</b>	<b>187,925</b>	<b>122,946</b>	<b>103,823</b>	<b>33,215</b>	<b>747,247</b>

2022/23 £000	FINANCING	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Subsequent £000	Total £000
9,000	Capital Receipts	8,000	5,000	1,000	6,500	1,000	0	21,500
8,951	External Contributions including S106	6,461	8,849	23,680	19,170	4,050	33,215	95,425
9,520	Ringfenced Government Grant	23,632	7,136	10,500	10,180	6,964	0	58,412
57,019	Non-Ringfenced Government Grant	45,089	22,709	22,312	21,936	21,577	0	133,623
2,297	Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay	532	1,532	1,532	3,032	532	0	7,160
733	Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay – Business Rates Pilot	590	5,344	5,550	970	350	0	12,804
34,481	Core Borrowing	28,056	101,224	101,788	50,405	56,148	0	337,621
8,519	Economic Development Borrowing	12,523	22,661	21,563	10,753	13,202	0	80,702
<b>130,520</b>	<b>TOTAL PROGRAMME</b>	<b>124,883</b>	<b>174,455</b>	<b>187,925</b>	<b>122,946</b>	<b>103,823</b>	<b>33,215</b>	<b>747,247</b>

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24**

FINANCED FROM	£000	£000	%
<b>External Sources</b>			
<b>Ringfenced Government Grant</b>			
Environment and Climate Change	159		
Finance and Property	300		
Highways and Transport	13,442		
Learning and Skills	9,431		
Support Services and Economic Development	300		
		23,632	18.92%
<b>Non-Ringfenced Government Grant</b>	45,089		
		45,089	36.10%
<b>External Contributions</b>			
Highways and Transport	519		
Learning and Skills	5,942		
		6,461	5.17%
<b>Total External Sources</b>		75,182	60.20%
<b>Corporate Funding</b>			
- Capital Receipts	8,000		
- Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay	532		
- Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay – Business Rates Pilot	590		
- Borrowing	40,579		
<b>Total Corporate Funding</b>		49,701	39.80%
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>124,883</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Community Support, Fire and Rescue**

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 to 2027/28**

Project	Approved Budget Profiled							
	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Subsequent £000	Total £000
<b>In-Flight Projects</b>								
Fleet	700	1,500	800	1,542	0	0	0	<b>3,842</b>
Fire and Rescue Equipment	330	154	0	0	0	0	0	<b>154</b>
Live Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station	9,053	6,537	2,000	0	0	0	0	<b>8,537</b>
Worthing Community Hub	58	50	51	0	0	0	0	<b>101</b>
Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Programme	125	500	525	702	0	0	0	<b>1,727</b>
<b>Total In-Flight Approved Projects</b>	<b>10,266</b>	<b>8,741</b>	<b>3,376</b>	<b>2,244</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14,361</b>
<b>Proposed Projects*</b>								
Electric Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	<b>100</b>
Future Years Fire and Rescue Equipment	0	348	350	350	350	350	0	<b>1,748</b>
Future Years Fleet	0	0	2,300	5,350	4,612	3,500	0	<b>15,762</b>
Records Office	0	0	250	750	0	0	0	<b>1,000</b>
Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Programme	0	0	1,000	1,500	650	0	0	<b>3,150</b>
<b>Total Proposed Starts List</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>7,950</b>	<b>5,612</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21,760</b>
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMME</b>	<b>10,266</b>	<b>9,089</b>	<b>7,276</b>	<b>10,194</b>	<b>5,612</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36,121</b>
<b>Financing</b>	<b>2022/23 £000</b>	<b>2023/24 £000</b>	<b>2024/25 £000</b>	<b>2025/26 £000</b>	<b>2026/27 £000</b>	<b>2027/28 £000</b>	<b>Subsequent £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>
<b>Sources of Funding</b>								
Electric Vehicles Grant	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	<b>100</b>
Corporate Resources	10,266	9,089	7,276	10,194	5,612	3,850	0	<b>36,021</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>10,266</b>	<b>9,089</b>	<b>7,276</b>	<b>10,194</b>	<b>5,612</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36,121</b>

\* All projects approved subject to business case

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## Report to Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

**30 November 2023**

### Community Risk Management Plan Update

**Report by Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

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#### Summary

This report is to present a six-monthly update against the progress of our delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan 2022. This is a four-year plan and therefore activity has been planned across the four years according to resources and dependencies. The Community Risk Delivery Plan is overseen by the Chief Fire Officer, which includes all activity relating to our five Strategic Priorities over these four years. The five Strategic Objectives are set out below with their alignment to the corresponding WSCC Strategic Priorities:

- 1** Preventing fires and emergencies from happening  
*{Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations}*
- 2** Protecting people, firefighters, and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be.  
*{Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations & safe and prosperous economy}*
- 3** Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively  
*{Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations and helping people and communities to fulfil their potential}*
- 4** Have a safe and valued workforce.  
*{Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential}*
- 5** Making best use of resources  
*{Making the best use of resources}*

This report is the first report against progress of the Community Risk Management Plan and the areas of delivery over the last six months covering the period of April 2023 to September 2023.

#### Focus for Scrutiny

Scrutiny is asked to consider the CRMP progress through the last six months from April 2023 through to October 2023.

Key Lines of Enquiry:

(1) The progress made over the last six months relating to the five Strategic Objectives

(2) Identify any areas for consideration for future scrutiny or any areas to highlight to the Cabinet Member

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### 1 Background and context

- 1.1 Our CRMP sets out the fire and rescue service’s strategic priorities and the steps that the service will be taking to implement these new programmes of work to help ensure that West Sussex continues to be a safe place to live and work.
- 1.2 The plan went live in April 2022, and began its second year in April 2023 with a supporting progress report in the Statement of Assurance 2022/23 published in July 2023. This report is to show the progress against the five strategic priorities and associated projects and work packages within the six months since the statement of assurance.

### 2 Progress Overview

- 2.1 The start of the year was focussed on ensuring the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) governance was in place including the Community Risk Delivery Plan review and associated annual Service Plans updated.



**Figure 1 - CRMP Governance**

- 2.2 The CRMP is a four-year plan and through our six-monthly reports we will update against the projects that are in progress and the associated dependencies that support the prioritisation and mapping as part of the

Community Risk Delivery Plan. This report will also form part of the annual Statement of Assurance.

- 2.3 Across Q1 and Q2 there has been a focus on the people service plan and specifically the leadership development programme; the commissioning of a culture leadership programme and notably the opening of the new Platinum House Training Centre in Horsham.
- 2.4 This was alongside the continuing support and investigation into the significant fire at the Angel Inn in Midhurst through quarter one. There was an enforced Water ban from South East Water in July affecting some station's ability to train and utilise water on stations. A significant fire at the Windmill Harvester in Littlehampton, where the service was able to protect the surrounding buildings, such as the Windmill Entertainment Centre which includes a community theatre and cinema. During this time considerable progress has been made, despite the backdrop of being prepared to deliver a professional response to some notable incidents and organisational challenges.
- 2.5 We continue to horizon scan and assess future risks which for this quarter include the water ban and security of the new fire station before it has become operational has prompted us to initiate our Business Continuity procedures.
- 2.6 Looking forward to Quarter three and four we will be focussed on the completion of the projects that have commenced in these first two quarters such as Emergency Response Standards and Specialist Capability Review whilst ensuring we continue with the people service plan including leadership programme modules on managing wellbeing, effective performance & development.
- 2.7 This period also notable saw the commencement of our response to the spotlight report including some prioritised activity such as implementation of Enhanced DBS checks, 360-degree feedback, and an Independent Confidential Reporting line.

### **3 Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening.**

#### **(a) *Safe and Well Visits and Referrals***

***CRMP References:*** *Develop our capacity, through our frontline staff, volunteers, and the frontline staff of partner agencies. [CRMP Objective 1.2] Prioritise those who have the highest risk. [CRMP Objective 1.3]*

- 3.1 In Quarter 1 we carried out 1298 Safe and Well Visits (SWVs) and 342 home safety interventions which was our strongest performance in quarter 1 for over four years. In quarter 2 we completed 1,324 Safe and Well Visits (SWVs) and 324 home safety interventions. At the end of quarter two last year, we had completed 2100 SWVs and have completed 522 more during the same period this year, a total of 2622 visits and 666 interventions. We are on track to meet the target of 5,000 SWVs this year.
- 3.2 We continue to support requests for Safe and Well Visits through our partnerships and through our local risk management plans. We use data to target those who are most at risk of being injured or dying in a fire.

- 3.3 Frontline crews continue to increase in their delivery of safe and well visits, and they are now trained to deliver *high risk* safe and well visits. Further work has been carried out with crews to increase productivity and capitalise on this wider resource base. This work includes a dedicated training session for all crews at Platinum House as part of their ongoing maintenance of knowledge, implementation of the National Definition of Risk to help better target community engagement, as well as improved performance management and reporting. We have also implemented a robust quality assurance framework to ensure that safe and well visits are delivered consistently to a high standard.
- 3.4 We have recruited and provided our volunteers with additional training to enable them to undertake a broader range of prevention work and support crews with local risk reduction activity.
- 3.5 Promotion of safe and well visits through our health and social care partners continues as we support them in developing their staff to recognise and respond to fire risk. We recognise that making every contact counts and work with our partners to have a shared understanding of risk. We are developing referral pathways with GP practices to ensure that the most vulnerable are identified as early as possible and referred to us.
- 3.6 One of our areas of focus is developing our partnerships with health, housing, and social care colleagues as well as engagement with Public Health to unlock further opportunities and collaborative approaches.
- 3.7 Our Rural Engagement Officer has now been substantiated and has successfully started to support our vulnerable customers in our outlying rural communities where we do not have full time stations. This role has been extremely well received by individuals, businesses, and partner agencies.
- 3.8 Crews use a range of data to drive and target prevention activity to areas where our most vulnerable residents live, and we make the most of every opportunity to deliver focused community safety activities following incidents at residential properties with any incident that involves a serious fire or injuries attracting a full review by the group manager where all the recommendations are collated to inform future LRMP activity.
- 3.9 We take a risk-based approach to our prevention work, through our triage process we identify those with the highest level of risk to ensure that they receive the most immediate service, usually by our specialist staff.

(a) ***Customer and community focus with our Prevention work***

***CRMP Reference:*** Place the public and communities at the center of our activities. [CRMP Objective 1.1]

- 3.10 The focus on the public and communities is reflected in our Safeguarding and Safe and Well Visit policies and in our newest iteration of the second year of this CRMP's Local Risk Management Plans for 2023/24. This continues to ensure that the work we do is tailored to the risks that are specific to that local community.



- 3.11 Work has been undertaken over these quarters to engage with the Adult Service Safeguarding Board and to continue to advance the work to date in line with some of the learnings from previous safeguarding reviews.
- 3.12 We are working to make it easier for the community to contact us and provide feedback. We have engaged with the county council to ensure that enquiries are dealt with efficiently and passed over to the appropriate team. We are also developing new pathways for customers to provide feedback after a safe and well visit to ensure that their voice is heard in future improvement work.

**(b) Fire Safety Education and Programmes**

***CRMP Reference:** Provide school children with fire safety education and deliver programmes so children and young people can make safer decisions and fulfil their potential. [CRMP Objective 1.4]*

- 3.13 We continue the delivery of our new targeted programmes for children and young people, GRIT, SPARK and IGNITE.
- 3.14 Twelve young people aged 16 – 23 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have successfully completed the latest GRIT course run in June 2023.
- 3.15 The course aims to create a positive experience to inspire young people and give them the opportunity to learn a range of skills and grow in confidence. It focuses on building personal resilience, healthy relationships, and stronger communities, as well as improving physical and mental health.
- 3.16 Three SPARK courses have been completed over the summer and future courses are planned over the Christmas and Easter holidays. The students spend five days with the service's Targeted Education team and learn a range of skills to help spark an interest in a future career as a firefighter, such as putting up ladders, squirting water from hoses and watching a demonstration of a car roof removal.
- 3.17 The course also prepares the students for adult life by promoting self-care and resilience through mindfulness exercises and learning about the nutritional value of certain foods and drinks.

**(c) Partnership working**

***CRMP Reference:** Strengthen and grow our partnerships, working together to keep the individuals and communities safer. [CRMP Objective 1.5]*

- 3.18 We continue to develop our multi agency working, with the prevention team being selected as finalists at the annual NFCC awards. We continue to chair the Safe and Habitable Homes Forum which promotes safe housing as the foundation for a safe person. The Fire Safety Development Group continues to be well attended and enables the service to embed the importance of fire safety knowledge within the working practices of partner agencies. Our Rural Engagement Officer continues to develop and strengthen links with a the seldom heard rural community to promote fire safety and encourage two way communication.

(d) **Targeted Community Safety**

**CRMP Reference:** *Deliver targeted community safety campaigns to address the risks identified. [CRMP Objective 1.6]*

- 3.19 Our Local Risk Management Plans for this year have been co-designed with crews and supports the local risk data, allowing safety campaigns to be delivered by crews.
- 3.20 The data relating to accidental dwelling fires has been incorporated into the Local Risk Management Plans to enable operational crews target their local risk.
- 3.21 This means that local initiatives and community safety activity will be delivered to reflect the relevant trends and target the most vulnerable people, in many cases cooking, smoking and electrical safety will feature, and locations targeted will use the data supplied by Adult's Social Care.
- 3.22 Crews, Prevention and Protection staff jointly deliver events where there are cross cutting building, person, and firefighting risk issues for example in high rise residential buildings where we are working to address non-compliance with fire safety legislation.

**4 Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters, and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be.**

(a) **Fire Safety (England) Regulations Digital Solution**

**CRMP Reference:** *Working effectively with other regulators and agencies to reduce risk. [CRMP Objective 2.5]*

- 4.1 The new Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 which came into force on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 have been introduced as an important step towards implementing the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report.
- 4.2 The regulations apply to all residential buildings that are made up of two or more domestic premises, including the residential parts of mixed-use buildings.
- 4.3 The specific actions that responsible persons need to take is dependent on the height of the building they are responsible for. However, those responsible for high-rise properties within the county must submit detailed external wall reports and building plans to West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service from 23 January.
- 4.4 This action has now been delivered and further information can be found on our website under [Fire safety advice for businesses](#).

(b) **Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) Reduction**

**CRMP Reference:** *Using a risk-based approach, to no longer automatically respond to fire alarm actuations at low-risk commercial properties. [CRMP Objective 2.7]*

- 4.5 Since the change in Policy in our Unwanted Fire signals last year we have seen a notable drop with only 133 in Quarter 1 of 23/24.
- 4.6 The number of Unwanted Fire Signals attended during Quarter 2 was 138. For the year to date there have been 271 compared to the 848 that were attended during the same period last year. This equates to a 68% reduction. For Quarter 2 of last year, we attended 419 calls compared to the 122 attended this year.
- 4.7 This approach has been a success and has allowed the service to ensure it is able to focus our activities upon addressing the behaviours of those repeat callers as well ensure the call challenge remains effective through our core measure 14.

**(c) *Upskilling staff with Fire Safety and Fire Investigation Qualifications***

*CRMP Reference: Develop and train our response crews with fire safety and fire investigation qualifications. [CRMP Objective 2.1]*

- 4.8 As of the end of Quarter 2, sixty of our wholetime Crew and Watch Managers have successfully completed the Tier 1 Fire Investigation training with our external specialist provider. This will give them better skills in determining the cause and development of smaller/ simpler fires.
- 4.9 This leaves us approximately seventy-five wholetime Crew and Watch Managers to complete the training, which we aim to complete by the end of Quarter 4.
- 4.10 Through Quarter 1 and 2 we have been using our ongoing trial that involves a limited number of our Retained Duty System personnel undertaking a formal national Fire Safety qualification, to gain an understanding of how we may then be able to provide the same to our Wholetime front line crews.

**5 Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively.**

**(a) *Day Crewed 7 days a week.***

*CRMP Reference: Enhance Day Crewed immediate response cover activity 7am - 7pm, 7 days a week. [CRMP Objective 3.7]*

- 5.1 With effect from 27 March 2023 Seven Day Immediate Response went live at Haywards Heath, Shoreham, and Burgess Hill, with all Day Crewing employees commencing their new individual underlying rota patterns under the Flexible Rostering Duty System. The go live was supported by a video update on the consultation page to update the communities on the successful [go live](#).
- 5.2 Watch Managers at each of the stations continue to work with Service Delivery to maintain and support crewing through the remainder of 2023.
- 5.3 There was a delay on the go live of the final station of East Grinstead due to the recruitment of the final Crew Manager. This was resolved in April 2023 and the station became the final one to complete the increased immediate response under a flexible rostering system.

- 5.4 The project will monitor the embedding of the new shift pattern and associated progress of the stations in the first year. This will include annual leave planning in January 2024 to ensure that the flexible rostering is working as expected and then we will close the project and objective 3.7.

**(b) Local Risk Management Plans**

*CRMP References: Develop and evolve our Local Risk Management Plans, working with key partners. [CRMP Objective 3.4] & An inclusive approach to local risk management [CRMP Objective 2.2] Deliver targeted community safety campaigns through LRMPs to address the risks identified. [CRMP Objective 1.6]*

- 5.5 Whilst this objective sits in the Response Service Plan these are fundamental to the delivery of the Service plans for Prevention and Protection as well.
- 5.6 The annual review of our local risk management plans has been undertaken and the reporting tool refined.
- 5.7 The review included feedback which had been sought from station staff on what analysis would support their activity and performance improvements. This was built into the data visualisation app to support managers and staff to own and understand their progress.
- 5.8 The development of the LRMPs for 2023/24 will be started in Quarter 3 to ensure they are in place for March 2023 ready for go live on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

**(c) Specialist Capability Review**

*CRMP References: A risk-based review of our specialist capability and asset requirements. [CRMP Objective 3.8]*

- 5.9 Whilst this objective sits in the Response Service Plan these are fundamental to the delivery of the Service plans for Asset, specifically in conjunction with the Strategic Risk Team.
- 5.10 In Quarter one there has been a focus on a report which defines what a specialist capability is within West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, identifying and assessing the risks not covered by sections 7 and 8 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. (7 Firefighting, 8 Road Traffic Collisions).
- 5.11 This will further be reviewed in quarter three with the development of a strategy and associated plans with recommendations around types of specialist capabilities and their locations, to ensure the response to these risks is made in an efficient and effect manner.

**(d) Joint Fire Control**

*CRMP References: We will continue to improve JFC arrangements through the use of technology [CRMP Objective 3.3]*

- 5.12 The introduction of the Dynamic Cover Tool (DCT) software has facilitated dynamic decision making and enhanced the efficient utilisation of resources contributing to meeting the services targeted response standards.

- 5.13 Fluctuating risks encountered in West Sussex and the evolving availability of resources, the DCT displays coverage in real time, aiding evidence-based decisions on resource deployment.
- 5.14 Recognising that well devised plans can be disrupted by major events, incidents or limited resource availability, the DCT becomes crucial during such periods, offering an immediate overview of coverage and the potential impact of resource location changes for response capabilities.

**(e) *Emergency Response Standards***

***CRMP References:** We will maintain our existing Emergency Response Standards (ERS) while we undertake a review based on the new national risk methodology which is currently being developed by the NFCC. When complete, we will consult with you if any changes to our ERS are proposed [CRMP Objective 3.10]*

- 5.15 Fire stations remain agile, responding to incidents within their communities and meeting the current emergency response standards and this is further supported through use of the aforementioned DCT.
- 5.16 The improved performance against these is a result of integrating professional standards and governance into our service delivery model.
- 5.17 Furthermore, with the more efficient approach this allows our crews more opportunity to regularly engage with communities through fire safety initiatives, venturing beyond the fire station to operate in high-risk areas, thereby ensuring a more rapid response capability.
- 5.18 This activity is documented through our Local Risk Management Plans.
- 5.19 The future Emergency Response Standards project will commence in Quarter three 2023/24 and will consider benchmarking of other Fire and rescue services as well as the national best practice to ensure that the standards adopted are sustainable and realistic for West Sussex and its risk.

**6 Strategic Priority 4: Have a safe and valued workforce.**

**(a) *Leadership and Cultural Change Programme***

***CRMP reference:** Strengthen leadership and people management skills [CRMP Objective 4.1]*

- 6.1 Work continues on our Leadership and Cultural Change Programme, to which all middle managers have access to, providing learning, information and guidance on the behaviours, expectations and practical skills required of our managers at all levels.
- 6.2 The modules that have now been completed include:
  - 6.2.1 Session 1 – Introduction (Q3 22/23)
  - 6.2.2 Session 2 – Coaching Skills (Q4 22/23)
  - 6.2.3 Session 3 - Inclusive Behaviours (Q4 22/23)
  - 6.2.4 Session 4 - Encouraging Conversations (Q1 23/24)
  - 6.2.5 Session 5 - Managing Grievances (Q1 23/24)
  - 6.2.6 Session 6 - Managing Absence (Q2 23/24)

- 6.3 The modules planned in the next quarter include:
- 6.3.1 Session 7 - Managing Wellbeing in the Workplace (Q3 23/24)
  - 6.3.2 Session 8 – Effective Performance & Development (Q4 23/24)
  - 6.3.3 Session 9 – Performance & Conduct (Q4 23/24)
- 6.4 Our leadership & culture programme is designed to support all our leaders in their development to role model our expected values and behaviours, to be confident and capable in their roles, and to enable them to create a positive, inclusive, supportive, and empowering work environment.
- 6.5 As a complimentary approach, external coaching consultancy 31ten have been commissioned to support our delivery of a team-based Cultural Development Programme to support the rapid development of our organisation’s culture towards everyone displaying the WSCC values, and the National Fire Chief’s Council (NFCC) Code of Ethics.
- 6.6 The programme must help identify what staff feel is or isn’t working well; develop the working culture within WSFRS to help support and deliver our vision, strategic aims, and objectives; and propose how this can continue beyond the programme.
- 6.7 The programme was started in Q1 of 2023/24 with our leadership team sharing some insights into the service and planning the programme to compliment and fit around the work already in progress.
- 6.8 This was followed in Q1 by the first sprint of coaching sessions with managers and teams. This has been received well by staff and we have had many teams engage with the process with some areas of focus and themes of staff feedback to support our continuous improvement.
- 6.9 This continued with the commencement of a period of planning for the following sprints and commencement of a second sprint in Q2.
- 6.10 It is planned that by Q3 we will have undertaken 62 team sessions and 16 manager sessions and that we have 4 manager session and 12 team sessions still to be undertaken in Q4.
- 6.11 It is foreseen that sprint 3 will be the final one, to commence in Q4 to ensure we have the final coaching sessions. These are planned with a delay built in to allow for absence and/or operational commitments. This has been agreed and will ensure we achieve value for money of the investment in the coaching to support our organisational development.
- 6.12 There has been an investment from Service Delivery in a complimentary activity of focus groups to further understand the organisational challenges from staff. The key themes from these groups, and the themes from the 31ten coaching have so far shown close alignment and will be developed further for reporting within the next Statement of Assurance for 2023/24.

**(b) Wellbeing**

*CRMP Reference: Support the health, wellbeing, and ways of working of our staff. [CRMP Objective 4.6]*

- 6.13 The organisation is now receiving feedback from colleagues through engagement actions such as aforementioned team coaching and focus

groups, which will support our understanding of related issues which affect wellbeing of staff and enable action plans to be drawn up to ensure our wellbeing approach remains appropriate and targeted.

- 6.14 We are committed to the wellbeing of all our staff and aim to provide a variety of effective avenues of support. One area that has been added this quarter includes the introduction of wellbeing dogs to further support staff.
- 6.15 We are partnering with the [National OK9 network](#) for this support. The Oscar Kilo wellbeing and trauma support dogs service was originally set up by the College of Policing to support all Police staff across all sectors. This has been expanded to Fire and Rescue Services and now one Ambulance Trust has also partnered with OK9.
- 6.16 A Wellbeing Support Dog has been a proven concept across blue light services. This model of delivering additional wellbeing support to colleagues shows the significance in staff wellbeing and the dogs are another resource that can be used alongside current provisions.
- 6.17 In parallel, work has commenced on development of a closer partnership with the National Fire Fighter's Charity to tailor our organisational wellbeing interventions to the wider sector.
- 6.18 The service is ensuring it reviews and adopts best practice from the NFCC Health and Wellbeing research findings including mapping wellbeing provision to career and life stage transition points through into the next reporting period in Quarter 3.
- 6.19 A reinvigoration of our previous work around 'Its OK not to be Ok' will commence in the following few quarters through our leadership programme to promote staff wellbeing further.
- 6.20 This will be complemented by the consideration of implementing an annual wellbeing survey using data to inform wellbeing provision and support mechanisms for WSFRS.
- 6.21 Work will continue into the next reporting period on application of HR analytics data to monitor trends and enable benchmarking across the sector as well as the promotion of the Health Assured app which replaces the Champion Health App.
- 6.22 There will also be consideration of a new initiative "Where can I turn to?" to signpost colleagues in understanding all the options for supporting their health & wellbeing.

### (c) **Equality Diversity & Inclusion**

***CRMP Reference:** Continue our work on creating a fair and equal place to work. [CRMP Objective 4.5]*

- 6.23 Work has commenced on the development of a strategic approach to Equality Diversity & Inclusion in alignment with WSCC Dignity & respect guidance as well as consideration of the wider sector challenges.

## Agenda Item 7

- 6.24 In March 2023 there was a report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, which was focussed on Values and culture in fire and rescue services and this spotlight report looks at the evidence from all 44 Fire and Rescue Services.
- 6.25 The first four recommendations asked that by 1 October 2023, Chief Fire Officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes as well as the supporting process and actions are in place to manage any reports.
- 6.26 An Independent Confidential Reporting service is recognised as a best practice means of enabling staff to speak up by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, National Fire Chiefs Council, and the Equality & Human Rights Commission.
- 6.27 The aim of the WSFRS Leadership & Culture Change Programme is to create an environment where leaders encourage, welcome, and respond to constructive feedback. As well as ensuring a culture of dignity and respect. A confidential reporting facility is an additional resource to facilitate that culture change.
- 6.28 Say So confidential reporting [line](#) was implemented on the 5 September 2023, which ensures staff have an opportunity to report confidentially. Since go live and during the period of this report there has been one report to date.
- 6.29 The spotlight report also had a significant number of other actions relating to the fire service and some which were required to be completed during Q1 and Q2.
- 6.30 This includes some immediate actions on areas such as Fire Standard Implementation, DBS checks and 360-degree feedback which are all being progressed within the service, and some may require additional funding to ensure we can appropriately address the recommendations.
- 6.31 There are also longer-term actions which will be embedded into the service plans for this year and some into the service plans for year three of the current CRMP.

## **7 Strategic Priority 5: Making best use of resources.**

### **(a) Horsham Fire Station**

***CRMP Reference:** Horsham, which is capable of supporting a more diverse workforce in the future, becoming a blueprint for the fire estate [CRMP Objective 5.1]*

- 7.1 The county council's Facilities Management team were handed the keys to the new Horsham Fire Station and Training Centre from Willmott Dixon as scheduled on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2023. This was a huge milestone for the project as the construction phase was now complete, and Facilities Management spent time configuring all the I.T and internal systems ready for the site to become operational in Summer 2023.



- 7.2 The new Live Fire Training Building (LFTB) at the new training centre was successfully commissioned in May 2023.
- 7.3 On 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023 the service bid farewell to Hurst Road site, which has served the service well over its 60 years in service. Former firefighters and their families, along with the crews currently serving at the station, gathered at Hurst Road to mark the end of an era as we prepare to move across to Platinum House.
- 7.4 Guests enjoyed reliving their memories of the station since it opened in the mid-1960s with a slideshow of old photos from the station's history. They also had the opportunity to walk around a selection of old WSFRS fire engines in the drill yard, long since retired from service.
- 7.5 This period also marked the commencement of the decommissioning of the Horley site.
- 7.6 On 25th June 2023 it was officially the first week of our Horsham Fire Station & Training centre with our first Annual Proud to Serve Conferences held on 26th and 28th June 2023. During which we had discussions around our Core Code of Ethics and how they influence the way we carry out our work across all areas of the service. We will continue to explore how our Core Code of Ethics applies to each of our areas of work as an ongoing practice.
- 7.7 First training courses began at Platinum House in early July, welcoming the first crews taking part in our official training courses at Platinum House. This was a significant moment for the service which will form part of the new three-day model to maintain operational competency.
- 7.8 Quarter 2 was our first 3 months of operating at Horsham Training Centre. This this time, Operational Training delivered 52 courses on site, for 328 staff, 87 of which were trained in the new Live Fire Building.
- 7.9 LION, who are the specialists in extraction and reburning of fire gases and who have built the extraction system for our new live fire training building which was then prepared to become operational in July 2023.

#### **(b) Contaminants**

*CRMP Reference: We will continue our work to minimise any risk from contaminants to our firefighters. [CRMP Objective 5.3]*

- 7.10 Work was undertaken on research & review of existing academic research and actions taken by other FRSs to minimise the risk to firefighters from contaminants in quarter one.
- 7.11 This will then inform the identification & prioritisation of further enhancements to operational procedures and training to reduce risks to firefighters from contaminants as we moved into quarter two.
- 7.12 A strategy will be developed in quarter three with the supporting processes to steer the continuous improvement to reduce the immediate risk of contaminants to firefighters.
- 7.13 Further considerations and work required beyond this to identify options for health screening of firefighters within WSF&RS in relation to cancers, analysis of blood, ultrasound scanning of all vital organs from contaminants and the support of behavioural health linked to depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

(c) **Estates Improvement Plan**

**CRMP References:** *Develop and deliver an Estates Improvement Plan. [CRMP Objective 5.1] Improve the layout of our buildings to support equality and diversity. [CRMP Objective 5.2]*

- 7.14 In January 2023 the Feasibility Reports for the four Phase 1 stations were delivered by Faithful & Gould (F&G). The Phase 1 Feasibility updated cost estimates based on the feasibility reports are in the region of £4.3m – £4.69m, which exceeds the £1.852m approved budget allocated to this Phase.
- 7.15 The project is currently working to generate the work order with F&G for the £1.85m to enable it to commence the improvement works at Bognor Regis and Selsey Fire Stations.
- 7.16 To complete Phase 1, the project requests access to the £3.150m proposed Budget allocated to Estates Improvement in the current 5-year Capital Programme (2023/24 – 2027/28).
- 7.17 This will provide the project with the estimated total £4.3m - £4.69m to deliver the required works at the other two stations to complete Phase 1 of WSFRS's Estates Improvement programme. This will leave £0.312m – £0.702m remaining in the pipeline capital programme.
- 7.18 This will also be done in conjunction with the Heat Decarbonisation Plan for which £0.937m will be funded from the WSCC Climate Change Fund.

**8 Proposal details**

- 8.1 For Scrutiny Committee to support progress to date for the period April 2023 to September 2023 and note the next report of continuous improvement will be provided through the Annual Statement of Assurance 2024/25 at Scrutiny Committee in Q2 for the period of October 2023 – March 2024. [http://teamspace.westsussex.gov.uk/teams/DSU/Guidance/Protected/Generic/Report Tempate Review2020/Report\\_Guidance/Proposal\\_details.docx](http://teamspace.westsussex.gov.uk/teams/DSU/Guidance/Protected/Generic/Report%20Tempate%20Review2020/Report_Guidance/Proposal_details.docx)

**9 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)**

- 9.1 None

**10 Consultation, engagement, and advice**

- 10.1 None

**11 Finance**

- 11.1 There has been a significant support from Cabinet and investment from the County Council which has helped drive the improvement plan and continuation of this has been crucial for enabling successful embedding of improvement over the life of this Community Risk Management plan and beyond.

**12 Risk implications and mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating Action (in place or planned)</b>

**13 Policy alignment and compliance**

13.1 There are no social value, crime and disorder, equality duty, human rights, public health, Climate Change, or legal implications arising from this report.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer

**Contact Officer:** Rachel Allan, Senior Advisor, 0330 222 8966,  
rachel.allan@westsussex.gov.uk

**Appendices**

None

**Background papers: None**

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## Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The County Council must give at least 28 days' notice of all key decisions to be taken by councillors or officers. The Plan describes these proposals and the month in which the decisions are to be taken over a four-month period. Decisions are categorised according to cabinet member portfolios.

The most important decisions will be taken by the Cabinet sitting in public. The meetings are also available to watch online via our webcasting website. The schedule of monthly Cabinet meetings is available on the website.

The Forward Plan is updated regularly and key decisions can be taken on any day in the month if they are not taken at Cabinet meetings. The Plan is available on the website. Published decisions are also available via the website.

A key decision is one which:

- Involves expenditure or savings of £500,000 or more (except treasury management); and/or
- Will have a significant effect on communities in two or more electoral divisions in terms of how services are provided.

The following information is provided for each entry in the Forward Plan:

<b>Decision</b>	A summary of the proposal.
<b>Decision By</b>	Who will take the decision - if the Cabinet, it will be taken at a Cabinet meeting in public.
<b>Date added</b>	The date the proposed decision was added to the Forward Plan.
<b>Month</b>	The decision will be taken on any working day in the month stated. If a Cabinet decision, it will be taken at the Cabinet meeting scheduled in that month.
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	How views and representations about the proposal will be considered or the proposal scrutinised, including dates of scrutiny committee meetings.
<b>Background Documents</b>	The documents containing more information about the proposal and how to obtain them (via links on the website version of the Forward Plan). Hard copies are available on request from the decision contact.
<b>Lead officer (report author)</b>	The contact details of the decision report author.
<b>Contact</b>	Who in Democratic Services you can contact about the entry.

### Finance, assets, performance and risk management

Each month the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property reviews the Council's budget position and may take adjustment decisions. A similar monthly review of Council property and assets is carried out and may lead to decisions about them. These are noted in the Forward Plan as 'rolling decisions'.

Each month the Cabinet will consider the Council's performance against its planned outcomes and in connection with a register of corporate risk. Areas of particular significance may be considered at the scheduled Cabinet meetings.

Significant proposals for the management of the Council's budget and spending plans will be dealt with at a scheduled Cabinet meeting and shown in the Plan as strategic budget options.

For questions contact Katherine De La Mora on 033 022 22535, email [katherine.delamora@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:katherine.delamora@westsussex.gov.uk).

**Published: 20 November 2023**

## Community Support, Fire and Rescue

### West Sussex Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Plan Budget Increase

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service's (WSFRS) Estates Improvement Plan, which is part of the [Community Risk Management Plan 2022/26](#) Asset Service Plan, sets out to address the concerns raised by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services Report, which confirmed that the entire WSFRS buildings estate is in significant need of upgrading and investment.

In January 2022 a Key Decision was taken ([CSFR03 \(21/22\)](#)) by the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue approving; the prioritised set of asset improvement projects to enable prioritised works on welfare improvements, contamination remediation, accessibility & community/training areas to be undertaken and a number of feasibility studies have been concluded.

The Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue will be asked to:

- (1) approve a Capital allocation of up to £3.15m to target delivery of estates improvements at three fire stations; and
- (2) delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Property and Assets) to award contracts for the works on completion of the procurement process.

<b>Decision by</b>	Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue (Cllr Duncan Crow)
<b>Date added</b>	15 November 2023
<b>Month</b>	December 2023
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	This decision will be taken in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property.  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made via the officer contact.
<b>Background documents</b> (via website)	WSFRS_Community Risk Management Plan_2022_2026
<b>Lead officer (report author)</b>	Sabrina Cohen-Hatton Tel: 033 022 24993
<b>Contact</b>	Erica Keegan Tel: 033 022 26050

### Fuel Cards Award of Contract

The County Council utilises fuel cards across the fleet to simplify the purchase and payment of fuel from commercial sites. The cards are administered centrally by the Fleet Service in West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.

The current contract for fuel cards expires in March 2024 and a new contract is required.

The term of the contract will be 4 years (based on a 2year + 2year term) and the anticipated spend is approximately £3,200,000 over the full term.

The Chief Fire Officer has endorsed the commencement of the procurement process to be carried out in line with Council's Standing Orders on Procurement and Contracts and will seek to award the contract to the successful supplier.

<b>Decision by</b>	Chief Fire Officer (Sabrina Cohen-Hatton)
<b>Date added</b>	7 November 2023
<b>Month</b>	January 2024
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made via the officer contact.
<b>Background documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Lead officer (report author)</b>	James Skilling Tel: 033 022 25432
<b>Contact</b>	Erica Keegan Tel: 033 022 26050

**West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service - Award of contract for breathing apparatus and ancillary equipment**

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service are leading an aggregated procurement to standardise Breathing Apparatus and ancillary equipment (BA) on behalf of the 4F Group consisting of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, East Sussex Fire Authority, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority.

Aside from the collaborative process and initial financial efficiencies from procurement, the project outcomes will strongly influence a variety of longer-term benefits which will include:

1. standardisation of Breathing Apparatus (BA) equipment across 4F.
2. enabling the wider programme of operational alignment (for example BA).
3. seamless cross-border mobilisation of FRS assets and firefighters who can work together using the same operational guidance, training, and equipment.

The procurement will utilise a National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) endorsed Framework Agreement with each organisation entering into its own call-off agreement for the provision of equipment and support services. The estimated total contract value for West Sussex is £1.7m based on a 10-year contract.

Following the completion of the procurement process, the Chief Fire Officer seeks to award the Contract for the purchase of this equipment to the bidder submitting the most economical and technologically suitable tender and following extensive practical evaluation processes by 4F leads.

<b>Decision by</b>	Chief Fire Officer (Sabrina Cohen-Hatton)
<b>Date added</b>	20 April 2023
<b>Month</b>	March 2024
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Lead officer (report author)</b>	James Skilling Tel: 033 022 25432
<b>Contact</b>	Erica Keegan Tel: 033 022 26050



### Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee Work Programme to March 2024

Topic/Issue	Other information	Timing
Work Programme Planning		Standing item
Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report		Standing item
Quarterly Performance and Resources Report		Standing item
Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report		1 March 2024
Quarterly Performance and Resources Report		1 March 2024
Recruitment of Retained Duty Staff	Update requested by the Committee at its November 2022 meeting - to include a review of the effectiveness of measures affecting retained firefighters, specifically relating to the recommendations made by the Retained Duty System Task & Finish Group	1 March 2024 Postponed from 30 November 2023 to ensure that adequate time on the committee's agenda is given.
CM16 call response times to be monitored and possibly a TFG established if they continue to be red		

#### Appendix A – Check List

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## Scrutiny Business Planning Checklist

<b>Priorities</b>	<p>Is the topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a corporate or service priority? In what way?</li> <li>• an area where performance, outcomes or budget are a concern? How?</li> <li>• one that matters to residents? Why?</li> <li>• key decision preview, policy development or performance?</li> </ul>
<b>What is being scrutinised and why?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What should the scrutiny focus be? What key lines of enquiry should be covered?</li> <li>• Where can the committee add value, what impact can scrutiny have?</li> <li>• What is the desired outcome from scrutiny?</li> </ul>
<b>When and how to scrutinise?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When can the committee have most influence? (Is the committee getting involved at the right time, or the earliest opportunity?)</li> <li>• What is the best approach - committee, TFG, one-off small group, informal briefing or written update?</li> <li>• What research, visits or other activities <del>are needed</del> could complement the scrutiny?</li> <li>• Would scrutiny benefit from external witnesses or evidence?</li> </ul>
<b>Is the work programme focused and achievable?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have priorities changed – should any work be brought forward, stopped or put back?</li> <li>• Can there be fewer items for more in-depth consideration?</li> <li>• Is there a balance between policy development, performance monitoring and key decision preview?</li> <li>• Has sufficient capacity been retained for future work?</li> </ul>

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