

# Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio - Summary

## Performance Summary

1. The Portfolio has a number of performance highlights to report this quarter:

### Fire and Rescue Service

- Quarter four saw the continued delivery of our Leadership and Culture Programme that is tailor-made for West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and focusses on coaching skills and inclusive behaviours. The focus and priority given to leadership and culture continues to be relevant and timely in the light of the publication in March 2023 of the Spotlight Report on values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS).
- In March 2023, the national firefighters pay dispute concluded with a revised pay offer that was accepted by the members of the Fire Brigades Union. This also ended the potential for industrial action. Officers are now reviewing business continuity plans and assisting Home Office colleagues in wider plans for future minimum service levels.
- Quarter four was a busy period for all teams across the service to ensure the Local Risk Management Plans were completed. These plans underpin our offer to the public which targets resources against risk. A number of local events were delivered to ensure we met our annual targets for Safe and Well Visits, Fire Safety Audits and emergency response standards.
- The Protection Team were also occupied ensuring end of year targets were completed. The team also managed to land our very first Primary Authority Scheme with Churchill Retirement Living. Primary Authority Schemes give businesses greater confidence and consistency to reduce the risk of contravening legislation, and this legal partnership will create a single point of contact for Churchill Retirement Living to get advice on fire safety matters to keep their residents safe from harm.
- Two new and important Fire Standards on leadership were launched during the quarter. These are professional standards that are set for each fire service to achieve and maintain continuous improvement across the fire sector.
- It has been a busy quarter for the operational crews. The most notable incident saw 15 fire engines attend the Angel Inn at Midhurst. This was a protracted incident, involving many of our partners across the County Council and beyond.

### Community Support

- The Registration Service delivered over 3,600 ceremonies during 2022/2023, a 23% increase on the 5-year pre-pandemic average. We also welcomed 864 new citizens during this past year. In March 2023, the Littlehampton

Registration Office was successfully relocated into the Littlehampton Library where we are currently offering birth and death appointments three days per week. It is proving very popular with residents, reducing the need for them to travel, and alleviating some demand on our very busy Worthing offices.

- Online safety remains a focus for the Community Safety and Wellbeing Team and during this quarter 632 residents and professionals have engaged in digital safety training. There are also increasing numbers of residents registering for the monthly Staying Safe Online E-Newsletter with over 6,000 people now receiving this. Through these and other communications channels such as social media, radio, press release, blogs, local magazines, it is estimated we have reached over 225,000 people with important online safety messages and support.
- Responding to data and information from Sussex Police on the most prevalent forms of online fraud, a bespoke webinar on sextortion was delivered as well as a very successful courier and impersonation fraud themed webinar with 46 attendees and subsequently over 1,500 views of the recorded version on YouTube. Victims disproportionately affected are elderly and also most likely to live in the Chichester and Arun districts. Prevention activity has therefore been focused on these localities and demographics.
- An expression of interest to a British Library administered funding stream has been accepted and, subject to final due diligence, we will receive a £30k grant in to invest in new digital content to promote our library services, linking online and community-based provision.
- During the quarter, Trading Standards officers were involved in two product safety recalls, five written warnings in relation to the supply of counterfeit clothing and phone cables and cases from retail outlets and over one thousand mobile phone accessories were seized from a shop in Chichester, fifteen hundred counterfeit goods from a trader operating from home and a seizure of trademark protected covers and blankets from a market in Worthing.

## **Our Council Performance Measures**

### **Fire and Rescue Service Performance Measures**

2. The following section provides updates of the performance KPIs agreed in Our Council Plan and the action taking place, comprising a wider performance view, with KPI measures comparing performance over the last three periods - this may be quarterly, annually or other time periods (depending on how regularly data is released); however, each measure will explain the reporting period.

Fire and Rescue		2022/23 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT
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	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	↗
			A	A	G	
			445	722	1,004	
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Mar-23: Q4 audit output has been the highest attained in any of the previous eight quarters. This has enabled the protection department to meet the target of 1,000 fire safety audits in regulated premises for the year.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> A significant number of the team have commenced the necessary training courses to bring them in line with the requirements of the Fire Standard and the National Competency Framework during Q4, and this will ultimately assist in ensuring that our regulatory work in the future is effective.</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>	4,000	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	↗
			G	G	G	
			2,451	3,384	4,680	
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Mar-23: In Q4, 1,296 Safe and Well Visits and 659 home checks were completed. A total of 4,680 Safe and Well Visits were delivered in 2022/23, exceeding the target by 17%. In addition, 2,245 homes were visited to carry out risk reduction activity such as installing smoke alarms and carbon monoxide sensors and supplying fire safety equipment. These are the highest number of visits completed since 2018.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> 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. We now offer regular fire risk awareness webinars to staff in the health, housing and social care sector and are working on direct pathways for customers with high fire risk, such as with Public Health and Wellbeing Hubs for housebound smokers to support smoking cessation.</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%	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	↗
			R	G	G	
			86.0%	89.1%	92.1%	
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Mar-23: A further improvement of 3% between Q3 and Q4 has been achieved. This is largely down to the continued use of performance data on turn out times being available to our teams on stations. The ongoing focus of embedding our professional standards in service delivery have also contributed to this improvement. This means that appliance turn out times from the station have once again improved showing a further 4% increase. The new Service Delivery Support team regularly analyse this data with our new Data Analytics and Reporting Team ensuring accuracies of data.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> We will continue to monitor and review the performance data locally on our stations through our Local Risk Management Plans. The Day Crewed 7 CRMP commitment that will go live at the beginning of Q1 2023/24 will ensure more resilience is available to continue to meet the risk when facing occasions of high demand, contributing to maintaining good performance in this measure.</p>						
43	<p><b>Measure:</b> Percentage of 'critical special service incidents' where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard</p> <p>Reporting Frequency: Quarterly.</p>	80.0%	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	↘
			G	G	G	
			81.4%	81.6%	80.8%	

Fire and Rescue	2022/23 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods	DoT
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Mar-23: Critical special Service Calls can occur anywhere in the County and we measure these separately to Critical fires. Performance this quarter remains high, providing further reassurance that the use of the Dynamic Cover Tool (which provides data on potential response times broken down to a district/local level to the control room operators) is now embedded in our ways of working. The initiative we have introduced to use our wholetime firefighters more proactively to support Retained Duty System (RDS) availability and improvements in our turn out times is also having a positive impact on this core measure.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> We continue to work with partner agencies to help improve the time taken to transfer calls and information. We also continue to undertake work at our fire stations to ensure we are doing everything we can to respond to incidents as quickly as possible as well as maximise the availability of RDS fire engines at times of the day when we know these incidents are most likely to occur using our Crewing Optimisation Group.</p>			

## Community Support Performance Measures

Community Support	2022/23 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT
<b>Measure:</b> Use of virtual/digital library services by residents  Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Accumulative	5.45m	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	
		G	G	G	
		2.87m	4.50m	6.30m	↗
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Mar-23: New library website pages have generated increased traffic to new content; increased collection of eBook and other content has led to greater eLibrary usage. Social media reach has also grown this quarter.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Continue to support growing demand though investment in eLibrary platforms and production of virtual and online library events content</p>					
<b>Measure:</b> Number of people reached and supported via the West Sussex Community Hub during the Covid-19 pandemic  Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Accumulative	36,000	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	
		G	G	G	
		87,298	89,957	92,436	↗
<p><b>Performance Analysis:</b> Mar-23: During Q4, there have been 2,479 reached by the Community Hub for support with food, energy and wider essentials.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Measure is changing 2023/2024 to reflect quality rather than quantity to ensure positive outcomes at first point of contact for residents that require support from the community hub.</p>					

## Finance Summary

### Portfolio In Year Pressures and Mitigations

Pressures	(£m)	Mitigations and Underspending	(£m)	Year end budget variation (£m)
Covid-19 pandemic expenditure – Community Hub and Fire and Rescue expenditure	£0.946m	Use of non-ringfenced Covid-19 grant.	(£0.946m)	
Fire and Rescue – Joint Control Centre additional inflationary costs	£0.300m	Fire and Rescue – Staffing vacancies and other minor variations	(£0.481m)	
Fire and Rescue – Additional 4% pay award pressure over and above budgeted 3%	£0.475m			
Community Support – Additional coroner costs projected following work undertaken on long inquests	£0.285m	Community Support – Staffing underspends and other minor variations in Community Safety and Wellbeing, Library Service and Trading Standards.	(£0.627m)	
Community Support – Shortfall in libraries income relating to changes in customer behaviour post pandemic	£0.181m	Community Support – Additional ceremonies income projected as this is the first summer season in recent times with no pandemic restrictions	(£0.362m)	
<b>Community Support, Fire &amp; Rescue Portfolio – Total</b>	<b>£2.187m</b>		<b>(£2.416m)</b>	<b>(£0.229m)</b>

### Significant Financial Issues and Risks Arising

- There are no significant issues to raise this quarter.

### Financial Narrative on the Portfolio's Position

- The 2022/23 financial outturn position for the Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio is an underspend of £0.229m. This is a reduction of £0.163m when compared to the £0.066m underspend forecast in December. The main movement during the quarter relates to the fire pay award settlement.

### Fire and Rescue Service

- The Fire and Rescue Service completed the year with a £0.294m overspend. This is an increase of £0.070m when compared to the £0.224m overspend forecast in December. The service has experienced a number of financial pressures during the year including £0.3m of the inflation impact on the **Joint Fire Control Centre's running costs**.
- A 7% pay increase was agreed with unions for 2022/23 which has been backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022. An allocation of 3% was built into the 2022/23 base budget and the remaining 4% has been mitigated in year through other underspends across the service and achieved in full, largely due to staffing vacancies within the Protection and Strategic Risk and Improvement teams.

## Community Support

7. Overall, Community Support completed the year with an underspend of £0.523m. This is an increase of £0.233m when compared to the £0.290m underspend forecast in December.
8. The **Coroner's Service** has overspent by £0.285m which relates to increases in mortuary and pathology provision and inquests. Excess deaths have caused an increase in expenditure due to the need to use agency cover and external mortuary provision; however, a proportion of these costs have been charged to the non-ringfenced Covid-19 grant as it is widely acknowledged that the number of excess deaths in the UK is directly linked to the impact of the pandemic. In addition, the County Council has facilitated a number of inquests this year which have led to additional expenditure, including the recently concluded Shoreham Inquest.
9. The **Library Service** has continued to experience a shortfall of income which relates to changes in customer behaviour post-pandemic restrictions. This has led to a £0.181m shortfall of income in 2022/23.
10. These overspending pressures have been mitigated by staffing vacancy savings of £0.627m and an increase in **Registrar Service** income of £0.362m. This increase is due to a surge of ceremonies being delivered in 2022/23 following the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions.

## In-year Revenue Grant Update

11. Since the creation of the 2022/23 Budget, a number of new grants have been awarded. Details of new grants are added to quarterly Performance and Resources Reports throughout the year.
12. These additional funds have/will be utilised in accordance with the grant determination.

	<b>New In-Year Grant - Name and Details</b>	<b>(£)</b>
Fire and Rescue	<b>Marauding Terrorist Grant.</b> This grant funds the specialist training in casualty management for Fire and Rescue Services.	£21,000
	<b>Building Safety Regulator Grant.</b>	£17,000
Community Support	<b>Household Support Fund: October 2022 – March 2023.</b> An extension (3) to the scheme to support those in need.	£4,871,000
	<b>Community Support - Homes for Ukraine Tariff Grant.</b> To enable local authorities to deliver their requirements in supporting Ukrainian nationals arriving under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. (Individual based tariff).	£7,592,000
	<b>Afghan Relocation and Assistance Scheme.</b> To enable local authorities to support Afghan nationals resettling. (Individual based tariff).	£503,000

	<b>New In-Year Grant - Name and Details</b>	<b>(£)</b>
	<b>Afghan Bridging Hotel Funding.</b> Funds to deliver wrap around support for local authorities delivering bridging accommodation. (Individual based tariff).	£1,647,000
	<b>Afghan Education Grant.</b> For the provision of education for children who have entered via the Afghan Resettlement Scheme.	£1,233,000
	<b>Homes for Ukraine Thank You Payments.</b> Funding for sponsors who are hosting Ukrainians under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.	£1,545,000
	<b>Homes for Ukraine Education and Childcare Grant.</b> For the provision of childcare and education for children who have entered via the Homes for Ukraine visa route.	£4,704,000
	<b>Syrian Refugee Grant.</b> To enable local authorities to support Syrian nationals resettling. (Individual based tariff).	£189,000

### Proposed Carry Forward Requests

13. A number of carry forward requests have been processed during the closure of the accounts, including the following item within the Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio:

<b>Service</b>	<b>2022/23 Carry Forward Requests</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Fire and Rescue	<b>Marauding Terrorist Grant</b> - This grant funds the specialist training in casualty management for Fire and Rescue Services. Grant arrangements changed during 2022/23 with PPE replacement transferring to central provision and training left with services. Balance from 2021/22 and 2022/23 is required for 2023/24 to ensure all Firefighters are adequately trained.	£29,000
Fire and Rescue	<b>Protection Uplift Grant (Fire Link Grant)</b> - To drive the improvement in the capability and capacity of Fire and Rescue Services to deliver their protection function to support a safer built environment and respond to the findings from the HMICFRS State of Fire Reports.	£151,000
Community Support	<b>Bequest to Chichester Library</b> – A generous bequest from a member of the public has been received with a wish for the funding to be used at Chichester Library.	£12,000

14. The following carry forward balance from 2021/22 which is currently within reserves also remains available use in 2023/24.

<b>Service</b>	<b>2021/22 Carry Forward Available In 2023/24</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Fire and Rescue	<b>Bequest to Worthing Fire Station</b> – A generous bequest from a member of the public has been received with a requirement that funds are spent on Worthing Fire Station. Time is being taken to finalise plans.	£98,000

Service	2021/22 Carry Forward Available In 2023/24	Amount
Fire and Rescue	<b>South East FRS Control Room Grant</b> – This funding is linked to the national communications project which has been delayed.	£97,000
Community Support	<b>Trading Standards - Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) restricted funds</b> - Plans have been developed for a number of initiatives to ensure these funds are reinvested into tackling crime and supporting the public.	£95,300

15. It should be noted that all carry forward balances have specific plans in place and can demonstrate the need of funding over and above set budgets. Any carry forward balance which remains unspent at the end of 2023/24, unless specifically agreed otherwise, will be withdrawn from the carry forward reserve and made available to assist the overall financial position.

### Covid-19 Expenditure Update

16. The Community Support Service has continued to provide support to residents in relation to the pandemic throughout 2022/23 by working with local partners and helping vulnerable people through the Community Hub and other front-line services. Funding of £0.759m from the Non-ringfenced Covid-19 Grant has been utilised in 2022/23.

17. During 2022/23, the UK has continued to see excess deaths and the latest data from the Office for National Statistics shows that in December 2022, excess deaths were 13.5% above usual expectations. It is widely acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on this situation, therefore £0.093m of these additional costs have been charged to the Non-ringfenced Covid-19 grant.

18. Within the Fire and Rescue Service, £0.094m of costs for firefighter isolation periods, sickness and overtime, as well as a one-year rural engagement officer within the Prevention Team to support vulnerable people living in rural areas who have been isolated during the pandemic have all been charged to the Non-ringfenced Covid-19 grant.

### Savings Delivery Update

19. There remained £0.070m of savings from the 2021/22 financial year which were not delivered on an on-going basis. This saving is reported in the table below to ensure that it is monitored and delivered during the year:

Saving Activity	Saving to be Delivered in 2022/23 (£000)	March 2023		Narrative	2023/24 Outlook
Community Support - Development of adapted Library Service offer in conjunction with Parish Councils	70	70	G	Saving mitigated in-year through staffing underspends. A permanent solution has been delivered and is included within the 2023/24 budget.	B

**Savings Key:**

Significant Risk



At Risk

Delivered/  
Mitigated In YearDelivered On An  
Ongoing Basis

## Capital Programme

### Performance Summary - Capital

20. There are five schemes within the portfolio. Four of the schemes in delivery are rated as green, indicating that the project is reporting to plan and one scheme is within its final retention phase.

Scheme	RAG Status at March 2023	Reason	Latest RAG Status	Updated Position
Fire Equipment Block Programme	GREEN	Programme of delivery of various types of operational fire equipment on track.	GREEN	Progressing to plan.
Fleet Replacement Block Programme	GREEN	Programme of delivery of fleet replacement programme (Fire/Appliances/Corporate) on track.	GREEN	Progressing to plan.
Live Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station	GREEN	All buildings but the Live Fire Training Building will be complete as per the original completion date - 11th April 2023. The Contractor has advised that the final part will be completed by 2nd June 2023.	GREEN	No impact to overall programme/ occupation dates as the period between mid-April to the start of June, is the fit-out period for the other buildings.
Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Programme	GREEN	Feasibility for remodelling at Selsey, Bognor Regis, Littlehampton & Haywards Heath Fire Stations.	GREEN	Feasibility Study including decontamination, staff welfare, accessibility, training/Community areas & heat decarbonisation works has completed.

21. A number of capital schemes have completed during the 2022/23 financial year, including the following project for this portfolio:

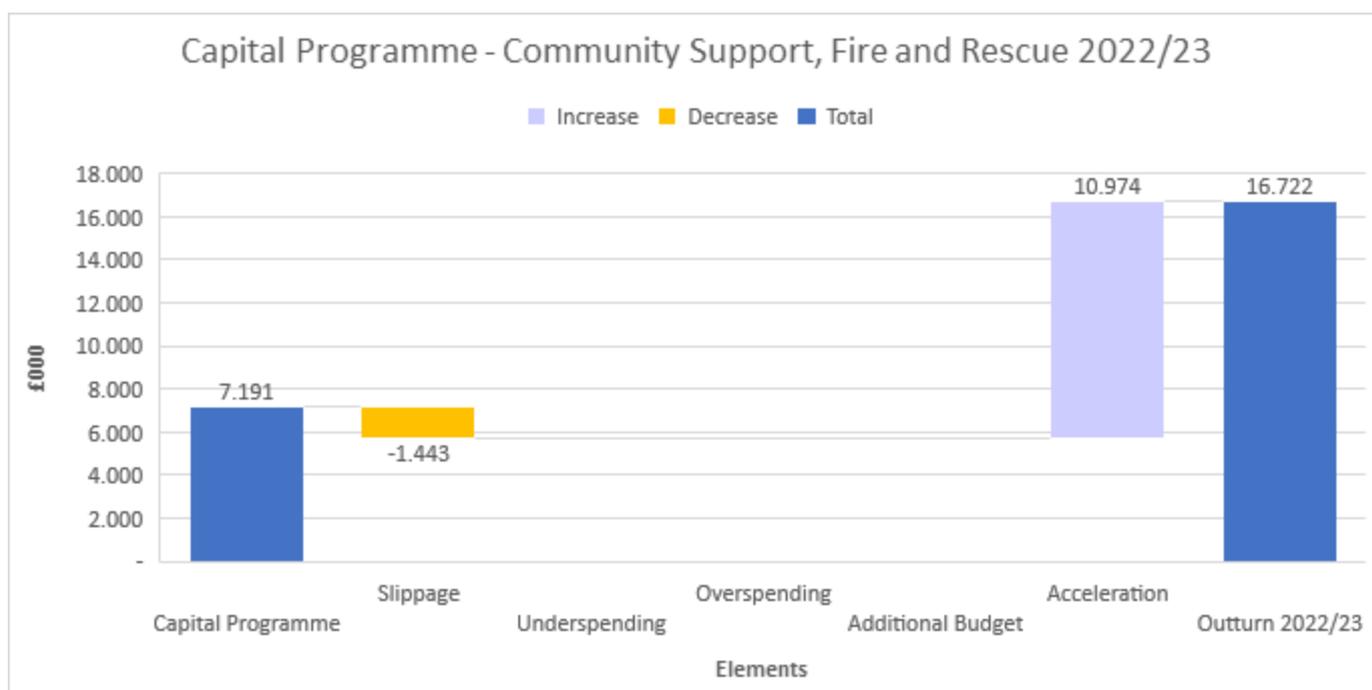
Month Completed	Project	Location	Description
May 2022	Worthing Community Hub	Worthing	Refurbishment of Worthing library to create a new community hub space, a range of services into the library building.

### Finance Summary - Capital

22. The capital programme; as approved by County Council in February 2022, agreed a programme totalling £9.725m for 2022/23. Budget of £2.534m

originally profiled to spend in 2022/23, was accelerated into 2021/22, revising the capital programme to £7.191m.

23. During the year, the Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio spent £16.722m on its capital programme, an increase of £0.346m when compared to the profiled spend reported in December 2022. Investment in the year focussed around the Live Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station which nears completion alongside improvement works at Crawley and Worthing Fire Stations, the fire equipment programme and fleet replacement programme.



**Key:**

Capital Programme – The revised planned expenditure for 2022/23 as at 1st April 2022.  
 Slippage – Funding which was planned to be spent in 2022/23 but has since been reprofiled into future years.  
 Underspending – Unused funding following the completion of projects.  
 Overspending – Projects that require further funding over and above the original approved budget.  
 Additional Budget – Additional external funding that has entered the capital programme for the first time.  
 Acceleration – Agreed funding which has been brought forward from future years.  
 Outturn 2022/23 – Total capital programme expenditure as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

24. Details of the main movements since December are as follows:

- **Slippage: (-£1.443m). Movement since Q3 report: (-£0.518m)**
  - **Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Programme: (-£0.125m).** The service are currently reviewing the feasibility reports for all the stations which will result in the business case being updated early in the new financial year. Funding has been reprofiled into 2023/24.
  - **Fleet: (-£0.230m).** Service are currently reviewing the future needs for fleet which has resulted in delays therefore funding has been reprofiled.
  - **Fire Equipment – (-£0.105m)** – Block allocation has been reprofiled into 2023/24 due to the lead in times for delivery of equipment.

- **Worthing Community Hub – (-£0.058m)** - Negotiations are ongoing regarding final payment, therefore funds have been reprofiled into 2023/24.

- **Acceleration: £10.974m. Movement since Q3 report: £0.864m**

- **Live Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station: £0.864m.** Works continue to progress quicker than first anticipated therefore funding has been accelerated from 2023/24.

25. The latest Capital Programme Budget Monitor is reported in **Appendix 3** and full details of all individual schemes are set out in the [Budget Report](#) published in February 2022.

## **Risk**

26. 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 4** - Corporate Risk Register Summary.

27. 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.