

Corporate Overview Group

Wednesday, 14 June 2023

Finance and Performance Management Quarter 4 2022/23 (OUTTURN)

Report of the Director - Finance and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline the year-end financial outturn position for 2022/23, linked to the closure of accounts process and previous financial update reports and performance monitoring for 2022/23.
- 1.2. To summarise the revenue budget has an overall revenue efficiency position of £1.979m and the capital programme overall underspend position of £5.599m. Much of the efficiency position for revenue is required for service demand in 2023/24 or to meet other risks and therefore an appropriation to earmarked reserves. The capital underspend is largely being carried forward for the completion of existing projects.
- 1.3. The overall financial working environment remains challenging, despite this draft Statement of Accounts has been prepared and published on 31 May 2023 in accordance with statutory deadlines.
- 1.4. The Corporate Strategy 2019-23 monitoring is complete, a new strategy is being prepared and reporting will begin in 2023/24.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Corporate Overview Group:

- a) notes the 2022/23 revenue position and efficiencies identified in Table
 1, the variances in Table 2 (and Appendix A) and approves the carry forwards and appropriations to reserves in Appendix E;
- b) approves the other changes to the earmarked reserves as set out at **Appendix B**;
- c) notes the re-profiled position on capital and approves the capital carry forwards outlined in **Appendix C** and summarised in **Appendix F**;
- d) notes the update on the Special Expenses outturn at paragraph 4.20 and in **Appendix D**; and
- e) considers whether scrutiny is required for identified exceptions.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To demonstrate good governance in terms of scrutinising the Council's ongoing performance and financial position.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 The Council is required to categorise its income and expenditure as either revenue or capital. The General Fund account deals with the Council's revenue income and expenditure, where spend is incurred on day-to-day expenditure or on items used within the year. Capital income and expenditure is included in the Capital Programme. The Financial Outturn, for both Revenue and Capital, is presented below.

Revenue Outturn

- 4.2 The net revenue position in Table 1 below shows a transfer from reserves of £2.760m (originally planned to be a transfer from reserves of £3.465m (adjusted to £4.739m largely reflecting carry forward commitments from 2021/22) a net reduction of £1.979m.
- 4.3 When setting the budget for 2022/23 an estimated increase for inflation and pay was included however, it was not anticipated that inflation levels would peak at 11.1% and that consequently this would result in a higher than anticipated pay award. Revenue budget efficiencies from 2021/22 were carried forward to support these cost pressures. During 2022/23 the Council has continued to closely monitor the budget position, particularly on utilities and where possible identify efficiencies that may help in balancing the increased costs.
- 4.4 The table below shows a positive outcome in a volatile economic environment. The cost of living pressures not only impact on the Council's residents but also on the Council budget and this remains challenging. Prudently the Council allocated additional budget to mitigate potential increases in costs and reductions in income and have continued to identify service efficiencies during the year.

A number of transfers were agreed by Cabinet 14 March 2023 which are included in the final carry forward request totalling £0.502m shown in Appendix E.

Table 1: Revenue Outturn Position

	Original Budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Revised Outturn £'000	Revised Variance £'000
Chief Executive	2,021	2,137	2,136	(1)
Development and Economic Growth	(112)	638	418	(220)
Finance & Corporate	4,330	4,204	3,546	(658)
Neighbourhoods	6,949	7,759	8,068	309
Sub Total	13,188	14,738	14,168	(570)
Capital Accounting Reversals	(1,895)	(1,895)	(1,895)	0

Minimum Revenue Provision	1,293	1,017	1,017	0
TOTAL NET SERVICE EXPENDITURE	12,586	13,860	13,290	(570)
Grant Income (including New Homes Bonus)	(1,861)	(1,861)	(2,450)	(589)
Business Rates (including SBRR)	(3,958)	(3,958)	(4,777)	(819)
Council Tax	(7,667)	(7,667)	(7,667)	0
Collection Fund Deficit	4,365	4,365	4,364	(1)
TOTAL FUNDING	(9,121)	(9,121)	(10,530)	(1,409)
Net Transfer to/(-)from Reserves*	(3,465)	(4,739)	(2,760)	1,979
Carry forward requests (Appendix E)				(502)
Reserves required				(1,477)
Net Surplus after carry forwards and reserve				0
transfers				

- 4.5 Along with in-year efficiencies, the position on utilities was better than anticipated and has helped with the overall net efficiency position of £1.979m in 2022/23. The main revenue variances are shown in **Table 2** (with more detail at **Appendix A**) some of which are requested to be carried forward. Adverse variances include additional cost pressures from Agency spend (mostly Planning and Refuse) £0.48m and reduced income from the delay in opening of Bingham Arena £0.213m and The Crematorium £0.284m. Positive variances include Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool surplus £0.627m (plus a some Business Rates growth £0.192m), additional Government grants £0.589m and increased interest rates on Council treasury investments £0.466m (due to rising interest rates).
- 4.6 The delay in the opening of Bingham and the Crematorium have resulted in a negative variance of £0.213m and £0.284m respectively in anticipated income receipts. The delays were due to factors outside of the Council's control. Despite the impact of both Covid and rising inflation, both were delivered within budget which is a remarkable achievement and testament to excellent project management.
- 4.7 The Council has reported a reduction in the capital value of some of the Council's Treasury Investments as a result of the Covid pandemic, this was followed closely by the war in Ukraine and cost of living pressures which also had a negative impact on the value of the assets. As at 31 March 2023 the value of the investments shows an overall decrease in value of £1.456m. This movement has been debited to the revenue account in accordance with statute and reversed through reserves and therefore does not affect the bottom-line revenue position. Movement in value is expected for assets held over a long period and they can fluctuate in response to market conditions, as we have experienced recently. The statutory override (allowing the reversal of price fluctuations through reserves) has been extended by Government to 31 March 2025 after which any movements will affect the general fund. In order to mitigate any potential impact on the general fund after March 2025, it is proposed to appropriate £0.773m to reserves along with £0.2m approved from 2021/22 efficiencies and £0.2m approved in the MTFS March 2023 (total reserve £1.173m). The position will be closely monitored and if necessary, recommendation to withdraw from the funds

will be reported to Cabinet and Governance Scrutiny Group as part of ongoing monitoring of the Council's Treasury Management position.

Table 2: Main Items Impacting on the Current Revenue Budget

	Main Variances	£'000
Adverse Variances		
Net employee expenses	Agency spend on planning and waste net of salary savings	480
Crematorium	Delay in opening	284
Bingham Leisure Centre	Delay in opening	213
Fleet	Repairs	102
Total		1,079
Favourable Variances		
Planning income	Increase in income	(275)
Edwalton Golf Course	Additional income generated and actual outturn was £62k profit	(97)
Growth Board	to be carried forward	(136)
Website development	to be carried forward	(80)
Contingencies	Utilities not fully required	(90)
Investment income	Rising interest rates	(466)
Total		(1,144)
Other minor variances		(505)
Total Variances		(570)

Business Rates and Council Tax

- 4.8 The Council ensured that applicable business rates reliefs were applied, resulting in 2044 businesses benefitting from over £8.7m of additional rates relief.
- 4.9 The Council has also administered a number of grants for Energy Rebates and Alternative Fuel Payments during the year. 36,755 £150 Energy Rebates were distributed to eligible households along with 4,713 payments of Discretionary Energy Rebates, the combined total of the awards being £5.644m. Since February 2023 the Council has also assessed and distributed grants under the Energy Bills Support Scheme and the Alternative Fuel Payments, awarding 513 payments totalling £0.171m.
- 4.10 Full Councill March 2023 approved use of 2022/23 efficiency savings to supplement the Government funding for Council Tax Support to further discount Council Tax bills meaning no increase for vulnerable households and households in bands A to D. The net cost of the scheme to the Council is £33k and is included in Reserve Commitments in Appendix E.
- 4.11 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) provides funding for investment in local projects to be spent by March 2025. The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is an addition to the UKSPF and is to specifically address the particular challenges rural areas face. The Council will receive £ £2.571m over three

years (Capital and Revenue funding) for investment in local projects and £0.596m Rural England Prosperity Fund (this is capital only). Schemes have commenced on both communities and place and business support projects. A grant funding pot for local organisations and local businesses was launched with applications closing on 19 May for projects to be delivered by the end of March 2024. Once projects are finalised these will be incorporated into the Council's budget and monitored through usual financial reporting.

Streetwise

4.12 On September 1, 2022 the Council brought back in-house its Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance functions to improve the service for Council residents and to drive forward efficiencies over the coming years. The net outturn position for 2022/23 gives an adverse variance of £0.189m largely due to the additional costs pressures of pay and inflation. Quarterly revenue reports will now incorporate Streetwise and budgets will therefore be monitored through the Council's normal financial and performance reporting processes.

Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium and Bingham Arena and Enterprise Centre

4.13 The Council have recently completed two major projects; the new Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium situated in open countryside between Cotgrave and Radcliffe on Trent (opened on 3 April) and the multi-million pound Bingham Arena and Enterprise Centre, comprising the leisure centre, Bingham Jubilee Community Hall and Bingham Enterprise Centre (opened on 20 February 2023). Both facilities are contributing to the Council's carbon net neutral target for 2030, with significant investment in new technology including an electric cremator and various other energy saving initiatives to deliver low CO2 emissions giving 85% and 78% reductions respectively. There has been a positive reaction to the Bingham Arena with memberships in line with targets, to date. We have secured 92% occupancy at the Enterprise Centre and Rushcliffe Oaks have had their first customers. The team are working hard to develop relationships with funeral directors and the feedback on Rushcliffe Oaks has been excellent and positively the facility is attracting customers and funeral directors from outside the Borough.

Planning

4.14 Recruitment to the planning sector has nationally been challenging and Rushcliffe is no exception, and the Council has relied heavily upon agency staff. All substantive posts however are now filled and consequently the reliance upon agency should reduce over the coming months.

Reserves

4.15 There are a number of movements in revenue reserves largely agreed as part of the budget setting process and budget monitoring for 2022/23. A net transfer from earmarked reserves of £4.003m comprises: £2.760m transferred from reserves to revenue plus £1.243m reserves used for capital. The overall net

movement on revenue reserves are detailed at **Appendix B**. The key points to note are:

- There are a number of 'transfers out' or use of reserves totalling £7.524m including: £1.017m from the New Homes Bonus reserve (used to offset the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)); £2.466m out from the Organisation Stabilisation Reserve; and £3.707m appropriated to meet the collection fund deficit.
- There are a number of 'transfers in' totalling £4.763m that increases reserves. Significant items comprise: £1.587m New Homes Bonus receipts; £1.006m net efficiencies to cover carry forward and reserve commitments; and transfer of £0.973m to the Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve approved as part of Quarter 3 revenue reporting.

Specific Reserves

- The New Homes Bonus (NHB) Reserve balance of £8.549m is used to fund internal borrowing in relation to capital projects. The Collection Fund Reserve balance of £1.438m is earmarked for: prior year deficits; risks associated with the decommissioning of the Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station; and pending reforms to the Business Rates system. The Organisation Stabilisation Reserve Balance of £2.534m will partly be used to fund the carry forward requests of £0.502m (Appendix E). This includes the ongoing impact of cost of living and inflation increases. The Climate Change (CC) Reserve (£0.81m) has been topped up by £0.2m in 2022/23 and it continues to contribute to the Council's ambitions to become carbon neutral. During 2022/23 the Council has delivered projects at Bingham Arena and the Crematorium (both of which incorporate energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures) and energy efficiency lighting and Local Authority Delivery (LAD) green energy grants however as these projects were fully funded by grants there is no recourse to draw from the reserve in 2022/23. Projects currently in the pipeline include energy efficiency measures to Council assets and electric vehicles and decarbonisation of Cotgrave Leisure Centre (grant funded). Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve is a new reserve in 2022/23 and will be used to mitigate if reductions in the capital value of the Council's Treasury Investments materialise (see paragraph 4.4).
- 4.17 Overall, whilst the level of Earmarked Reserves is a healthy £19.572m, there are risks going forward in terms of the continuing financial pressures from inflationary and pay increases, uncertainty regarding Fairer Funding and Business Rates systems and further reductions and commitments from reserves to capital projects. This includes the repayment of internal borrowing for the Arena and Cotgrave Masterplan, which was reliant on NHB receipts and these are anticipated to cease at the end of 2023/24. The General Fund balance of £2.604m accords with the Council's approved Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Revenue carry-forward requests and Reserve Commitments

4.18 Despite continuing difficult economic circumstances firstly from the pandemic and more recently inflation increases, the Council continues to invest and grow

the Borough, developing a brand-new leisure centre and Crematorium, improving its parks and recreational facilities and improving the way customers interact with us with a new website. Requests for the use of reserves in 2023/24 (from 2022/23 efficiencies) to support continuing cost pressures and delivery of the Council's priorities are shown in **Appendix E.**

Capital

- 4.19 The year-end Capital Programme provision totalled £21.018m (see Table 3 and Appendix C). Actual expenditure in relation to this provision totalled £15.419m (73% of the budget) giving rise to a variance of £5.599m, £5.426m of which is recommended to be carried forward £3.106m relates to delays in Bingham Arena and The Crematorium and the decision to defer smaller schemes which would pose no immediate Health and Safety risk. Both Bingham Hub and the Crematorium opened in Spring 2023 and are undergoing post opening enhancements. The main variations are as follows:
 - Bingham Arena and Offices £1.563m underspend requested to be carried forward £0.730m earmarked to cover post opening enhancements with any saving to be released in 2023/24
 - The Crematorium £1.273m carry forward is requested for final ancillary works and repayment of VAT due to breach of partial exemption.

A summary of the main variances can be found in **Appendix E and F** including savings of £179k, overspends of £6k, budget acceleration of £20k and a net carry forward request of £5,426m. Details of all variances can be found in **Appendix C.**

Table 3: Capital Summary

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	Current Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000
Development and Economic Growth	14,432	11,341	(3,091)
Neighbourhoods	6,114	3,944	(2,170)
Finance & Corporate Services	363	134	(229)
Contingency	109	0	(109)
	21,018	15,419	(5,599)
FINANCING ANALYSIS			
Capital Receipts	(6,551)	(4,386)	2,165
Government Grants	(3,045)	(2,702)	343
Use of Reserves	(789)	(1,243)	(454)
Grants/Contributions	(9)	(5)	4
Section 106 Monies	(1,374)	(83)	1,291
Borrowing	(9,250)	(7,000)	2,250
	(21,018)	(15,419)	5,599

NET EXPENDITURE

Appendix D shows the Outturn position on the Special Expenses budget. Budgets within the Special Expenses area are also exposed to cost of living risks as utilities costs increase and income from facility hire could reduce, as household income falls. The Special Expenses outturn budget deficit for West Bridgford is £0.018m. The total net deficit as at 31 March 2023, is £0.138m comprising of an opening deficit of £0.120m and the in year deficit of £0.018m. The budgets are set using estimates and the timing of expenditure can result in variances against the budget and has resulted in the £0.018m deficit. The budget going forward will aim to ensure deficits are recovered.

Financial Outturn Conclusion

- 4.21 The financial impact of inflation has, through prudent budgeting been maintained within resources without the need to draw on reserves. Inflation is expected to reduce during the year however there still remains a risk to both Council expenditure and to income receipts as household income contracts. The Council has to balance the need to balance the budget with supporting residents during this difficult period. The Comprehensive Spending Review and both the business rates revaluation and the Fairer Funding reviews (which have already been delayed three times) are now unlikely to take place before 2024/25 which adds a further level of uncertainty and risk making financial planning even more challenging.
- 4.22 The Council continues to drive efficiency and innovation and the Transformation Plan incorporates projects over the medium term that continually challenge Council processes.
- 4.23 The current reserves balance is healthy and this is necessary to insulate the Council against significant financial risks and enable the Council to deliver its corporate priorities, to improve services and invest and grow the Borough. Reserve levels have been critical in ensuring the Council has continued to deliver services through both the Covid pandemic and the cost-of-living pressures. However, we should not be complacent as reserves are a finite resource and with unknown challenges on the horizon and the need to maintain the Council's assets, the reserves could guickly diminish.
- 4.24 The year-end Financial Statements are subject to audit by Mazars and will be considered by the Governance Scrutiny Group in November 2023.

Performance Monitoring - Strategic Scorecard

- 4.25 A summary of the progress of tasks and measures falling within each theme of the Corporate Strategy is shown below. Commentary for any identified exceptions details why targets have been missed and what is being done to improve performance to meet these targets is shown in the appendices.
- 4.26 The Corporate Strategy 2019-23 monitoring is complete, a new strategy is being prepared and reporting will begin in 2023-24. This strategy has been the

most ambitious to date with the most notable tasks delivering a new leisure centre and enterprise hub at Bingham and the Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium at Stragglethorpe. These tasks and others were severely tested by the impact of the Covid pandemic and resulted in project delays due to holdups in the supply chain. Now that these projects are complete they will deliver significant benefits for our residents and the wiser community for years to come. The outstanding strategic tasks will either be added to the next corporate strategy or subsumed into service plan tasks at an operational level.

- 4.27 Performance in quarter 4 is showing signs of improvement, the positive trends seen towards the end of 2021/22 have carried through to this year. Good performance is particularly evident in the following performance indicators:
 - LIDEG06 Processing of planning applications: Major applications dealt with in 13 weeks or agreed period 76% against a target of 70%, this is excellent performance against the problems arising from staff recruitment.
 - LIDEG40 Percentage of RBC owned industrial units occupied occupation levels have increased and ended the year 3.11% above target.
 - LIFCS65 Percentage of telephone enquiries to Rushcliffe Customer Service Centre resolved at first point of contact performance is 94%, this is 7% above the target of 87%.
 - LINS06 Cumulative number of fly tipping cases (against cumulative monthly comparison for last year) – the number of reported cases is 949, 441 below target.
 - LINS28 Number of affordable homes delivered another excellent year with 281 delivered, 81 above target.
 - LINS31a Percentage of applicants within Bands 1 and 2 rehoused within 26 weeks the annual figure of 88% exceeds target by 30%.
 - LINS32 Average number of weeks for all Home Search applicants to be rehoused through Choice Based Lettings 32 weeks compared to target of 52 weeks.
 - LINS37 Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households 6.61 compared to 10.27 last year.
 - LINS38 Robberies per 1,000 population currently 0.29 compared to 0.42 last year.
 - LINS39 Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population 4.84 which is 2.16 below target.
 - LINS51 Number of leisure centre users public over 1.14 million users which is showing signs of a recovery to pre-pandemic levels.
- 4.28 There are four corporate and three operational indicators missing their targets. Explanations can be found in Appendix H.
- 4.29 The Corporate Strategy is a living strategy that is adapting to changing priorities. This means the Council will take advantage of emerging opportunities and removes tasks that have been completed to ensure it is reflective of the current position.

EFFICIENT SERVICES				ENV	/IRO	NME	NT			
	Strategic Tasks				Stra	tegi	с Та	sks		
⊘ 3	> 0	<u> </u>	1	⊘ 2	lacktriangle	2		0		0
There is one task exceptions this quarter. • ST1923_08 Include digital principals in our communications and ways of undertaking business			There and quarter.	re no tas	sk ex	cept	ions th	is		
Performance Indicators			ı	Perform	ance	e Ind	licator	s		
0	△ ₀	2 3	3 0	② 1	<u> </u>		1	? 1		o
Performance exceptions:			Perform	ance Ex	cept	ions:				
LIFCS15 Value of savings achieved by the Transformation Strategy against the programme at the start of the financial year		LINS18 sent for		_						
LIFCS62 Percentage increase in self- serve transactions										
Explanations are provided in the appendix.										

QUALITY OF LIFE	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH
Strategic Tasks	Strategic Tasks
5 2 0 0	3 3 0 2
There are no task exceptions this quarter.	 There are two task exceptions this quarter. ST1923_12 Support the delivery of employment land on all 6 strategic sites in Rushcliffe and sites allocated through the Local Plan ST1923_22 Implementation of proposals from new planning legislation
Performance Indicators	Performance Indicators
2 0 1 2 0	⊘ 6

QUALITY OF LIFE	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH
Performance Exceptions:	No Performance Exceptions.
LINS72a Percentage usage of community facilities	

Further details and a key of symbols is shown in **Appendices G and H**.

Performance Monitoring - Operational Scorecard

4.30 The Council's operational business is also monitored, and 36 measures make up the Operational Scorecard.

	Operational Sco	recard – Perforn	nance Indicators	5
⊘ 24	<u>^</u> 2	35	? 6	2 1

There are three performance exceptions to report.

LIDEG01 Percentage of householder planning applications processed within target times

LIFCS61a Percentage of calls answered in 60 seconds

LINS73b Income generated from parks, pitches and open spaces

These indicators have been identified as exceptions. Explanations are provided in **Appendix H**.

5 Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1 Failure to comply with Financial Regulations in terms of reporting on both revenue and capital budgets could result in criticism from stakeholders, including both Councillors and the Council's external auditors.
- 5.2 The transfer of the net surplus to reserves will support the creation of the Treasury Capital Deprecation Reserve and carry forward of budget efficiencies will assist the Council to meet its priorities to support and grow the Borough.
- 5.3 Changes in Central Government policy influences Business Rates received and their timing, for example policy changes on small Business Rates relief. There is also a risk from Government reform although as mentioned this is unlikely before 2024/25.
- 5.4 There is a continued risk from inflation to expenditure the Council incurs such as fuel and utilities but also on income from fees and charges. This is being

closely monitored and, if necessary, included in our normal financial reporting arrangements to Cabinet and Corporate Overview Group.

- 5.5 Recruitment continues to be challenging in the sector and this increases the pressure on the pay budgets and agency costs.
- 5.6 The Council needs to be properly insulated against such risks hence the need to ensure it has a sufficient level of reserves, as well as having the ability to use reserves to support projects where there is 'upside risk' or there is a change in strategic direction. The Council continues to ensure it is financially resilient at this most difficult of times.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

Financial implications are covered in the body of this report with commentary on revenue (Sections 4.2 to 4.4), Business Rates (section 4.5) reserves (section 4.12), capital (section 4.14).

6.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6.3 Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6.4 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Crime and Disorder implications arising from this report.

7 Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	Successful management of the Council's resources can help
Sustainable	the Council deliver on its goals as stated in the Corporate
Growth	Strategy and monitored through this quarterly report
The Environment	

8 Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Corporate Overview Group:

a) notes the 2022/23 revenue position and efficiencies identified in Table 1, the variances in Table 2 and approves the carry forwards and appropriations to reserves in **Appendix E**;

- b) approves the other changes to the earmarked reserves as set out at **Appendix B**;
- c) notes the re-profiled position on capital and approves the capital carry forwards outlined in **Appendix C** and summarised in **Appendix F**;
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- e) considers whether scrutiny is required for identified exceptions.

For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Director - Finance and Corporate Services Tel: 0115 9148439 Email: plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Council 3 March 2022 – 2022-23 Budget and Financial Strategy; Cabinet October 2022 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Q1 Cabinet December 2022 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Q2 Cabinet March 2023 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Q3
List of appendices:	Appendix A – Revenue Variance Explanations Appendix B – Movement in Reserves Appendix C – Capital Variance Explanations Appendix D – Special Expenses Position Appendix E – Carry forward and reserve commitments Appendix F – Summary Capital carry forwards Appendix G – Corporate Scorecard Appendix H – Operational Scorecard