

Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio - Summary

Performance Summary

1. Performance highlights this quarter:

Fire and Rescue Service

- Another significant milestone was reached in April for the **new Horsham Fire Station and Training Centre** when the contractors Wilmott Dixon handed over the keys to the County Council's Facilities Management Team. This marked the early completion of the construction phase and allowed for the start of the commissioning of all the internal systems ready for the site to operate. The Fire Station and Training Centre became operational in July.
- April also saw all four of the **day crewed fire stations go-live with the new shift pattern** marking another successful Community Risk Management Plan project delivered. Each station is now working a rota system that will provide immediate response cover seven days a week and will deliver an improvement in overall response times of 13 seconds to all incidents across West Sussex.
- This quarter, the **Fire and Rescue Service welcomed its latest new wholetime firefighters** who joined the service after completing a 13-week training course. These new colleagues will provide further resilience to the crewing optimisation group which continues to help maintain good standards of fire cover for the county and contribute to the core measure performance reported.
- Culture and leadership remains a priority for the service with the **leadership programme** continuing this quarter focusing on coaching, grievances and discipline. The programme was supported by the annual Proud To Serve staff conference which was hosted at the new Training Centre in Horsham. Colleagues heard from all the heads of service on previous successes and future challenges, with a focus on sustained performance and improvement.
- The **Fire and Rescue Service was operationally busy** this quarter with a particularly difficult road traffic collision and a significant fire in Burgess Hill at an industrial unit that required 10 fire engines and over 50 firefighters at the height of the incident. A tragic road traffic collision in Petworth was yet another reminder of the road risks in West Sussex, with the Prevention Team remaining focussed on road safety and hosting a drop-in event for bikers to help raise awareness and share prevention messages to the biker community.

Community Support

- **Support for the Homes for Ukraine scheme** continues for hosts and guests across West Sussex in 2023/24. Many Ukrainians are moving towards independence and securing privately rented accommodation. Support remains available for those newly arriving under the scheme, in addition to financial assistance for those now seeking a move to private rented accommodation following their initial period living with a sponsor. The Homes for Ukraine

Team continue to offer information, advice, guidance on a range of matters including finance and benefits, education and employment as well as delivering practical assistance with transport arrangements, access to English lessons and regular engagement through proactive milestone calls and face to face visits.

- The County Council has been **allocated £9.7m of Household Support Funding in 2023/24** by the Department for Work and Pensions. Funds from this scheme are being distributed in accordance with the guidance by a range of partner agencies including district and boroughs, Citizens Advice, and community-based organisations. The Community Hub remains a contact point for residents to request support and is available seven days a week to provide information, advice, guidance, practical support, and signposting to internal/external services and support where appropriate.
- **The Registration Service** have delivered 1,062 ceremonies and completed 2,151 notice appointments during the quarter. There were 2,306 deaths registered between April and June, the highest number of registrations in the last four years over the same period and 2,354 births were registered with good availability for appointments on the same day or next day.
- **The Library Service** has been awarded £30,000 by the British Library to enable production of new photo, video and animated content to support the promotion of library services and activities online. The ambition is to better illustrate the full breadth of support available from libraries, to engage hard to reach residents who do not make regular use of their local library. As part of the funding agreement, content will also be used on national online platforms, raising the profile of West Sussex library services across the sector.
- **The Record Office** have been awarded £22,000 by the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust to conserve the working papers of the Consistory Court of the Archdeaconry of Chichester. The documents in this collection date back to 1554 and are extremely fragile as the result of historic water and mould damage. This grant will enable them to be conserved so that they can be fully catalogued by volunteers and made accessible as a valuable resource for researchers.
- Responding to data and information provided about the most prevalent types of fraud in West Sussex, the **first of three digital support and scams awareness sessions took place** in East Grinstead Library. The session was delivered as a hybrid event, which consisted of both in person and webinar delivery to enable better access for target demographic audience.
- The **Community Safety Team** were involved in the 17 **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference's (MARAC)** which took place in West Sussex during Q1. These conferences involved 312 case discussions for high-risk victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse, creating targeted multi-agency safety and action plans, helping to reduce the presenting risk(s), identify gaps in support and continue to hold perpetrators to account for their abusive behaviour.

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>Measure: 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	Dec-22	Mar-23	June-23	↑	G
			A	G	A		
			722	1,004	247		
<p>Performance Analysis: Jun-23: There has been an increase in the number of fire safety audits completed compared to Quarter 1 of the previous year, where 210 audits were delivered. Furthermore, there has been a positive increase in the percentage of unsatisfactory fire safety audits.</p> <p>Actions: Whilst the service are three audits short of the quarterly target, it is confident that the annual target will be met. The team continues to grow and develop within the Protection Service and a number of the team are continuing with their formal Protection qualifications. In the past month, three of the Fire Safety Apprentices have been moved into full time positions of Fire Safety Inspectors. This will assist protection activities including fire safety audits.</p>							
10	<p>Measure: 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	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	↑	G
			G	G	G		
			3,384	4,680	1,298		
<p>Performance Analysis: Jun-23: This is the strongest Q1 performance for over four years and puts the service in a strong position to meet the new proposed annual target of 5,000 visits. During home safety interventions, additional risk reduction activities including installing carbon monoxide sensors, supplying flame retardant bedlinen and replacing alarm batteries were carried out.</p> <p>Actions: 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>Measure: Percentage of 'critical fires' where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard</p> <p>Reporting Frequency: Quarterly.</p>	89.0%	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	↓	G
			G	G	G		
			89.1%	92.1.%	89.4%		
<p>Performance Analysis: Jun-23: For a third consecutive quarter, performance remains high and above target. Stations are continuing to mobilise quickly, responding to incidents in their communities. By continuing to embed professional standards in service delivery, it has been possible to maintain this level of performance. In addition to this, the service has seen 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. This activity is captured through Local Risk Management Plans.</p> <p>Actions: 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. The Day Crewed 7 CRMP commitment is now complete with the service monitoring the positive impact this is having on this measure moving forward into Q2.</p>							

Fire and Rescue		2023/24 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT	Year End Forecast
43	Measure: Percentage of 'critical special service incidents' where the first appliance in attendance meets our emergency response standard Reporting Frequency: Quarterly.	80.0%	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	↑	G
			G	G	G		
	81.6%	80.8%	82.2%				
Performance Analysis: Jun-23: Performance remains above target for a sixth quarter in a row 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 ways of working when mobilising fire engines to calls. It is assisting control room operators to ensure available fire engines are strategically placed across the county to ensure the service are maintaining the agreed response times.							
Actions: 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	Measure: 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		G
					G		
	New Measure – No Data	New Measure – No Data	91.0%				
Performance Analysis: Jun-23: No anticipated issues at this early stage in meeting year-end target.							
33	Measure: Use of virtual/digital library services by residents Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Accumulative	5.45m	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	↑	G
			G	G	G		
	4.50m	6.30m	1.69m				
Performance Analysis: Jun-23: Increased use driven by new Library Website platform with additional content and features, plus new BorrowBox eBook platform offering additional choice for customers.							
Actions: Continue to support growing demand though investment in eLibrary platforms and production of virtual and online library events content.							
34	Measure: Community Hub provides positive outcomes for residents at first point of contact. Reporting Frequency: Quarterly	95.0%			Jun-23		G
					A		
	New Measure – No Data	New Measure – No Data	92%				
Performance Analysis: Jun-23: The Community Hub continues to deliver a high-quality service to the residents of West Sussex providing information, guidance signposting and practical support focusing on Cost of Living and Household Support Fund enquiries.							
Actions: Continuing to regularly review the streamlining of processes as Household Support Fund moves us to a more digital focus.							

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.	(£0.200m)	
Community Support – Transfer of Coroner Officers from Sussex Police	£0.120m			
Community Support, Fire & Rescue Portfolio - Total	£0.485m		(£0.200m)	£0.285m

Financial Narrative on the Portfolio's Position

- As at the end of June, the forecast for the Community Support, Fire and Rescue Portfolio budget is a projected overspend of £0.285m. The main variations are described below.

Community Support

- 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 1st April 2023. Over the next two years, Sussex Police will continue to pay a contribution towards the cost of these staff. The budget was increased by £0.1m in 2023/24 to contribute towards the increased staffing in-take, with further efficiencies from the coroner merger with Brighton and Hove planned to be re-directed to this team; however, due to the increasing demand on the Coroner's Service and based on current projections, an overspend of £0.120m is forecast in 2023/24.
- Additional income of £0.2m is projected within the Registration Service due to the continued increase of ceremonies being delivered following the relaxation of pandemic restrictions.

Savings Delivery Update

- 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)	June 2023		Narrative
Community Support - Optimise Use of Grants	2023/24	200	200	G	
Resilience and Emergency Team - Structural Review	2023/24	100	100	G	
Staffing vacancy increase in vacancy factor from 5% to 6%	2023/24	370	370	G	

Savings Key:			
R Significant Risk	A At Risk	G On Track	B Delivered

Capital Programme

Summary - Capital

- The Fire and Rescue and Communities 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.
- The portfolio's capital programme contains five schemes. Four of the schemes 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	Project: Fire and Rescue Equipment Block Programme - Block	G	G	G	£0.259m	N/A	£0.061m	£0.198m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: On-Going			Project Phase: In Delivery				
	Narrative: Scoping of projects is underway.							
2	Project: Fleet Replacement Programme - Block	G	G	G	£4.072m	N/A	£-	£4.072m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: On-Going			Project Phase: In Delivery				
	Narrative: Projects are going through the governance process.							

	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				
3	Project: Live Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station	G	G	G	£25.608m	£23.935m	£0.794m	£0.879m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: July 2023			Project Phase: In Delivery				
	Narrative: 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	Project: Fire and Rescue Estates Improvement Programme	G	G	G	£1.852m	£-	£-	£1.852m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: To Be Confirmed			Project Phase: In Delivery				
	Narrative: Business Case being created by Service and with a first draft expected in August 2023.							
5	Project: Worthing Community Hub	G	G	G	£2.852m	£2.693m	£-	£0.159m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: May 2022			Project Phase: Practically Complete - In Retention				
	Narrative: In retention.							

10. 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

11. 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.

12. 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.