

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY
DATE OF MEETING: 2 SEPTEMBER 2014
REPORT OF: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCE
TITLE: BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2014

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

No

1. What is the report about?

This report advises Members of any material differences to the approved budget in respect of the Community Services revenue and capital budgets.

Potential areas of budgetary risk are also highlighted in this report, so that Members are aware that certain budgets have been identified as being vulnerable to factors beyond the control of the Council, which may result in potential deviations from budget, and are therefore subject to close monitoring by officers.

2. Recommendations:

That Members of Scrutiny Committee – Community assure themselves that satisfactory actions are being undertaken by Officers to address the key areas of budgetary pressure highlighted in this report.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

Local authorities have a statutory duty to set and monitor their budgets during the year and to take any actions necessary because of potential overspending or potential shortfalls in income. Members are therefore presented with a quarterly financial update in respect of Community Services.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources

The financial resources required to deliver Community Services during 2014/15 are set out in the body of this report.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Section 151 Officer to set out the projected financial position of Community Services as at 31 March 2015.

6. What are the legal aspects?

Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides the legislative framework for the process of setting and managing budgets. In particular, Section 28 of the 2003 Act requires local authorities to monitor their budgets during the financial year.

7. Monitoring Officer comments:

The Monitoring Officer has no issues to raise on the content of this report.

8. Report Details:

Community Services Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2014

8.1 Key Variations from Budget

The current forecast suggests that net expenditure for this committee will decrease from the approved budget by a total of £2,560 after transfers from reserves and revenue

contributions to capital, as detailed in Appendix 1. This represents a variation of 0.03% from the approved budget. This includes supplementary budgets of £10,130.

8.2 The significant variations by management are:

MU Code	Management Unit	Over / (Underspend)	Detail
81A3	Health & Safety, Licensing & Commercial	(£5,260)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacancy pay savings
81A4	Public Safety	£3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University Contract loss of income
81B2	Bereavement Services	(£31,200)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backdated NNDR refund Higher Cemetery
81C4	Private Sector Housing	£39,170	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of a new licensing scheme not expected until late 2014/15
81D7	Exton Road Overheads and Fleet Management	(£6,260)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate refund and utility savings

9. Capital Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2014

To report the current position in respect of the Community Capital Programme and to update Members with any anticipated cost variances, acceleration of projects or slippage of schemes into future years.

9.1 Revisions to the Community Capital Programme

The 2014/15 Capital Programme, including commitments brought forward from 2013/14, was last reported to Scrutiny Committee – Resources on 2 July 2014. Since that meeting the following changes have been made to the programme:

Description	£	Approval/Funding
Capital Programme, as at 2 July 2014	2,067,910	
Play Area Refurbishments	7,250	Contribution from Bull Meadow Playground Project
Topsham Recreation Ground	30,490	Contribution from Topsham Community Association
Revised Capital Programme	2,105,650	

9.2 Performance

The current Community Capital Programme is detailed in Appendix 2. The appendix shows a total spend of £366,361 in 2014/15 with £77,820 of the programme deferred until 2015/16.

9.3 Capital Variances from Budget

No variances or issues concerning expenditure have arisen for this committee.

9.5 Capital Budgets Deferred to 2015/16

Schemes which have been identified as being wholly or partly deferred to 2015/16 and beyond are:

Scheme	Revised 14/15 Budget £	Budget to be Deferred £	Reason
Play Area Refurbishments	182,280	48,010	The schemes at Pinhoe and Crossmead are unlikely to be completed in this financial year
Vehicle Replacement Programme	426,000	29,000	The purchase of one van has been deferred to 2015/16

9.6 Achievements

The following schemes have been completed during the first quarter of 2014/15:

- **Play Area Refurbishments**

The Bull Meadow project has been completed and is proving very successful. The new play area at Sylvan Heights has been provided, there is some remaining budget which will fund possible future improvements at the site following further public consultation. Further safety surfacing improvements have been made at Newcourt and this project is now fully complete.

- **Refurbishment and Upgrade of Paddling Pools**

The new Splash Pad at St Thomas Pleasure Ground opened on 23 May. The City Council has replaced the old paddling pool with a brand new water splash play area that is unique to the city.

A series of water fountains, cannons and a tipping bucket now entertain children on top of a brightly coloured rubber surface. There has also been a series of general improvements in the park with an old tarmac area being replaced with freshly laid turf, ideal for picnicking families.

- **Vehicle Replacement Programme**

Exeter City Council has underlined its green credentials by purchasing a two Nissan LEAF electric cars for staff to use when out and about on official duty.

The pool cars will replace some of the Council's ageing diesel-powered vans. As well as reducing climate change emissions, moving away from diesel power reduces particulate emissions and this will help improve air quality on Exeter's streets.

10. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

Community Service budgets contribute to 3 key purposes, as set out in the Corporate Plan; keep me/my environment safe and healthy, keep place looking good, help me find somewhere to live

11. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

Areas of budgetary risk are highlighted in this report. The key areas of budgetary risks within Community Services are attached as Appendix 3, for reference.

12. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

No impact.

13. Are there any other options?

No

Assistant Director Finance

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

Contact for enquiries:

Democratic Services (Committees)

Room 2.3

(01392) 265275