

REVENUE BUDGET – BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr A Holliday, Deputy Leader
LEAD OFFICER: Julie Crellin, Head of Finance and Management
Information Systems
REPORT AUTHOR: Alison Clark, Accountancy Services Manager

Summary and Recommendation:

The report provides the Executive with an indicative forecast outturn position at the year-end at 31st March 2009.

Recommendation

- a. That Members note the Revised Revenue Budget of £13,611,458 to reflect adjustments of transfers from reserves along with the correction of the treatment of £500,000 budget relating to Renovation Grants - this is more properly considered a capital programme item, but this is subject to confirmation when the 2006/07 and 2007/08 audit is complete.
- b. That Members note the estimate forecast budget position at the year-end of a net under spend of £1,139,941 against the revised Revenue Budget of £13,611,458. This consists of three elements: (1) £207,000 of underspend required to meet commitments which will fall due in 2009/10; (2) £393,453 of the underspend relates to activities supported by earmarked reserves and will be required in 2009/10; and (3) £539,488 of underspendings which are uncommitted and can be returned to revenue balances at year end. The uncommitted underspends relate to Customer Services and Finance and MIS (paragraphs 2.7 and 2.8). This forecast will be subject to adjustment as the year proceeds, to reflect the context in which the services are operating.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a revenue budget forecast of the position at the year end, based on the actual position at 30th November and managers' current projections in mid - January.

- 1.2 The forecast at the year-end is of a net expenditure position of £12,472k compared to a revised budget of £13,611k. This would result in a net under spend across all services of £1,140k, a proportion of which will be committed. Executive will recall that the original net Revenue Budget approved by Council in February 08 was updated in November 08 to reflect the agreed funding from earmarked reserves to fund specific activities, this report again updates the use of funding from earmarked reserves.
- 1.3 The report outlines the significant variances against the Revenue Budget in paragraphs 2.7 to 2.14.
- 1.4 The monitoring report has been prepared by the Accountancy section, working with budget managers. The backlog of work resulting from staffing vacancies (now filled) and Accounts closure 2006/07 and 2007/09 have impacted upon the availability of the team to assist budget managers, but the dialogue is continuing to develop and improve as the year proceeds.

2. BUDGET MONITORING FORECAST AT 31ST MARCH 2009

- 2.1 Budget monitoring is a live and an on-going process. Budget managers receive monitoring reports each month, and working with Accountancy, provide forecasts as to the likely position at the year-end. Forecasts are updated as the actual position is confirmed, and assumptions regarding the remainder of the year are revised in line with experience and new information, where appropriate as part of a dynamic process.
- 2.2 The Original Net Revenue Budget agreed at Council in February 2008 was £13,974k. This has been revised to reflect the drawing down of earmarked reserves since 1st April 2008 for specific purposes, totalling £137k, including £100k relating to involvement of Deloitte in the production of the 2007/08 accounts, and reduced by £500k as a result of the (provisional) transfer of the Renovation Grants to Capital. This is subject to the completion of the audit of Accounts 2006/07 and 2007/08. The Revised Net Revenue Budget for 2008/09 is therefore, £13,611k.
- 2.3 The Executive received a report at its November meeting which considered the actual position and year end projections at the end of the second quarter (month 6). The forecast to at the year end indicated an underspending of £47k (0.3%) against the full year budget. This has been revised, as would be anticipated, during the third quarter.
- 2.4 Current projections indicate a year-end position of £12,472k, compared to the Revised Budget of £13,611k, resulting in a forecast underspend of £1,140k, a proportion of which is committed. This amounts to a significant net increase in underspend compared to the Quarter Two forecast.

- 2.5 Appendix A summarises the budget position by main service heading at 30th November 2008 and the forecast at the year-end. Members will note the revised and extended format, showing the budget, actual and projections in relation to gross expenditure and income. This represents a step-change in budget management and should result in better resource management as the relationship between income and expenditure in delivering and enabling services to achieve corporate objectives will be more clearly apparent.
- 2.6 The main areas of budget variance are as follows:-
- 2.7 Customer Services – the forecast net under spend of £241k relates to a number of variances. The key causes being; staff vacancies, expected costs stemming from the introduction of Allpay cash collection not fully coming to fruition due to staffing natural wastage and, the prudent estimate of net Housing Benefit Subsidy income and expenditure in the 2008/09 base budget - actual net activity indicates a net underspend at year end, this has been reflected in the budget discussions for 2009/10. This will provide an addition to reserves at the year end.
- 2.8 Finance and Management Information Systems – the forecast position at year end is an underspend of £365k. Key variances contributing towards this are; (i) a forecast underspend in relation to Concessionary Fares of £190k, based on actual usage to 30th November and forecast to the year end. (2) Interest from Treasury Management income being greater than budgeted target income (£135k). A number of investments were secured prior to 31st March 2008 at a rate higher than budget assumptions. This has generated a windfall and will benefit reserves at the year end. (3) A forecast underspend of £27k against Management Information Systems due to vacancies. £100k of reserves has been utilised to match the cost of engaging Deloitte to support the closure of Accounts 2007/08.
- 2.9 Legal and Democratic Services – the net forecast overspending of £61k in the main relates to a decline income from housing searches, reflecting the down turn in the housing market, offset by a number of underspends across a range of other budget lines. It is anticipated that a commitment of £20k will be requested to be carried forward in relation to the electronic signature checking system.
- 2.10 Leisure and Environmental Services – the forecast underspending of £45k is due to the net effect of a number of under and overspends. The key underspends are; additional income from Enforcement (approx £15k), and an underspending of around £65k in relation to staffing and an overspending of £26k within Waste Services due to fuel price increases combined with increased costs arising from the change in refuse staff working arrangements. £18k is forecast to be drawn down from reserves in respect of Arts Development ongoing schemes.

- 2.11 Policy and Performance – An underspending of £260k is forecast in relation to Policy and Performance. This is primarily due to underspending against the Corporate Development training budget (£127k) due to programme slippage. A request for carry forward of this underspend is expected as it is intended that the programme will be completed in 2009/10. An underspend of £60k is forecast in relation to Job Evaluation costs which will not be incurred in 2008/09, this is also listed as a forecast commitment. In addition, budget provision of approx. £50k for external consultants to assist with Job Evaluation has not been utilised.
- 2.12 Regeneration is currently forecast to be underspent by £286k at year end. The key variances are as follows; Housing strategy is forecast to underspend by £80k in relation to use of consultants, but this is required to be carried forward to 2009/10 to meet commitments. The Regeneration Delivery Plan, agreed at Executive in August, set out an expectation of spend against the £770k budget, however, locality working arrangements will not be operational by 31st March and consequently, this budget is forecast to under spend by £311k. However, resources are required as the profile of spend effectively shifts to future years and again this underspend will be required to be earmarked and carried forward.
- 2.13 It is important that active budget monitoring is undertaken at least every month, and significant variations are reported through Corporate Team and Executive, so that timely corrective action can be taken. Robust, responsive budget monitoring is a key tool to support the management of the organisation.

3. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 3.1 The financial implication is a projected underspend of £1,140k (8.4%) against the revised revenue budget. Of this underspend, it is anticipated that £600k (52.7%) will be committed in 2009/10 (see Appendix B).
- 3.2 The financial implications of the slow-down in the economy, in particular, the budgetary implication of the recent reductions in the bank interest base rate, have been considered in the preparation of the 2009/10 budget.

4. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 4.1 The budget and monitoring process is fully integrated into the planning process of the Council embracing all objectives of the Council.

List of Appendices

**Appendix A – Summary Budget Monitoring Position at 30th November 2008
(Period 8 plus projection to the year-end)**

**Appendix B – Summary of expected commitments of 2008/09 underspends
in 2009/10**

List of Background Documents: None

List of Consultees: Corporate Team

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed.
This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the
report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	None
Impact on Sustainability	None
Impact on Rural Proofing	None
Health and Safety Implications	None
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	None
Children and Young Persons Implications	None
Human Rights Act Implications	None
Monitoring Officer comments	No comments
S. 151 Officer comments	Expenditure and income need to be continually monitored against budget to ensure compliance with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and forecasts to the year end subject to continual revision and review.

Is this a Key Decision? No

Summary Budget Monitoring 2

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION	Other Income			Net Expenditure			Annual Budget £'000	Revised Nat Budget £'000	Variance £'000
	Actual to Date (30th Nov 09) £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Annual Forecast £'000	Actual to Date (30th Nov 09) £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Annual Forecast £'000			
Chief Executives	-	-	-	611,818	724,538	1,083,857	1,086,807	1,086,807	(2,950)
Customer Services									
Customer Services Revenues & Benefits	(285,931)	(3,931,239)	(520,247)	(3,294,152)	99,358	(8,993)	618,070	618,070	(83,615)
	(285,931)	(3,931,239)	(520,247)	(2,997,135)	511,415	525,762	767,122	767,122	(241,380)
Finance & MIS	(1,355,465)	(1,175,947)	(1,913,877)	(366,864)	292,690	56,618	393,870	393,870	(335,252)
Accountancy Services	-	-	-	131,007	141,914	211,271	212,871	212,871	(1,600)
Audit & Fraud Prevention	-	-	-	309,479	431,862	550,159	647,823	647,823	(27,665)
Management Information Systems	-	-	-	104,882	89,916	890,047	1,254,364	1,254,364	(954,817)
Legal & Democratic Services									
Democratic Services	52,375	-	(30)	236,213	280,202	364,376	390,303	390,303	(25,927)
Elections	-	-	(30)	78,704	56,127	75,629	84,190	84,190	(6,561)
Peace Time Emergency Planning	(54,203)	(120,661)	(61,304)	15,484	13,408	15,484	20,114	20,114	(4,630)
Land Charges	(450)	(71)	(107)	(27,488)	(68,675)	(42,934)	(130,463)	(130,463)	87,529
Legal Services	(87,279)	(83,333)	(130,895)	447,223	367,763	589,626	581,674	581,674	17,952
Licensing	(89,557)	(204,085)	(212,914)	(79,833)	(72,586)	(114,576)	(108,879)	(108,879)	(5,699)
				670,223	557,859	897,603	838,939	838,939	60,664
Leisure & Environmental Services									
Cultural Services	(119,747)	(15,400)	(313)	592,389	742,315	1,152,516	1,113,473	1,113,473	39,045
Enforcement	(345,865)	(268,816)	(469,625)	(105,299)	(62,629)	(139,339)	(124,243)	(124,243)	(15,085)
Environmental Health	(1,090)	(12,006)	(8,739)	371,784	407,811	586,472	611,987	611,987	(13,395)
Leisure & Information	(517,654)	(406,815)	(680,068)	135,918	178,252	221,411	267,378	267,378	(46,167)
Open Spaces	(750,051)	(655,341)	(922,051)	836,930	587,799	844,599	851,699	851,699	(6,700)
Waste Services	(1,822,071)	(1,446,381)	(2,310,960)	1,531,329	1,230,393	1,842,456	1,845,578	1,845,578	(3,082)
				3,263,031	3,043,835	4,550,359	4,565,752	4,565,752	(46,394)
Policy & Performance									
Communications	-	-	-	70,892	73,726	110,732	110,801	110,801	131
Human Resources	(41)	-	(41)	295,129	76,720	176,251	1,127,355	1,127,355	(251,104)
Policy & Performance	-	-	-	192,287	115,381	276,381	286,770	286,770	9,981
Process Improvement Team	(41)	-	(41)	43,056	53,869	65,871	60,323	60,323	(18,875)
				611,274	1,054,667	1,326,984	1,397,249	1,397,249	(260,268)
Regeneration									
Admin Buildings	(748,249)	(449,485)	(1,427,384)	327,393	187,210	343,352	280,815	280,815	65,537
Beacon & TIC	(104,621)	(61,741)	(103,916)	224,833	253,942	365,945	390,913	390,913	(14,988)
Building Control	(150,277)	(191,649)	(203,639)	42,424	20,973	105,136	30,110	30,110	75,026
Community Renewal	(20,633)	-	(20,633)	(15,329)	-	(15,329)	-	-	(15,329)
Economic Development	(14,884)	(19,472)	(18,809)	109,442	74,039	125,611	111,059	111,059	14,752
Regeneration H/A	(233,172)	(176,652)	(256,020)	589,031	598,968	919,595	898,494	898,494	15,091
Planning	(27,149)	(6,867)	(21,157)	(212,362)	(142,723)	(212,029)	(214,065)	(214,065)	2,056
Property	(72,181)	(28,289)	(72,307)	121,321	188,973	236,431	253,459	253,459	(18,028)
Public Buildings	(18,669)	(38,483)	(1,237)	122,357	183,221	301,614	274,862	274,862	(26,752)
Regeneration Strategy	(20)	(10,219)	(4,153)	47,789	90,511	174,235	135,767	135,767	38,468
Homelessness	1,450	(1,467)	(2,200)	2,538	(1,273)	629	(1,909)	(1,909)	2,538
Housing Services	-	-	-	6,238	21,400	18,467	32,100	32,100	(13,633)
Housing Strategy	-	-	-	1,772	5,230	45,751	768,751	768,751	(83,207)
Private Sector Housing Regeneration Delivery Plan (PNSF) Procurement	-	(1,665)	-	85,451	142,212	150,111	213,318	213,318	(311,000)
				1,772	5,230	45,751	768,751	768,751	25,979
				1,580,028	2,342,017	3,226,969	3,513,025	3,513,025	(286,116)
	(1,483,151)	(1,056,028)	(2,126,017)	1,580,028	2,342,017	3,226,969	3,513,025	3,513,025	(286,116)
	(5,036,216)	(7,825,676)	(7,065,876)	3,864,451	9,070,507	12,471,517	13,611,466	13,611,466	(1,139,941)

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Appendix B

Summary of expected commitments of 2008/09 underspends in 2009/10

CORPORATE DEPARTMENT	Forecast (Under) / Over spending 2008/09	Underspending Relating to Commitments to be Funded in 2009/10	Underspending Relating to Earmarked Reserves - 2009/10 commitments	Forecast (surplus) / deficit to transfer to General Fund Balances (Reserves)	NOTES
	£	£	£	£	
Chief Executive:	(2,950)	-	-	(2,950)	No commitments
Customer Services:	(241,360)	-	-	(241,360)	No commitments
Finance and Management Information Systems:	(364,517)	-	-	(364,517)	No commitments
Legal & Democratic Services:	60,664	-	22,453	83,117	Electronic signature checking system. This budget was funded from earmarked reserves and expenditure will happen in 09/10.
Leisure & Environmental Services:	(45,394)	-	-	(45,394)	No commitments
Policy & Performance:	(260,268)	127,000	60,000	(73,268)	£127k - Corporate Training budget will be fully committed by the year end. This carry forward is based on initial estimate of actual expenditure at 31st March in comparison to budget. £60k - Job Evaluation. Reserve funded was identified during budget preparation 08/09 to meet the costs of implementation in 2008/09, related to estimates of pay protection etc. It is unlikely this budget will be utilised before the year end.
Regeneration:	(286,116)	80,000	311,000	104,884	£311k - Regeneration Delivery Plan. This budget is supported by use of earmarked reserves. The Executive agreed to the utilisation of the earmarked reserve, created as a result of Area Based Grant to fund this activity over a three year period 2008/09 - 2010/11 at its meeting of 12 August 2008. Actual expenditure on locality working is unlikely to occur before 31st March. The profile of spending will shift into later years. This budget underspend is required to fund the re-profiling. £80k - Housing Strategy team - staff training and the filling of vacant posts has meant that the expenditure on professional services has not been as great as was budgeted for, but some of the underspending will be required to meet committed external support.
GRAND TOTAL:	(1,139,941)	207,000	393,453	(539,488)	

Appendix B