

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 8 NOVEMBER 2011

COMMUNITY SERVICES STEWARDSHIP TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2011

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report advises Members of any material differences by management unit to the revised budget.

2. STEWARDSHIP TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2011

2.1 The current forecast suggests that net expenditure for this committee will decrease from the revised estimate by a total of £228,550 after transfers to and from reserves, which represents a variation of 2.1% from the revised estimate.

2.2 The main variations by management unit are detailed below:

2011-12 REVISED ESTIMATE	£ 10,929,770
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81A1 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	(52,370)
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There will be a saving on staff costs as a result of a vacancy which will not be filled, and two casual vacancies which have now been filled.

81A2 CLEANSING SERVICES (see separate operational accounts)	143,000
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Fleet costs in both the domestic and trade refuse collection services are expected to exceed the estimates mainly due to the increased price of diesel, the additional mileage to Greendale waste transfer station, and the costs of maintaining the fleet.

Waste disposal costs for the trade refuse service are expected to exceed the estimates. This is partially offset by increased income from trade refuse customers and the sale of recyclates collected by the trade recycling service.

These increased costs are further offset by net income from the garden waste collection service in excess of the estimates, and reduced electricity costs in public toilets.

81A3 LICENSING, FOOD, HEALTH & SAFETY (13,740)

A refund has been received in respect of a software package relating to earlier years leading to an underspend.

Following several successful prosecutions by the Commercial Team, the costs incurred in bringing about the prosecutions have been awarded to the authority by the courts.

The net cost of taxi licensing will be funded by a transfer from the earmarked reserve.

81A4 PUBLIC SAFETY 5,250

The restructure of this unit, following the necessary period of notice and consultation, was implemented later than expected when preparing the estimates, leading to an overspend in respect of pay in the unit.

Income from the Supporting People subsidy is expected to be less than included in the estimates, while income from the Home Call Alarm service is expected to exceed the estimates.

A partial refund of service charges paid for the Control Room in 2010/11 is expected to result in a saving.

ACTION POINTS: Staffing is now at the level anticipated in the estimates so no further action is required. The estimates for the Supporting People subsidy and Home Call Alarm income will be reviewed in the 2012/13 estimates.

81A6 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE 16,000
(see separate operational accounts)

Works required to maintain the Flowerpot Skate Park are expected to lead to an overspend.

Water costs in the allotments are expected to exceed the estimates as a result of the dry weather conditions experienced. In addition, the cost of emptying toilets in the allotments is expected to exceed the estimates as a result of increased use.

The planned deletion of a post in the Countryside service was not implemented until later than expected when preparing the estimates, leading to increased pay costs.

Arboricultural costs are expected to exceed the estimates, but this is offset by savings in other operational services as a result of the weather conditions experienced this year.

Expenditure on dealing with illegal campers is expected to be less than estimated.

These additional costs are partially offset by reduced recharges from the Community & Environment Administration and Leisure Management services.

	ACTION POINTS :	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staffing in the Countryside service is now at the level anticipated in the estimates so no further adjustment is required. ▪ A capital bid has been made to replace the Skate Park and one of the paddling pools 	
81A7	MUSEUMS SERVICE	(59,190)
	<p>There will be a saving on staff costs as a result of the restructuring of the service agreed by Executive in January 2011. The grades established for a number of posts by the Job Evaluation exercise are lower than the budgeted grades, but in some cases pay protection will apply.</p> <p>These savings will be partially offset by the agreed extension in the contract of the Head of Museums to the end of March 2012, increased overtime costs due to vacant posts, and anticipated expenditure on additional temporary staff when the museum re-opens.</p> <p>Reduced recharges from the Community & Environment Administration service will arise due to vacancies in that service.</p>	
81A8	SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES	41,000
	<p>Several unexpected contractual liabilities have arisen increasing the cost of this service. In particular, the government's withdrawal of the carbon reduction rebate and increased utility prices will lead to a reduction in the income from Parkwood. In addition, the cost of some equipment and essential electrical work has been incurred.</p>	
81B1	LEISURE SERVICES MANAGEMENT	0
	<p>All staffing and other costs in this unit have now been transferred to the Sports and Leisure Facilities and Grounds Maintenance units. These salaries and the resulting reduction in recharges from this unit to those services have been reflected in their respective outturn forecasts.</p>	
81B2	BEREAVEMENT SERVICES	(23,630)
	<p>Income from interments is expected to exceed the estimates, although this is partially offset by a reduction in income from headstone fees.</p> <p>In addition, savings have arisen on staffing costs, and increased recycling has led to savings on the hire of skips</p>	
81B3	PROPERTIES	(2,700)
	<p>Additional rental income is anticipated.</p>	

81B5	SPORTS & PLAY DEVELOPMENT	(11,830)
	<p>This service ceased with effect from 1st August 2011.</p> <p>Savings have been made on pay, transport and support service costs. However additional expenditure on supplies and services will partially offset these savings.</p>	
81B6	RECYCLING (see separate operational accounts)	(300,000)
	<p>Income from the sale of recyclates continues to exceed the estimates and the cost of freight remains less than estimated. While the prices at which materials are currently being sold exceed those assumed for the estimates, the volatility of these prices makes it difficult to predict the outturn.</p>	
81B9	ADMINISTRATION SERVICE	0
	<p>There will be a saving on staff costs as a result of a vacancy which will not be filled. This is reflected in the outturn forecasts of the units which use the service.</p>	
81C2	ADVISORY SERVICES	109,600
	<p>A number of Private Sector Leaseholders will not be renewing their leases this year as due to the economic climate they need to live in the properties themselves. Under the terms of the lease ECC have an obligation to make repairs to the properties before handing them back and these costs are expected to reach £16,000 by the end of the year.</p> <p>There has been a high level of turnover on the units at Shauls Court as we have been able to house people more quickly; this has resulted in the costs of repairing and cleaning the vacated units being significantly higher than budgeted.</p> <p>At Glencoe there has been a large amount of water penetration into one of the larger rooms caused by damaged roof tiles. This has created significant damage requiring major works to rectify and a reduction in income due to the room having to remain vacant during this time.</p> <p>The Homelessness Grant from central government was increased allowing £44,000 of additional funding to be used to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>At the point of budget setting we expected to receive the full contract value of ECC's Supporting People contract with Devon County Council to provide supported temporary accommodation to homeless families. However, following budgetary reductions made by the County Council we have been advised that we will only receive 75% of this contract value for 2011/12. We have chosen to continue providing the same level of support to these families so they are not disadvantaged, however if further cuts are made for 2012/13 we will have to reconsider our position.</p>	

81C3 STRATEGIC HOUSING & ENABLING (5,000)

A saving is forecast within the salary budgets due to a combination of vacant posts during the first six months of the year and the forthcoming team restructure. The overall savings have been partially offset by redundancy costs.

81C4 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING (53,590)

Savings have arisen as a result of the termination of the contract for the Pan-Devon Home Improvement Agency. Further savings have arisen as a result of changes to staffing in the unit.

These savings are partially offset by an anticipated reduction in income from licences for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) compared with the estimates, as some HMO landlords seek to leave this particular sector of the rental market.

81C5 SUNDRY LANDS MAINTENANCE 0

There are no material variances to report.

81C6 CONTRACTS AND DIRECT SERVICES 0

The costs of this unit are fully recharged to its clients, and there is therefore no direct impact on this committee. However, it has been necessary to employ additional staffing resources to cover increased workloads in some areas which will be recharged as appropriate.

81C7 DIRECTOR – COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT 0

There are no material variances to report.

2011-12 EXPECTED FINAL OUTTURN 10,722,570

EXPECTED VARIANCE ON TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) RESERVES (21,350)

EXPECTED TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE 10,701,220

3. RECOMMENDED

That Scrutiny Committee – Community note this report.

**DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY
AND ENVIRONMENT**

S:PA/LP/Committee/1111SCC15
28 October 2011

HEAD OF TREASURY SERVICES

**COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE
CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report

None