

# Environment and Climate Change Portfolio - Summary

## Performance Summary

### 1. Performance highlights this quarter:



- The installation phase for the **Summer 2023 Solar Together Sussex Scheme** began this quarter. The scheme, which is coordinated by the County Council on behalf of all local authorities in West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, delivers high quality and competitively priced solar panels and battery systems to help residents to reduce their energy costs and their impact on the environment. So far approximately 700 renewable energy systems have been installed under the summer 2023 scheme. Two previous Solar Together Sussex rounds in 2020 and 2021 installed 1,700 systems across Sussex.
- Approval was given in July for a **technical feasibility study to be carried out on a project to build a new solar farm** of around 2MW in size on council-owned land at Baystone Farm near Horsham. Subject to the outcome of this study, the project will require the development of a full business case before it can be taken forward through the County Council's capital governance process.
- **Estate Decarbonisation** – A Key Decision was published in August to implement Phase 1a of the County Council's Estate Decarbonisation Programme. This phase of work will focus on 14 properties across the county including some libraries, fire stations and a day centre. It is estimated that the improvements will save around 237 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions each year - around 4% of our total corporate emissions. Upon the conclusion of the procurement process, work is expected to commence in December 2023.
- This summer, County Council staff completed the first **Climate Change Awareness and Commuter Survey**. This staff-wide survey gauged knowledge of and engagement with the Climate Change Strategy and inquired about working from home (WFH) and commuting patterns. Over 900 staff responded to the survey with their experiences and feedback around the council's sustainability goals. The Sustainability Team will use the results of the survey to tailor engagement with services across the organisation. Importantly, the survey results will also help to inform the carbon baseline and improve the accuracy of the County Council's emissions reporting by incorporating commuting and WFH emissions for the first time. This survey will be administered annually to track progress over time towards the 2030 Climate Change Strategy objectives.
- There remains a level of uncertainty around the **Government's waste policy reforms** despite DEFRA announcing the introduction of "Simpler Recycling" in the place of the previous policy approach of "Greater Consistency in Recycling." It is noteworthy that this set a deadline for the introduction of separate food waste collections by March 2026 and this will require changes to the County Council's disposal arrangements. Further details are awaited in particular on funding and clarity on frequency of residual waste collections.
- All West Sussex district and borough councils have hosted a monthly

**UKHarvest community food hub**, where for a suggested small donation, residents have been able to acquire a diverse range of surplus foods that would otherwise have been discarded by their suppliers. During this period, it has fed over 3,400 people and saved £28,000 worth of food from being wasted.

- Since launching in July 2023, the '**Think Before You Throw**' campaign - working in partnership with the districts and borough councils, and supported by the West Sussex Communications Team - has had over 12,000 views of the campaign video animations. The total social media reach, including both organic and paid for impressions, sits at 1.29m. The second phase of the campaign launched in September, focusing on a 'back to basics' approach to kerbside recycling, including which materials are accepted, and the 'clean, dry, loose' message.

## Our Council Performance Measures

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

Environment and Climate Change		2023/24 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT	Year End Forecast
22	<b>Measure:</b> Equivalent tonnes (te) of CO2 emissions from WSCC activities (CC) Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Accumulative. 	22,833 CO2te	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	↘	G
	G		G	G			
			27,264 CO2te (2022/23 Target: 29,910 CO2te)	4,667 CO2te	9,611 CO2te		
<b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: Preliminary recorded carbon emissions for Q2 2023/24 totalled 4,944 tonnes. This is the first fiscal year of emissions reporting under a new baseline calculation and thus comparison to previous reporting is not accurate.  There has been an increase of emissions within the transportation and additional sources categories, largely due to the recent update in County Council commuting and work from home activities data. This increase does not reflect a sudden change in activity, but rather a better reporting of existing activity. This increase was somewhat offset by decreases in emissions from our corporate and schools' estates.  Overall emission performance remains on track to meet the targeted annual reductions.  <b>Actions:</b> Work continues on the actions set out in the Carbon Management Plan to achieve net zero carbon by 2030.							
23	<b>Measure:</b> Household waste recycled, reused or composted (CC) Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Reported two quarters in arrears. 	56.0%	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	↗	A
	A		A	A			
			52.9%	53.3%	53.7% (2022/23 Target: 55%)		
<b>Performance Analysis:</b> Sep-23: The recycling rate for Q4 2022/23 decreased by 0.03% when compared to the same quarter in 2021/22. The Q4 percentage has increased by 0.34% when compared to the Q3 of 2022/23, however, the target of 55% set for 2022/23 has not been achieved. Some of the possible reasons for this are detailed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The remaining wood stockpile of 237 tonnes has been cleared during the quarter.</li> <li>• The green waste in Q4 2022/23 was lower than the same quarter in 2021/22 and overall, was lower in 2022/23 than 2021/22. This could be due to the weather for this period. The Met Office reported that February 2023 had</li> </ul>							

Environment and Climate Change	2023/24 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods	DoT	Year End Forecast
<p>been the driest in 30 years for England and March 2023 had been the wettest in over 40 years for England. There has been a big increase at the start of 2023/24 in green waste being disposed through the sites which may improve the recycling rate in Q1 of 2023/24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total local authority collected waste continues to decrease, possibly due to the rise in the cost of living.</li> <li>There remains 1,726.18 tonnes of unprocessed material at the Mechanical Biological Treatment Centre as of 31st March 2023. The recycling rate could show an improvement once this has been completely cleared.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b> Further work will take place to improve our recycling and green waste processing rates in line with government guidelines.</p>				

## Finance Summary

### Portfolio In Year Pressures and Mitigations

Pressures	(£m)	Mitigations and Underspending	(£m)	Year end budget variation (£m)
Waste Services – Recycling. Projected POPs disposal legislation costs	£0.900m	Increase in Trade Waste income	(£0.720m)	
Waste Services – Non-delivery of saving - reduction in recycling income projection	£0.690m			
Waste Services – Shortfall in baled RDF contract	£0.600m			
Waste Services – Increase in waste volumes at Household Waste Recycling Sites and kerbside collections including increase in green waste tonnage	£0.430m			
Waste Services – Additional cost on waste recycling contract above budgeted inflation	£0.130m			
Energy Services – Delays in saving delivery on solar and battery storage project	£0.500m			
Other minor variations	£0.010m			
<b>Environment &amp; Climate Change Portfolio - Total</b>	<b>£3.260m</b>		<b>(£0.720m)</b>	<b>£2.540m</b>

### Financial Narrative on the Portfolio's Position

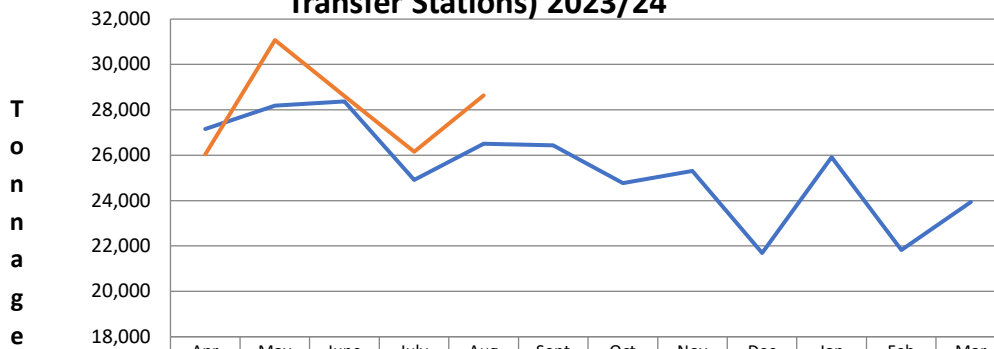
- As at the end of September, the forecast against the Environment and Climate Change budget is a projected overspend of £2.540m, an increase of £1.155m when compared to the June position.
- Identification, classification and disposal of **persistent organic pollutants (POPs) material** is a requirement recently mandated by Central Government. Waste Disposal Authorities are now responsible for identifying what types of waste contain POPs, sorting and storage of POPs waste and the removal of material and destruction of POPs content within the waste. The cost of meeting these new

obligations is projected to be around £0.9m for 2023/24 and covers the period January 2023 to March 2024.

5. In recent years, the value of **Recyclate** has fluctuated greatly. The start of 2023/24 had been less volatile, however during the second quarter, the recyclate values have generally seen a downturn. The largest driver of recycling income is waste paper and the value of this material has reduced from +£38 per tonne in May 2023 to +£28 in August which is an improvement from the 2022/23 low of +£18 in November 2022 but far below the high of +£124 per tonne in August 2022. Due to the reduction in recyclate values, the budget is projecting a £0.690m shortfall of income in 2023/24. This is reflected in the savings delivery update position.
6. Continuing issues with **Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) baling** means that it is unlikely the County Council will meet its guaranteed minimum tonnage (GMT) as part of the agreement with the RDF contractor. The service have been working to solve this issue and there has been a recent increase in the number of RDF loads sent to continental Europe. It is anticipated that the GMT shortfall will create an overspend of £0.600m. This projection could fluctuate dependent on performance.
7. There has been an increase in **waste volumes** of around 4% above the budgeted tonnages so far this year. Additional green waste has been received due to a weather-related pro-longed growing season. When compared to the same period in 2022, approximately an additional 8,000 tonnes of green waste was processed during April to August. The Material Recycling Facility (MRF) has seen 2% higher than budgeted waste volumes due to the increase in household waste recycling collected at kerbside; in part due to the continued and likely permanent home working arrangements. Overall, the current net position is a £0.430m projected overspend.
8. This increase in waste volumes is also due to an increase in **trade waste service** volumes. Two district and borough councils have been temporarily using the County Council's Trade Waste Service following the termination of contracts with their previous providers. This short-term solution is expected to generate an additional £0.720m of income.
9. **Inflation** on the waste recycling contract was set at 12.4%, slightly lower than the actual inflation rate applied to the contract which averaged 12.9%. This has led to a budgeted shortfall of £0.130m.
10. Due to continued delays in the **Solar and Battery Storage site at Halewick Lane** becoming active, the income generation saving of £0.5m linked to this site is not expected to be delivered in 2023/24. It had been hoped that this shortfall could be mitigated by the County Council's other solar farms producing and selling more energy following recent favourable weather conditions. However, the current and projected sale prices suggest this may not be possible.

## Cost Driver Information

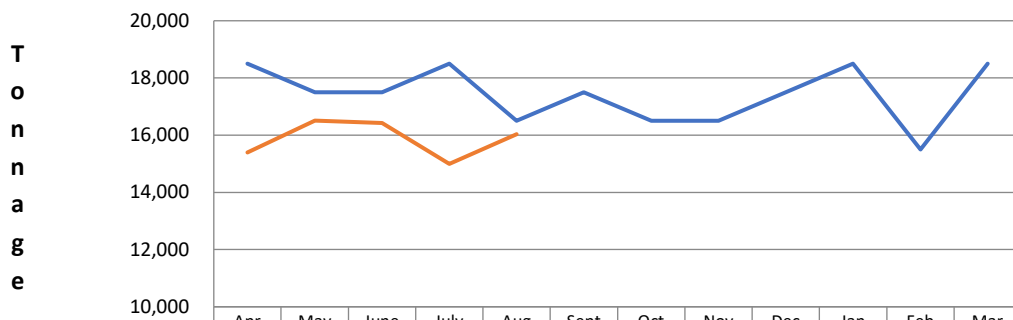
### Contract Handling Fee Tonnage (Recycling Centres and Transfer Stations) 2023/24



This graph shows tonnages received at the Household Waste Recycling Sites (HWRS) and Transfer Stations.

The tonnages received to August are around 4% above the budgeted profile.

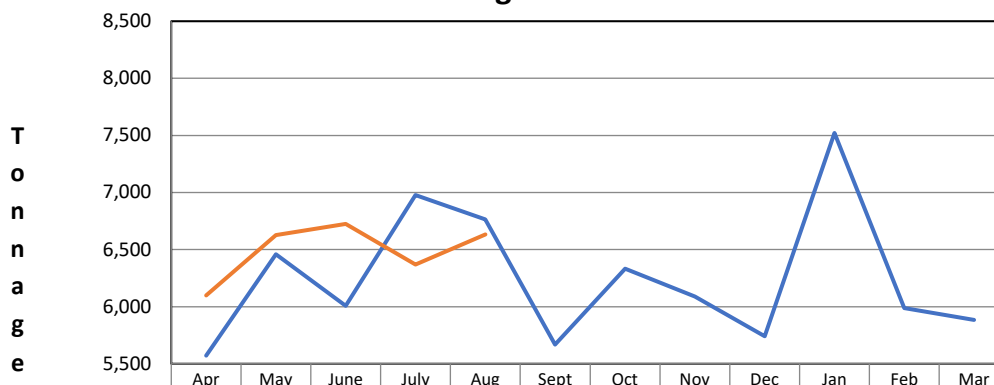
### Monthly tonnage Profile and Actual Waste Entering the MBT and Waste Sent Direct to Landfill 2023-24



Waste is transferred to the Mechanical Biological Treatment Centre (MBT) with a small proportion directly sent to landfill, as the waste is not suitable for treatment through the MBT.

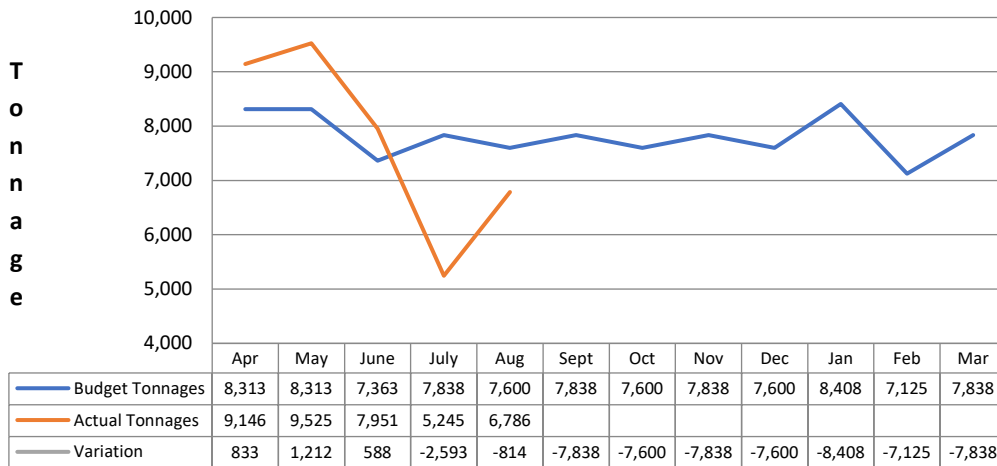
This graph demonstrates a 8% reduction in tonnes sent to the landfill so far when compared to the forecast profile.

### MRF Tonnage 2023-24



This graph shows the monthly volumes of recycling taken to the Material Recycling Facility (MRF). The monthly tonnages taken to the MRF so far in 2023/24 are 2% above the budgeted profile.

### Monthly Profile and Actual Waste Tonnage Converted Into RDF 2023-24

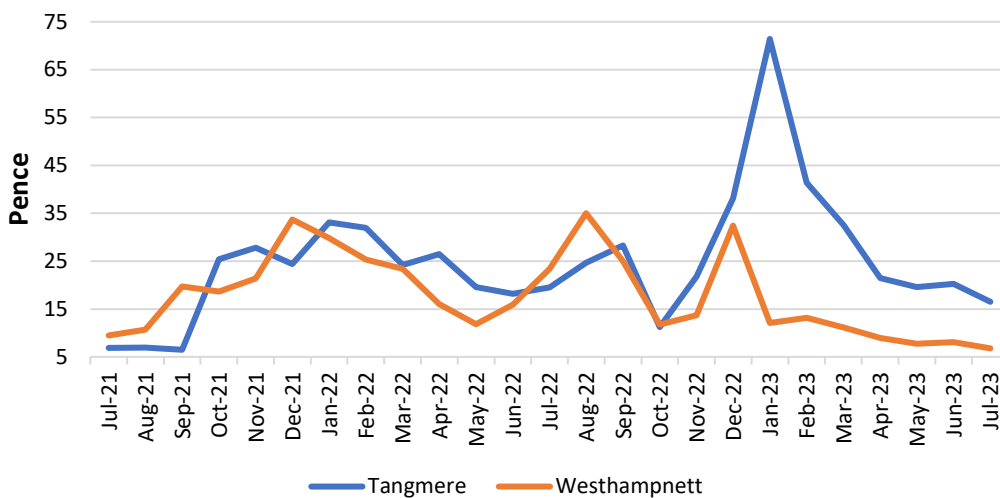


This graph shows the Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) production compared to the estimated levels.

RDF levels are around 2% below the budgeted profile.

There has been a reduction in production of RDF in recent months due to operation issues at the plant. This is expected to improve going forward.

### Solar Farm Income Unit Rate - Pence Per kWh



This graph demonstrates the average pence per kWh since April 2021 for both Tangmere and Westhampnett Solar Farms.

The sale of the power at Tangmere is agreed in advance whereas Westhampnett's sale of power is subject to a blend of agreed and demand system sell price due to the battery storage element. This difference can produce distinctive pricing variations.

## Savings Delivery Update

11. There are £2.492m of savings to be delivered within the portfolio. Details are shown in the table below:

Saving Activity	Year	Saving to be Delivered in 2023/24	September 2023		Narrative
Recyclate income	2023/24	£0.800m	£0.110m	A	There has been a downturn in the value of recyclable material in the last 6-9 months. It is unlikely that the majority of this additional income will be achieved in 2023/24.
			£0.690m	R	
Solar and Battery Investments	2023/24	£0.500m	£0.500m	R	Continued delays at Halewick Lane, project will not complete or generate income in 2023/24.

Saving Activity	Year	Saving to be Delivered in 2023/24	September 2023		Narrative
			£	Rating	
Additional Energy Generation	2023/24	£0.200m	£0.200m	G	
Staffing vacancy increase in vacancy factor from 5% to 6%	2023/24	£0.072m	£0.072m	G	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.
Development of Battery Storage Site	Prior Years	£0.100m	£0.100m	B	
Additional income from increased sales of Recyclates (2022/23 element)	Prior Years	£0.800m	£0.800m	B	
Review of Countryside Fees and Charges	Prior Years	£0.020m	£0.020m	G	

**Savings Key:**

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

## Capital Programme

### Summary - Capital

- The Environment and Climate Change capital programme; as approved by County Council in February 2023, agreed a programme totalling £12.182m for 2023/24. Budget of £0.291m, originally profiled to be spent in 2022/23, was slipped into 2023/24, revising this year's capital programme to £12.473m.
- Since this time, the profiled spend has decreased overall by £1.053m, to give a current year end projection for 2023/24 of £11.420m.
- The portfolio's capital programme contains 12 projects with all projects currently in delivery. The performance and financial details for each scheme are reported below.

	Environment and Climate Change 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				
					<b>In Flight Projects</b>			
1	<b>Project:</b> Asset Decarbonisation - Carbon Net Zero Programme	G	G	G	£7.926m	£0.064m	£0.714m	£7.148m
<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> March 2024				<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				

	Environment and Climate Change 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				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Key Decision published in July 2023. Programme progressing to plan.							
2	<b>Project:</b> Carbon Reduction (Salix) Programme – Block Allocation	G	G	G	£1.756m	£1.575m	£0.005m	£0.176m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> On-Going			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Overall the programme is on track to deliver in year. One school project is due to start in October with three others at various stages of approval							
3	<b>Project:</b> Faygate Site Improvements	G	G	G	£1.121m	£0.504m	£0.03m	£0.614m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> To Be Confirmed			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Quotation for new gas wells is still required and designs to be submitted for review. Works programmed for Q3 – as long as ground conditions remain favourable.							
4	<b>Project:</b> Flood Management	A	G	G	£1.069m	£0.704m	£0.004m	£0.361m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> Year 2024			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Angmering project completion date slipped from Autumn 2023 to Spring/Summer 2024.							
5	<b>Project:</b> Property Maintenance - Carbon Net Zero – Block Allocation	G	G	G	£5.060m	£1.509m	£1.145m	£2.406m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> On-going			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Programme progressing as planned.							
6	<b>Project:</b> Your Energy Sussex (YES) - Halewick Lane	A	G	G	£23.616m	£5.051m	£0.119m	£18.446m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> To Be Confirmed			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Time status remains amber owing to the need to re-start the process with contractor and choose a manufacturer to design and create battery system.							
7	<b>Project:</b> Operation Watershed	G	G	G	£1.009m	N/A	£0.165m	£0.844m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> On-Going to 2028			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Funds have recently been awarded to local communities to help with works to improve drainage and flood areas.							
8	<b>Project:</b> Your Energy Sussex (YES) - Schools Solar PV Programme	A	G	A	£4.685m	£4.170m	£-	£0.515m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> To Be Confirmed			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				



	Environment and Climate Change 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				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Quality issues caused by one installer has caused some disruption to the programme. Solution to rectify installations currently under review.							
9	<b>Project:</b> Your Energy Sussex (YES) – Solar Battery PV corporate sites and schools	G	G	G	£7.700m	£-	£0.013m	£7.687m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> January 2027			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Programme of work over 23 corporate and 56 school buildings. The Programme Team are currently moderating Tender Scores. A Key Decision for contract award is planned to take place before the end of the calendar year.							
10	<b>Project:</b> General After Care Works - Block	G	G	G	£0.434m	£0.403m	£0.013m	£0.018m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> On-Going			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Works ongoing at Baystone Farm (gas vents and replacement boreholes), Westhampnett (gas well repairs) and Sompting (boreholes – still to be scoped).							
11	<b>Project:</b> Capital Receipts Funding Waste New Service Model – Transformation Project	G	G	G	£0.627m	£0.547m	£0.002m	£0.078m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> March 2024			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Waste project is in its final phase with a trial for segregation and disposal of food and absorbent hygiene products in Mid Sussex underway. £0.080m expected to be spent in 2023/24 with remaining uncommitted funds returned to capital receipts budget.							
12	<b>Project:</b> Littlehampton Harbour – Infrastructure Maintenance	G	G	G	£1.100m	£-	£0.300m	£0.800m
	<b>Latest Estimated Completion Date:</b> To Be Confirmed			<b>Project Phase:</b> In Delivery				
	<b>Narrative:</b> Funding contribution towards the maintenance works required at Littlehampton Harbour.							

15. 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

16. The following table summarises the risks within the Corporate Risk Register that would have a direct impact on the portfolio. Risks to other portfolios are specified within the respective portfolio sections.

Risk Number	Risk Description	Previous Quarter Score	Current Score
CR73a	<p><b>Climate Change Mitigation</b> - 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 <b>insufficient capacity and capability to fully deliver the necessary actions within the stated timeframes</b>. This will lead to additional resource strain, higher demand on capital programmes and threaten organisational reputation.</p>	12	12
CR73b	<p><b>Climate Change Adaptation</b> - 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, <b>WSCC assets, service delivery and West Sussex residents are at increased risk of damage, disruption and injury</b>. 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.</p>	12	12
CR76	<p>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 <b>water neutrality</b> can be demonstrated. There are a number of impacts on and, potentially, opportunities for WSCC arising. The principal corporate risk is that <b>the council will be unable to provide sufficient school places in the water neutrality area</b>.</p>	12	12

17. Further detail on all risks can be found in **Appendix 5** - Corporate Risk Register Summary. 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.