

Leader Portfolio (including Economy) - Summary

Performance Summary

1. Performance highlights this quarter include:

- **An introductory meeting of the [West Sussex Economy Growth Board](#)** has taken place. The Board will ensure a strong, independent business voice and will oversee the new West Sussex Economic Strategy due to be adopted in March 2025. The Board includes business representatives, and appointed representatives from further education, higher education, business representative bodies, and the Sussex Integrated Care Board, alongside local authority representatives. The current [membership of the Board](#) has been approved. The Board will meet formally for the first time in February 2025.
- **The Careers Hub Teen Technology Festival** took place in November at the AMEX Stadium in Brighton and was attended by more than 300 young people from 28 secondary schools. Participants enjoyed a range of 'tech' activities designed and delivered by national and local employers to inspire careers in tech. The festival was supported by London Gatwick Airport and ARUP Group.
- In relation to the visitor economy, the [Experience Sussex website \(www.experiencesussex.com\)](#) **is now live**, a key development for the new Experience Sussex Partnership covering the geographies of East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council. The content is audience led and data driven, amplifying all the different elements that Sussex has to offer through a collective and collaborative platform, aiming to deliver significant destination cut through with key markets. The new website is building on the success of Experience West Sussex and is key to achieving the County Council's ambitions for the sector.
- The partnership with District and Borough Councils, as part of the **Growth Deals, continues to drive forward key economic and transportation projects**. In Q3, construction works were practically completed along Railway Approach in Worthing, and in Bognor Regis, the Esplanade Public Realm Improvements commenced construction. Both projects focus on improving sustainable transport methods to promote modal shift. Additionally, the Chichester Public Realm Improvements project underwent a four-week public consultation, resulting in 641 survey submissions. Feedback is currently being reviewed while the project progresses into preliminary design. In Burgess Hill, remedial works for Burgess Hill Place and Connectivity Programme Phase 1 are in progress and materials for a public engagement on Victoria Business Park connectivity improvements are being developed with the view to undertake engagement in Q4.
- The **One Public Estate (OPE) Partnership** has been evaluating the optimal use of land, focusing on collective estates and aiming to align with partners and the Council's strategy to better optimise the public estate. Site evaluation work was undertaken on underutilised sites including Crawley County Buildings, the former Year 7 Block at Chichester High School and Chichester Northern Gyratory. Throughout 2025, further viability and market

assessments will be conducted on Crawley County Buildings and Northgate Chichester with a view to progress their development through the Council's Joint Venture or the open market. This work will focus on how best to achieve the County Council's Corporate Plan priority to 'Make the Best Use of Resources'.

Our Council Performance Measures

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

Leader		2024/25 Target	Performance Over The Last 3 Periods			DoT	Year End Forecast
15	<p>Measure: Enterprises supported to sustain, innovate, and grow</p> <p>Reporting Frequency: Quarterly, Accumulative. Reported a quarter in arrears.</p> <p>Aim High Measure</p>	2,337	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24		G
	A		G	G			
			4,616 (2023/24 Target: 5,028)	197	968		
	<p>Performance Analysis: Dec-24: Our Council Plan commits to support enterprises, encouraging successful start-ups and helping established businesses to sustain, innovate, and grow. Seven initiatives made up the KPI at the start of 2024/25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Track creative digital hub in Bognor Regis, Let's Go Net Zero to support enterprises to reduce their carbon footprint and become more sustainable, Experience Sussex and Sussex LVEP supporting visitor economy enterprises, Create Growth to increase investment by private investors in creative industry businesses with high growth potential, The Arun Creative Digital Support Project offering free networking events and intensive support for creative and digital business in the area to support growth and foster collaboration, The Careers Hub which works with secondary schools and colleges across the county to support them in developing a cohesive careers strategy linked to the needs of the West Sussex economy, and, The Growth Hub, which offers a single point of access to business support, advice, signposting and intensive support for businesses of all sizes and sectors in West Sussex. <p>Actions: All initiatives to continue as part of the Economic Growth Business Plan for 2024/25.</p>						
24	<p>Measure: Number of growth deals in place with district and boroughs</p> <p>Reporting Frequency: Annually (April)</p> <p>Aim High Measure</p>	7	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		G
	G		G	G			
			7	7	7		
	<p>Performance Analysis: Dec-24: The partnership with district and borough councils, as part of the Growth Deals, continues to drive forward key economic and transportation projects. Areas of activity this quarter include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The construction along Railway Approach in Worthing is practically complete. Bognor Regis Esplanade Public Realm Improvements commenced construction on site in November 2024. Appointing Landbuild as the contractor for Manor Royal Bus Lane Extension Phase 3. A public consultation was undertaken for Chichester Public Realm Improvements in November 2024, which resulted in 641 responses. <p>Actions: Work is planned to progress on the Bognor Regis Esplanade, which is due to complete in April 2025. Commencement of works is due to start on the Manor Royal Bus Lane Extension – Phase 3 and a site evaluation is to continue on under-utilised sites including Crawley County building, the former Y7 Chichester High School block and the Chichester Northern Gyratory.</p>						

Finance Summary

Portfolio In Year Pressures and Mitigations

Pressures	(£m)	Mitigations and Underspending	(£m)	Projected Year End Budget Variation (£m)
		Staffing Vacancies within the Portfolio	(£0.193m)	
		Economic Development and OPE – Utilisation Grant, External and Partnership Funding	(£0.180m)	
Leader Portfolio - Total	£0.000m		(£0.373m)	(£0.373m)

Financial Narrative on the Portfolio's Position

- As at the end of December, the forecast for the Leader Portfolio is a projected underspend of £0.373m, an increase in the underspend projection of £0.223m when compared to September.
- There have been a number of staffing vacancies held vacant in accordance with the corporate workforce controls currently in place. This has resulted in a projected underspend of £0.193m, an increase in the underspending projection of £0.043m when compared to September.
- The opportunity to utilise external and partnership funding and grant income has been actively maximised within the Economic Development and One Public Estates Team. This action has resulted in the release of £0.180m.

Savings Delivery Update

- The Leader Portfolio has no names savings targets for 2024/25.

Capital Programme

Capital Summary

- The Leader Portfolio Capital Programme; as approved by County Council in February 2024, agreed a programme totalling £1.514m for 2024/25. Budget of £0.264m, originally profiled to be spent in 2024/25, was accelerated into 2023/24, revising this year's capital programme to £1.250m.
- Since this time, the profiled spend has decreased overall by £0.6m, to give a current year end projection for 2024/25 of £0.650m.
- The portfolio's capital programme contains three projects. Two of the projects are in delivery and one is practically complete and within a retention phase

whilst snagging and cosmetic works are complete. The performance and financial details for each are reported below.

	Leader Capital Projects	Performance RAG Status			Total Project Budget	Previous Years Expenditure To 2023/24	2024/25 Expenditure	In Flight Remaining Project Budget
		Time	Quality	Cost	In Flight Projects			
1	Project: Burgess Hill Growth Programme	G	G	G	£6.638m	£6.210m	£0.043m	£0.385m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: 2025			Project Phase: In Delivery		Direction of Travel: ►		
	Narrative: Project is on track. A cyclepath has been added to the scheme and it is hoped these works can be completed in the Spring.							
2	Project: Crawley Growth Programme	G	G	G	£15.665m	£12.060m	£0.036m	£3.569m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: 2025			Project Phase: In Delivery		Direction of Travel: ►		
	Narrative: The Eastern Gateway and Manor Royal Improvement Schemes have been completed. Snagging works are underway.							
3	Project: Bold Ideas, Creative Bognor	G	G	G	£1.080m	£1.071m	£-	£0.009m
	Latest Estimated Completion Date: Complete			Project Phase: Complete – In retention period		Direction of Travel: ►		
	Narrative: Project is practically complete.							

Key:

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

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 2024.

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.