

| Report for: | Cabinet |
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| Date of Meeting: | 9 December 2021 |
| Subject: | Q2 Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2021/22 |
| Key Decision: | Yes |
| Responsible Officer: | Dawn Calvert, Director of Finance and Assurance |
| Portfolio Holder: | Councillor Natasha Proctor, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources |
| Exempt: | No |
| Decision subject to Call-in: | Yes |
| Wards affected: | All wards |
| Enclosures: | Appendix 1 – Summary of 2021/22 Revenue Budget Forecast by Directorate  Appendix 2 – Summary of Reserves  Appendix 3 – Summary of Grants  Appendix 4 – Savings Tracker 2021/22  Appendix 5 – Capital Programme 2021/22  Appendix 6 – Trading Company Update 2021/22 |

| Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations |
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| This report sets out the Council’s final revenue and capital outturn position for 2021/22. **Recommendations:**   1. That Cabinet notes the revenue and capital forecast positions set out in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3. 2. That Cabinet approve the proposed amendments to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraphs 3.34 to 3.39 and notes paragraphs 3.31 to 3.33. 3. That Cabinet note the Council’s Trading Update as detailed in Appendix 6. 4. That Cabinet authorise the Director of Strategy and Partnerships, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Community Safety, Cohesion and Enforcement, to spend the expected grant received from the Government to support the Afghan Resettlement Programme, which over the three-year period of the funding programme is expected to be in the region of £1.5m.  Reason: (For recommendations) To report the 2021/22 financial forecast position at Q2 and to update Cabinet on trading company performance.  **Afghan Resettlement Programme**  The Council will receive £20,520 over three years per family member. Given the average size of families in Holding Hotels is 6.6, if the Council takes 10 families, then this would equate to £1.35m over the three years of the programme. As this amount exceeds the £500,000 delegated authority for revenue spend, it is necessary to seek Cabinet approval for overall spend for the Afghan Resettlement Programme. The programme will be agreed in consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Community Safety, Cohesion and Enforcement. |

# Section 2 – Report

1. **INTRODUCTION**
2. This is the second budget monitoring report for 2021/22.
3. The revenue budget in 2021/22 is £179.442m which is net of government and other specific grants. A list of external grants is shown at Appendix 3. The net forecast position on the revenue budget at Q2 is an overspend of £101k, after the planned use of reserves which are largely applied to fund one-off projects and cross divisional adjustments.
4. The general fund capital programme budget in 2021/22 is £113.027m. The net forecast position on the capital budget at Q2 is £88.826m which represents 79% of the total capital programme budget. The variance of £24.201m is made up of proposed slippage of £19.721m and an underspend of £4.480m.
5. The Housing Revenue Account capital programme budget is £102.645m. The net forecast position on the HRA capital budget at Q2 is £99.595m which represents 97% of the total HRA capital programme budget. The variance of £3.050m is made up of proposed slippage of £2.3m and a net underspend of £750k.
6. **REVENUE MONITORING**
7. The net forecast position on the revenue budget at Q2 is an overspend of £101k.
8. This is a reduction of £540k from the position reported at Q1 which is largely due to technical adjustments in the Corporate budgets.
9. The summary of the outturn by each division is set out in Table 1 with a more detailed breakdown at Appendix 1:

**Table 1: Summary of Revenue Budget Monitoring Forecast – Q2 2021/22**



**RESOURCES**

1. As at Q2 the directorate is reporting a net overspend of £1.426m after a draw down from reserves and cross divisional adjustments.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Budget £’000** | **Forecast £’000** | **Variance £’000** |
| Q1 | £38,730 | £39,923 | £1,193 |
| Q2 | £38,795 | £40,221 | £1,426 |
| **Variance** | **£65** | **£298** | **£233** |

1. This is an increase since Q2 of £233k which is largely due to additional expenditure funded from Controlling Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) grant which is held within the corporate budgets.
2. The main variances at Q2 are detailed in the following paragraphs.
   * **Business Support** – net overspend £28k. This relates to a scanning project which was scheduled in the previous financial year but delayed due to Covid-19
   * **Customer Services/Access Harrow** – net overspend £350k. This reflects unachieved savings of £50k (£175k 2020/21 and £175k 2021/22). Cabinet agreed to close the telephone lines for Council Tax and Benefits resulting in a saving in staffing costs. The closure was due to take place from 1 October 2020 however Covid-19 prevented to the start of the programme of work required to shift to digital channels. The delays are due to the team working on supporting CEV residents, the Community Hub, Track & Trace, Testing and the Revenues service. It is anticipated that the work can be carried out over the next nine months although there are ongoing discussions regarding the future of this team. In the meantime, the discovery work for the digitalisation of Revenues & Benefits has commenced.
   * **Management** – net overspend £13k. This is due to additional subscription costs.
   * **Strategy** – net overspend £583k. £572k is funded from the COMF grant.
   * **Finance & Insurance** – net overspend £88k. This is due to a loss of income as several schools have jointed the Government’s Risk Protection Arrangement insurance scheme.
   * **Revenues & Benefits** – net overspend £314k. This is due to increased workloads due to Covid-19 and additional resource spend on post-pandemic recovery work to decrease backlogs which built up. In addition, there are extra pressures to a 40% increase in working age council tax support applications over the last 12 months.
   * **Legal & Governance** – net underspend £50k. This relates to Land Charges and Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages where the income is expected to exceed the budget.

**COMMUNITY**

1. As at Q2 the directorate is reporting a net overspend of £1.475m after a draw down from reserves and cross divisional adjustments. It should be noted that whilst it’s assumed that Covid-19 related measures will cease in the financial year 2021/22 the expectation is that the legacy of these restrictions will continue to have an impact on the Council’s financial performance.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Budget £’000** | **Forecast £’000** | **Variance £’000** |
| Q1 | £33,214 | £34,373 | £1,159 |
| Q2 | £33,147 | £34,622 | £1,475 |
| **Variance** | -£67 | £249 | £316 |

1. The variance has increased by £316k from Q1, due mainly to the following reasons:
   * Facilities Management – forecast pressure of £200k assumed against the budget for reactive repair works across the Council’s corporate sites
   * Facilities Management - Increase in forecast security cost at the depot of £64k
   * Planning – legal costs of £70k are expected to be incurred following the commission of a public inquiry on a planning application at Canons Park station
   * Housing (GF) - £176k increase in the forecast cost of using of B&B accommodation. As part of the pandemic response for the last 15 months, the Council has continued to accommodate households who were homeless even though full assessment of their circumstances resulted in the Council not having a housing duty. As we now move into recovery mode, a decision has been made following a review of these cases to work with them to move them on over the next 3 months.

This is partially offset by the following reductions:

* + Regeneration – £32k reduction in forecast spend on providing additional support. This includes expenditure on consultancy advice.
  + Harrow Arts Centre/Harrow Museum – £147k reduction in income loss forecast due to the award of the Cultural Recovery Fund Round 2
  + Licensing & Enforcement – the easing of restrictions has allowed for a greater number of applications to be processed and the forecast income shortfall has been revised accordingly.

1. **Environmental Services – net overspend £1.648m**
2. Estates & Facilities Management
   * **Facilities Management** – net overspend £1.402m. This is due to a forecast overspend on the Depot operational costs. The budget for reactive repair works for the Council’s corporate sites is estimated to overspend by £200k. Interim staffing arrangements across the service area is projected to increase staffing costs, resulting in a net overspend of £79k. In addition there is Covid related expenditure of £801k including works resulting from fire risk assessments as the Civic Centre, enhanced cleaning, fogging and security.
   * **Corporate Estates** – net underspend £208k. This is due to over recovery of rental income across the Council’s corporate property portfolio
   * **Head of Facilities and Estates** – net overspend £22k due to staffing costs as a result of interim staffing arrangements.
   * **Catering** – net overspend £6k in relation to the Harrow Meals on Wheels service following the cessation of service provision to LBHF in August 2021
   * **Waste Management** – net reduction £400k in the monthly gate fee, driven by current market conditions for dry recyclables, has resulted in a forecast underspend on waste disposal costs.
3. Parking and Network Management
   * **Parking Services** – income is expected to be lower than pre-Covid-19 levels however this is largely offset by budget growth in the MTFS to reflect the losses of income. Therefore, this area is forecasting a balanced budget.
4. Divisional Director
   * **Staffing** – net underspend £93k. This is due to 2 vacant divisional director posts which at present are being covered by an interim member of staff
5. Licensing & Enforcement
   * **Covid-19 Marshalls** – net overspend £480k. In addition, £52k pressure relates to advertising and legal costs attributed to a manslaughter case.
6. Strategy, Development & Performance
   * **Community Engagement** – net underspend £121k. This is due to vacant posts across the Community Engagement and School Crossing Patrol teams.
   * **Contracts Management** – net overspend £23k. This is as a result of a forecast overspend on the Public Mortuary SLA which is partially offset by a small underspend on service overheads.
   * **Business Performance** – net underspend £19k. This is due to a vacant post
7. Transport and Environmental Operations
   * **Transport** – net overspend £21k. This is due to staffing costs in the Fleet Management team
   * **Head of Transport and Environmental Ops** – net overspend £66k. This is due to interim staffing arrangements.
8. **Directorate Management – net underspend £14k**
9. Covid-19 is expected to continue to result in losses of income in 2021/22. As part of the MTFS process budget growth of £5m was added to the Community directorate budget to recognise anticipated losses of income. This £5m growth is held within Directorate Management. As at Q2 it is anticipated that the losses of income due to Covid-19 will be £4.986m resulting in a net underspend of £14k.
10. **Enterprise and Planning – net overspend £70k**
    * In the Planning service a public inquiry on the planning application decision of Canons Park Station is estimated to result in £70k of counsel and consultant costs. There is a risk that this may increase if the Council is liable for appellant’s costs.
11. **Cultural Services – net underspend £229k**
    * **Harrow Museum** – net underspend £263k. A one-off payment of £325k has been received from the National Heritage Lottery fund. This relates to the final 10% of the grant award for the Headstone Manor refurbishment project as the grant condition only allows that this funding is released after the final monitoring and evaluation report has been submitted and approved. This is partially offset by a pressure of £46k due to sunk costs in relation to proposals for a new funding application for Headstone Manor. In addition, there is a further £16k of additional Covid-19 costs.
    * **Harrow Arts Centre** – net overspend £39k. This is due to additional enhanced cleaning costs related to Covid-19.
    * **Libraries** – net underspend £5k. This is due to several part-time posts across the library portfolio which are forecast to remain vacant throughout the financial year of £30k partially offset by £25k in additional enhanced cleaning costs relating to Covid-19.
12. **Housing General Fund**
13. As at Q2 the Housing General Fund is projecting a contribution to reserves of £218k and a cross divisional adjustment of £70k. The forecast also includes utilising £2.028m from the Homelessness Prevention Grant (formerly FHSG) to meet the costs associated with the Homelessness Reduction Act.
14. It is expected that there will be a significant increase in homelessness approaches from the private rented sector as Government support and mitigations such as the ban on evictions, furlough scheme extension and the extended six-month Section 21 notice period comes to an end.
15. Estimated known pressures are summarised as follows
    * Additional costs of accommodating single homeless and rough sleepers of £31k. Bed & Breakfast and other forms of emergency accommodation are initially used, then settle into more permanent private rented accommodation (costs net of Housing Benefit)
    * B&B cases accommodated under discretionary power due to Covid-19 where homelessness duty has ended total costs £165k
16. **Regeneration**
17. The Regeneration Programme revenue budget for 2021/22 is £1.250m and is forecast to spend within budget. The majority of the costs relate to staffing and additional consultancy advice however a portion of the spend is attributable to the financial impact of Covid-19.

**PEOPLE SERVICES**

1. The forecast for People Services at Q2 is a net overspend of £1.564m after drawdowns from reserves and cross divisional adjustments.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Budget £’000** | **Forecast £’000** | **Variance £’000** |
| Q1 | £105,305 | £108,261 | £2,956 |
| Q2 | £105,370 | £106,934 | £1,564 |
| **Variance** | £65 | -£1,327 | -£1,392 |

1. This is reduction from the position reported at Q1 of £1.392m This is made up of
   * Adult Services - £1.091m reduction in spend previously anticipated to be funded from the Adults Social Care Reserve
   * Children’s Services - £301k reduction in spend mainly related to SEN Transport
2. The movements and variations are explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

**Adult Services**

1. As at Q2 the forecast for Adult Services indicates that the service will be delivered within the budget allocated.
2. At this point in the financial year it is challenging to forecast the position with certainty given that the services continue to be affected by the pandemic.
3. **Strategic Management** – net overspend £176k. This has changed from a balanced position at Q1 due to new temporary social worker posts to be funded for a fixed term, funded from the ASC reserve. A balance of £186k is being held on the Directors contingency to mitigate any unplanned pressures arising during the year which cannot be reduced or eliminated elsewhere across the directorate
4. **Purchasing** – balanced position. At Q2 the reported forecast for purchasing indicates planned activity in line with the allocated budget, requiring no draw down from the ASC reserve.
5. The position has improved since Q1 by £1.255m due to:
   * Reduction in level of growth by £200k in Children & Young Adults with Disabilities service in terms of number and cost of care packages than previously forecast
   * Reduction in the Adults purchasing forecast by £1.055m due to a lower number of care packages per week being set up than forecast in Q1 and a higher number of deaths in the community above budgeted assumptions.
6. The forecast assumes the following:
   * The Discharge to Assess process will continue until the end of the financial year and results in the costs of the first 4 weeks of care being funded by the NHS
   * 15 new care packages per week (11 in the community and 4 in Nursing and Residential). Winter pressures have been assumed for 12 weeks starting from mid-November resulting in a further 2 Nursing Packages a week being required over this period. Evidence suggests that this is overstated as data indicates that 6 months post hospital discharge there is a steep drop off and the ongoing new packages is closer to 11 per week. This will continue to be closely monitored.
   * Early indications show that the Three Conversations to social care conversations is returning to pre-pandemic performance at finding alternative solutions and thereby reducing the number of ongoing packages of care, however, this has led to a bottleneck at the front end and continued pressures on staffing.
   * A number of CCG commissioned care packages from hospital discharges will transfer to the LA. This is currently estimated at £325k however social care reviews will determine any ongoing LA liability
   * 325 deaths during the year
   * Approximately £220k of the £300k MTFS commissioning savings have been achieved and the balance is on target to be delivered by year end. The PWC costs of £175k are being funded centrally.
   * The best-case scenario forecast assumes that the 5.3% BCF uplift is agreed and will reduce placement pressures and that there are no further nursing pressures (beyond the £325k assumed) from CCG commissioned placements.
7. **Mental Health** – balanced budget. This assumes forecast savings of £627k as part of the S75 overspend recovery plan will be achieved. The position is being closely monitored and reviewed through the S75 governance process.
8. **Other Adults** – balanced budget. This position has worsened since Q1 by £80k due to assumptions around the use of corporate reserves changing, as well as an increase in the Occupational Therapists staffing forecast.
9. **In-House Services** – net underspend £331k. This is due to the phased opening of day care largely in relation to the budgeted costs of agency staff which enables the loss of income at Wiseworks to be mitigated. This underspend has increased by £242k since Q1 due to delays in re-opening the day centres, leading to lower agency staff and transport costs.
10. ASC Reserve – the 2020/21 outturn enabled reserves to be set aside for adults social care to be carried forward to 2021/22, totalling £1.921m. It is anticipated that this will not need to be drawn down this financial year.

**Public Health**

1. As at Q2 Public Health (PH) is reporting an overspend of £128k related to wider health projects. The position has improved since Q1 by £194k due to increase in underspends in the sexual health service (on the CNWL contract), an underspend on the agenda for change budget of £76k and a staffing underspend caused by delay in recruitment of staffing allowing for the service not to use the grant uplift to offset staffing costs. The overspend will be managed through a draw down from the PH reserve. There are ongoing projects which are being funded through reserves including the Dementia Hub, ADHD & Autism, Ridgeway Project and PNA assessment which is cyclical and has been delayed from 2020/21 as well as the funding of October half term free school meals.

**Children’s Services**

1. As at Q2 Children’s Services is reporting a net overspend of £1.564m after draw down from reserves. This has reduced by £301k since Q1 largely due to reduction of pressures in SEN Transport as the new routes for the 2021/22 academic year have been finalised.
2. The headline pressure across the directorate is £4.963m with mitigating managements actions of £901k and £2.498m draw down from reserves. It should be noted that these £627k of these management actions are one off and will not be available in future years.
3. The 2021/22 budget has increased by £1.226m through the MTFS to support anticipated growth in placements & accommodation and frontline staffing which is partially offset by a reversal of savings of £410k no longer achievable taking the net growth to £816k. There was also growth of £777k for SEN Transport to manage increased demand and costs.
4. **Frontline Teams Staffing & Other Costs** – net overspend £1.504m.In order to manage caseloads agency staff are required to cover vacant social work posts, including sickness and maternity cover. There are around 25% of frontline posts which are covered by agency as well as increased ‘As and when’ workers to provide statutory supervised contact sessions. It has been necessary to recruit agency super numerate social workers in frontline teams to help manage increasing referrals and caseloads.
5. **Children’s Placements & Accommodation** – net overspend £2.384m
6. In 2020/21 spend in these areas significantly increased compared with average spend in the previous two years. Largely this was attributed to Covid-19 however it is difficult to accurately work out exactly which costs are Covid-19 related and which are due to other demographic changes. Throughout 2020-21 the number of Children Looked After peaked at 207 in August 2020 compared to previous averages of around 170.
7. The current number of CLA is back down to around 170 however the number of young people currently accommodated have significant and complex needs which in some cases require expensive residential provision.
8. There are regular resource tracking and monitoring panels to ensure the level of accommodation and cost continues to be appropriate for the young person’s needs. This is supported by the Keeping Families Together service which aims to prevent young people coming into care or working on step down plans where safe to do so. In addition, there are targeted actions to reduce the average cost of service provision through negotiation with providers including block contract services for Asylum and also Leaving Care.
9. There are also issues regarding placement sufficiency as foster carers and other providers were reluctant to take new young people during COVID resulting in higher cost placements than necessarily required or young people staying longer in existing placements where they could have been stepped down. In addition, despite a successful in-house fostering recruitment campaign young people are still being placed out of borough for reasons of contextual safeguarding and not just placement sufficiency
10. **Signers & interpreters and Legal costs** – net overspend £143k. There are pressures mainly in relation to translation services, such as whole document translation of parenting assessments for individuals whose first language is not English as well as Legal disbursement costs including barrister and independent experts’ fees in relation to care proceedings.
11. **Client Spend Section 17** – net overspend £65k. There are pressures in relation to support to families with children subject to a Child Protection or Children in Need plan, to help children remain at home where it is safe to do so. This budget remains at risk due to increasing numbers of Children in Need.
12. **Other Children and Young People Services** – net overspend £183k. This is due to pressures on other non-staffing budgets including commissioned services and the Harrow Children’s Safeguarding Board.
13. **SEN Transport** – balanced budget. SEN Transport provides home to school and home to further education settings for children and young people in education with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). There are significant pressures due to increase in demand for transport, increased complexity of children’s needs and pressures in the market in relation recruitment of qualified drivers. These issue lead to requirement for more single passenger journeys and the increased use of taxis and other hired transport. Despite this, it is anticipated that a balanced budget can be achieved in 2021/22.
14. **Education Services** – net overspend £286k. This is due to pressures in relation to SEN Assessment & Review Service and Educational Psychology for Covid-19 recovery which is funded from a draw down from a reserve.
15. **Capital Programme & PFI**- net overspend £224k. The majority of this pressure relates to the Schools PFI which will be funded by a drawdown of £195k from the PFI reserve. The remainder relates to feasibility studies which must be charged to revenue until the it is determined whether the capital scheme can proceed.
16. The above pressures are partially mitigated by the following income/drawdowns:
17. **One-off grant and other income** – net underspend £627k.
18. **Drawdown from Reserves** – net underspend £2.498m.

**Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

1. The DSG is a ring-fenced grant of which the majority is used to fund individual school budgets in maintained schools, academies and free schools in Harrow. It also funds Early Years nursery free entitlement places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds in maintained council nursery classes and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries as well as provision for pupils with High Needs including those with Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) in special schools and special provision and mainstream schools in Harrow and out of borough. The DSG is split into blocks: schools block, early years block and high needs block
2. There is a projected overspend on the High Needs Block of £1.164m in 2021-22 which added to the cumulative deficit of £3.730m brought forward from 2019-20 and 2020-21 will take the total deficit at the end of March 2022 to £4.895m.
3. There is a projected underspend on the Schools Block (growth fund) of £777k which will be returned to the schools contingency.
4. Any deficits an authority may have on its DSG account is expected to be carried forward and does not require to be covered by the authority’s general reserves. This is a temporary arrangement until 2022-23 beyond which LAs must demonstrate they have sufficient reserves to cover the deficits.
5. With effect from 2019-20 the DfE has tightened up the rules under which local authorities have to explain their plans for bringing the DSG account back into balance.
6. The DfE will require a report from any LA that has a cumulative DSG deficit of more than 1% at the end of the financial year. The 1% calculation will be based on the latest published DSG allocations for 2021-22 compared with the deficit shown in the authority’s published draft accounts.
7. The final deficit at the end of 2020-21 of £3.730m represents 1.55% of the overall DSG allocation (including academy funding). The recovery plan has been drafted however and discussed with Schools Forum. However, the following points should be noted
8. Despite the significant proposals and measures planned over the next ten years, this will not mitigate the deficit. This is due to the following contributory factors:

* historical underfunding
* current budgets being based on historical budgets rather than historical spend
* extension of age range to include 0-5 and post 19
* current and projected formulaic funding which does not keep pace with demand
* significant historical and projected growth in number of EHCPs
* continued growth in complexity of pupils’ needs
* limitations about creating cost effective provision in borough due to capacity and site limitations

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)**

1. As at Q1 the HRA is forecast to make a small surplus of £74k which brings the reserves in line with the budgeted position of £6.347m ie £6.273m (draft closing reserve position for 2020/21. The position reflects the Covid-19 pressures of £71k and other variances of £849k due to lower income of £561k, higher depreciation charges of £184k, health & safety costs £80k and GLA grant £24k. These have been offset by lower capital charges of £732k and savings in operational budgets of £262k mainly due to vacancies and the impact of lower void numbers.
2. The main risk identified in the budget is the impact of the end of Covid-19 restrictions on the repairs service that may have the effect that the number and cost of void properties, which are currently below budget, could increase over the next seven months
3. The expected HRA reserve position is set out below at Table 2:

**Table 2 – Housing Revenue Account Reserves 2021/22**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **HRA revenue balances £'000** | **Outturn 2020/21 pre audit** | **Budget** | **YTD actual** | **Forecast** | **Variance** |
|  | £’000 | £’000 | £’000 | £’000 | £’000 |
| Balance b/fwd | -7,526 | -6,347 | 0 | -6,347 | 0 |
| Net (surplus) deficit | 339 |  | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Transfer to/(from) reserves: | | | | | |
| Repairs reserve | 114 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Transformation reserve | 250 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Regeneration Reserve | 550 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Balance c/fwd | -6,273 | -6,347 | 0 | -6,347 | 0 |

**CORPORATE AND TECHNICAL**

1. As at Q2 the forecast for the corporate and technical budget is a net underspend of £4.364m as detailed below.

**Corporate Items**

1. As at Q2 the forecast for corporate items is a net overspend of £80k. This is due to increased costs related to the coroner’s court.

**Investment Properties**

1. As at Q2 the forecast for investment properties is a net overspend of £80k. This is due to vacant space which results in loss of rental income.
2. From 2015 to 2019 the Council acquired seven investment properties at a cost of £48.2m. The portfolio consists of warehouses and other commercial and residential properties across the UK, as well as an office block in Harrow.
3. At acquisition, the net yield was estimated at 2.31% (gross yield 7.3%) for all but the office block Kings House (net yield 0.9% and gross yield 5.9%) which was also purchased as a land acquisition for potential regeneration. The return from investment properties was included in the MTFS.
4. The projected return from all but Kings House is currently on target despite COVID-19. There is vacant space in Kings House – part of the 3rd floor has been vacant since acquisition and the remainder of the 3rd floor became vacant in December 2020. This results in loss of rental receipts and the additional cost such as business rates and service charges which falls back to the council.
5. The annual estimated impact of vacant space at Kings House in 2021/22 is a loss of rental income of £395k. This is partly offset by earlier investment purchases achieving returns over and above their target hence the overall investment property pressure is forecast at £80k.
6. If this pressure materialises the council can call on the investment property reserve to mitigate this.

**Transformation Savings**

1. As at Q1 the transformation savings target of £1m is reporting an adverse variance as the target will not be met.

**Covid-19 Grants & Income**

1. In 2021/22 the council will receive the following Covid-19 grants and income as shown at Table 3

**Table 3 – Covid-19 Grants & Income**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **£000** |
| Covid-19 Expenditure Pressures Grant 2021/22 | 6,051 |
| Controlling Outbreak Management Fund |  |
| * 2020/21 brought forward | 1,503 |
| * 2021/22 allocation | 2,100 |
| Compensation for loss of sales, fees & charges | 700 |
| **Total Covid-19 grants and income** | **10,354** |

1. The Covid-19 Expenditure Pressures Grant 2021/22 allocation of £6.051m was included in the overall 2021/22 budget on a one-off basis. Compensation for loss of sales, fees & charges was also included in the budget on a one-off basis but at an estimated lower value of £500k.
2. Both COMF allocations have been earmarked to additional expenditure within the directorates including enhanced cleaning, fire risk assessments, communications, Covid-19 marshals and other COMF relevant activities. The grant is not as specific as other ringfenced grants as it can be spent against a set of criteria at the organisation’s discretion to best meet the needs of the borough. The expenditure is shown against the relevant directorate and the grant income is held corporately as it is a cross-council grant.

**Central Contingency**

1. The central contingency of £1.248m was not required and therefore there is an underspend against this budget.

**Technical and Corporate Adjustments**

1. As at Q2 there is a projected net underspend of £473k in the technical and corporate adjustments budgets which is primarily an underspend on capital financing costs and interest charges.

**RESERVES**

1. Attached at Appendix 2 is a schedule of all the reserves held by the Council.

**GRANTS**

1. Attached at Appendix 3 is a schedule of all the grants the Council is anticipating receiving in 2021/22

**AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME**

1. On 31 August 2021, [the Government announced ‘Operation Warm Welcome’](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fnews%2Foperation-warm-welcome-underway-to-support-afghan-arrivals-in-the-uk&data=04%7C01%7CJo.Frost%40harrow.gov.uk%7C0b4ce7c69c6845ce87a808d9aace6c63%7Cd2c39953a8db4c3c97f2d2dc76fb3e2c%7C1%7C0%7C637728625814527046%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=D6r4BgMkdibvjoYTopG%2BE9icq3n5Jm5KuGR%2FIfYpiQ4%3D&reserved=0) to ensure that all those Afghan residents who have relocated to the UK following the evacuation of Kabul, can access the vital healthcare, housing, education and support into employment they need to fully integrate into our society.
2. There are two specific programmes as part of ‘Operation Warm Welcome’, the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), both of which offer funding to Local Authorities who receive families under these schemes for three years on the basis of £20,520 per family member over the three year period, tapered in three annual payments, with the year one payment being £10,500.
3. On the basis of the number of families in holding Hotels, the Council has made an initial pledge to receive 10 families over the next 10 months, which given the average size of families within hotels is currently 6.6, would equate to around £1.35m over the three years. The council has developed a partnership approach to support the delivery of this programme locally, but with the sums of money that the Council is likely to receive, Officers require delegated authority to move forward with the development of the offer, which will include housing, integration support, benefits take up, school places, language support, employment skills and more. The funding received will go towards putting in place the best value response to support these outcomes being delivered effectively for the families.
4. Regular monitoring reports will be submitted to the finding department, the Home Office, to ensure spend is carried out to support the intentions of the funding agreement.

**MTFS IMPLEMENTATION TRACKER**

1. The 2021/22 budget includes approved MTFS savings of £3.443m.
2. Attached at Appendix 4 is a schedule of the individual red, amber, green and purple rated savings in the MTFS. The definition used to classify savings ratings in this report are detailed in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Savings Definition**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Green** – Low or no risk to delivery of savings | Clear delivery plans in place  Project running to timescale |
| **Amber** – Medium/some risk to delivery | Potential for slippage but project will be delivered as originally intended but not within timescale, so saving will not be fully realised |
| **Red** – High risk to delivering forecast savings | Project may have started but will deliver **no** savings in the current financial year  Project cannot be delivered but underspends found elsewhere to mitigate savings. |
| **Purple** | Future years’ savings |

1. Table 5 below shows the summarised position for each directorate for 2021/22:

**Table 5 - Savings Tracker 2021/22 – Directorate Summary**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Resources** | **People Services** | **Community** | **Corporate** | **Total** | **%** |
| **£’000** | **£’000** | **£’000** | **£’000** | **£’000** |  |
| **Red** | -175 |  | -34 | -1,000 | -1,209 | 35% |
| **Amber** |  |  | -36 | -144 | -180 | 5% |
| **Green** | -1,759 |  | -295 |  | -2,054 | 60% |
| **Totals** | **-1,934** | **0** | **-365** | **-1,144** | **-3,443** | **100%** |

1. In 2022/23 the MTFS savings total is £3.443m. 35% of these savings are rated red which means that these savings will not be delivered in this financial year. The financial impact of not delivering these savings is included in the overall forecast position at Q2.
2. The red savings of £1.209m relate to the following savings:
   * Resources £175k – Customer Services: Reduction in Customer Channels. Cabinet agreed to close the telephone lines for Council Tax and Benefits to reduce the Access Harrow budget by £350k through staff reduction.  The closure was due to take place from 1 October 2020 with the budget reduction being equally split between 2020/21 and 2021/22.  However, Covid-19 prevented the start of the programme of work required to channel shift Revenues & Benefits to digital channels. It is anticipated that the work can be carried out over the next nine months.
   * Community £20k – Building Control. Income is adversely impacted by Covid-19 and it is unlikely that any additional income will be generated in 2021/22.
   * Community £14k – Housing General Fund: Travellors Site. The Housing service will be unable to carry out this review in 2021/22 to achieve full cost recovery. The saving will be met from within the Housing General Fund in 2021/22.
   * Corporate £1m – Transformation Savings.

1. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
2. The revised capital budget for 2021/22 is £215.672m as set out at Table 9:

**Table 9: Capital Programme 2021/22**



1. The general fund capital programme budget in 2021/22 is £113.027m. The net forecast position on the capital budget at Q2 is £88.827m which represents 79% of the total capital programme budget. The variance of £24.201m is made up of proposed slippage of £19.721m and an underspend of £4.480m. Further details are set out at the following paragraphs.

**RESOURCES**

1. As at Q2 the Resources capital programme is forecasting to spend £14.528m which represents 98% of the total budget.
2. There is a variance of £250k in relation to the Careline Devices Replacement Programme and this will be slipped to 2022/23 as the programme is phased over two years. There are no revenue implications as a result of this slippage.

**COMMUNITY**

1. As at Q2 the Community Directorate forecast is an overall spend of £62.716m which represents 90% of the total budget.
2. The forecast variance of £2.113m is planned to be slipped into 2022/23 and £4.480m is forecast as underspend in this year’s Capital Programme.

**Environment**

1. The services forecast to spend £36.617m in 2021/22 and to slip a budget of £0.060m to 2022/23. £1.691m is reported as budget underspend. Projects with a budget variance are summarised below.
2. There are a couple of major transport infrastructure projects in Wealdstone area in the capital programme – Bus Improvements scheme and Liveable Neighbourhood. Both projects require significant external funding from TfL supported by a match fund from BCIL. TfL funding has been adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Following its funding review, TfL confirmed the release of the funding for the bus improvements scheme in 2021/22 to continue the works that started in the previous financial year. However, no funding has been allocated for Liveable Neighbourhood. £300k was originally assumed to be allocated in 2021/22 capital programme, and this is forecast as an underspend until there is any update from TfL funding.
3. TfL funding update is awaited on the annual Local Implementation Plan, therefore the budget of £1.391m in the capital programme is reported as an underspend.
4. There is a budget of £0.060m allocated for vehicles procurement in 2021/22. This is primarily for the replacement of a couple of small vehicles according to their age profile. Following an assessment on vehicles’ condition, it is decided that the vehicles are to be kept for another year and therefore this budget is slipped to 2022/23.
5. The Wealdstone Future High Street Fund project is funded by MHCLG with a match fund from BCIL. There is a total budget of £9.209m over 3 years. £1.500m was originally estimated for year 1 when the Capital Programme was prepared. Subsequent reviews of the project plan and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding confirm the funding profiled to year 1 of £0.960m. Therefore the £0.540m in 2021/22 is forecast to be slipped to 2022/23.

**Culture**

1. The services forecast to spend £1.445m in 2021/22 and to slip a budget of £1.513m to 2022/23. Projects with a budget variance are summarised below.
2. Harrow Arts Centre refurbishment. This project is for multiple years and is funded by the GLA and BCIL. The refurbishment of existing buildings was completed in previous years, while the New Build phase is programmed in 2021/22. An initial tender exercise for the New Build was completed, however the costs exceeded the funding envelope. A decision was then made to re-tender the project based on a design and build contract instead. The delay in appointing a contractor means that the majority of works will be delivered next year and therefore £1.513m is slipped to 2022/23.
3. Unless explicitly stated above there are no revenue implications as a result of the slippage.

**Enterprise & Planning**

1. The services forecast to spend the full budget allocation of £3.385m in 2021/22.

**Housing General Fund**

1. The services forecast to spend £9.559m in 2021/22. £2.789m is reported as a budget underspend. Projects with a budget variance are summarised below.
2. Additional DFG grant was carried forward from 2020/21 resulting in a corresponding £0.085m reduction in borrowing requirement for 2021/22.
3. Property Acquisition programme – 32 additional homes. Budget was carried forward from 2020/21 to complete 3 remaining property purchases, bringing the total programme purchases to 42. These have concluded resulting in an estimated underspend of £154k.
4. Property Acquisition Programme 2021/22 – there is a projected underspend of £2.550m as a result of legislation changes effective from 1st April 2021, which prevents the continued use of Right to Buy 1-4-1 receipts being eligible to fund this programme.

**Regeneration**

1. At this stage, the service is forecasting spend to budget. There are some known risks to this position identified on Waxwell Lane (£0.220m) due to some immature Japanese Knotweed identified on site, boundary tree issues, design and drainage issues but at this stage it is thought this will be contained within existing budgets. Practical completion is estimated to be achieved January 2022 with sales concluding early in 2022/23.

**PEOPLE SERVICES**

1. The total People Services capital budget in 2021/22 is £28.886m. As at Q2 the projected spend is £11.528m which represents 40% of the total budget. Further details are set out at the following paragraphs.

**Adult Services**

1. The Adult Services capital budget in 2021/22 is £411k. As at Q2 this is forecast to spend to budget.

**Public Health**

1. The Public Health capital budget in 2021/22 is £9k. As at Q2 this is forecast to spend to budget

**Children’s Services**

1. Children’s Services capital budget in 2021/22 is £28.466m. It is proposed to slip the majority of this funding totalling £17.118m to future years. The majority of the slippage relates to external grant funding allocated for basic need school places. However, at present the school roll projections do not indicate that there is a need for permanent expansion at this time.
2. There are no revenue implications as a result of this slippage

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

1. The service forecasts to spend £102.644m and slip budget of £2.30m to 2022/23. There is also an underspend of £750k. Projects with a budget variance are summarised below.
2. Planned Investment – following the tender of Meadfield & Cornell scheme, the budget has been reprofiled to reflect project delivery resulting in slippage of £900k to 2022/23.
3. Health & Safety 3 Programme – In October 2021 Cabinet approved an additional £1.6 of HRA capital resources, above that which had already been approved in the programme of £2.4m, resulting in a total revised allocation of £4m. The additional £1.6m expenditure is as a result of additions to the level of works required can be contained within the current HRA Planned Investment Capital Budget for 2022-23 of £5.895m with no impact on the General Fund and no requirement for additional borrowing. This is estimated to be a 66 week programme of works spanning this year and 2022-23 and the budget has been reprofiled to reflect this resulting in slippage of £1.4m into 2022-23.
4. There is a budget of £1.0m within the planned investment programme set aside to be used as match funding towards meeting Governments’ Green initiatives targets and the service anticipates that the full budget will not be required this year resulting in an underspend of £0.750m. This resource will go back into the HRA capital programme and be reallocated.
5. The following additions required to the Capital Programme are all funded by grant and therefore no additional capital financing costs will be incurred within the Council’s general fund.

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22**

1. **ICT Dynamics – Further £500,000 draw down from budget**
2. The current capital programme includes provision for the new Dynamics ERP system.  The Finance part of the project went live on 4th October, with payroll and HR being progressed with an estimated go live date of April 2022. Cabinet were updated in September 2021, (as part of the Quarter 1 budget monitoring update) and were asked to note that £500k of the phase II budget was being drawn down to cover delay costs to 31st March 2022.
3. The total budget in the Capital Programme associated with enhancing Dynamics 365 is £1.7 m (£1.050m in 2021/22 and £0.650m in 2022/23). Out of the £1.7m, £1m relates to HR enhancements. Cabinet are requested to note a further draw down of £500k to cover the completion of the Phase I project and to cover some of the additional HR functionality which was in the second phase of the Dynamics project. Given the current focus of the project team is to go live with payroll and HR by 1st April, it is likely that any new HR functionality will be timetabled for post April 2022, once HR and payroll have gone live.

**Additions to the Capital Programme**

1. **Litter in Project - £17,693**
2. Following the successful application of the Litter Bin-frastructure grant scheme, WRAP has awarded a funding of £17,693 to undertake a litter project that focuses on raising awareness of litter and educates on what can be done with it. The project will focus on 30 primary schools and install 2 bins outside each school at located agreed with them. The funding will be used on the purchase of bins, therefore it is proposed that additional funding of £17,693 is included in the Capital Programme.
3. **Headstone Manor Park for People - £308,371**
4. The Headstone Manor Park for People project was in the previous year’s Capital Programme with a total budget of £1.797m. Due to two periods of prolonged wet weather and Covid-19 lockdowns, the project was delayed with resultant contractor claims and extension of time. The work has now been completed and the final account from the contractor is produced. The additional costs of £359,289 over budget are being met from an additional grant of £265,100 recently secured from Heritage Lottery Fund (original funder of the project), additional S106 funding of £43,271 not previously utilised on the project and an existing budget of £50,918 in Highway Drainage of the Capital Programme. It is therefore proposed that a total additional funding of £308,371 is included in the Capital Programme. A separate approval will be sought for the use of budget of £50,918 from Highway Drainage project by way of a budget virement under delegated authority in accordance with Financial Regulations.
5. **Parks Infrastructure - £15,000**
6. A funding of £15,000 from Heritage of London Trust has been secured to contribute towards the restoration of the historic railings and gates and the stone piers of Cedars Open Space. It is therefore proposed that additional funding of £15,000 is included to Parks Infrastructure capital programme.
7. **COUNCIL TRADING STRUCTURE UPDATE 2021/22** 
   1. The Council’s Trading Structure update is attached at Appendix 6 and summarises the financial position and provides a general update on the activities of all the Council’s trading entities.
8. **REPORTING FOR THE 2021/22 FINANCIAL YEAR**
   1. This is the second revenue and capital budget monitoring report for 2021/22.
   2. Cabinet will receive quarterly monitoring reports during the year as follows:
      * Quarter 3 – February 2022
      * Outturn report – June 2022

## 6.0 Implications of the Recommendation

Implications of recommendation are set out in the body of this report.

#### 7.0 Performance Issues

Good financial monitoring is essential to ensuring that there are adequate and appropriately directed resources to support delivery and achievement of Council priorities and targets as set out in the Corporate Plan. In addition, adherence to the Prudential Framework ensures capital expenditure plans remain affordable in the longer term and that capital resources are maximized.

As at Q2 the forecast position on the revenue budget is an overspend of £101k

For the 2021/22 savings built into the MTFS total £3.443m. The overall position is that 60% of the savings are RAG rated as Green (Clear delivery plans in place and project running to timescale), 5% amber (Potential for slippage, project will be delivered as originally intended but not within timescale, so saving will not be fully realised) and 35% red (Project may have started but will deliver no savings in the current financial year).

The general fund capital programme budget in 2021/22 is £113.027m. The net forecast position on the capital budget at Q2 is £88.826m which represents 79% of the total capital programme budget.

The Housing Revenue Account capital programme budget is £102.645m. The net forecast position on the HRA capital budget at Q2 is £99.595m which represents 97% of the total HRA capital programme budget.

#### 8.0 Environmental Implications

There is no direct environmental impact.

## 9.0 Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **Yes**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below. **Yes**

The following key risks should be taken onto account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk Description** | **Mitigations** | **RAG Status** |
| Additions to the capital programme that may incur additional borrowing costs to the council | * Funded by additional grants thus no additional capital financing costs will be incurred by the Council’s general fund budget | Green |
| Failure to deliver the budget on target | * At Q2 the council can broadly manage a balanced budget, reporting a small overspend of £101k which has reduced from £641k reported at Q1. * It is anticipated that by the end of the year this can be contained within budget through continued robust budget monitoring and challenge. | Green |
| Trading companies’ failure to deliver required contribution to the MTFS | * Income target reprofiled over four years rather than three * Impact of reprofiling on 2021-22 budget is already assumed in overall forecast at Q2 * Quarterly stakeholder groups * Review of financial and non-financial performance information | Green |
| A total £1m draw down of the ICT Dynamics Budget to cover delays and to complete Phase I leaves insufficient budget to complete the project | * The project scope will be reviewed to ensure the project comes in on budget whilst delivering as much of the additional functionality as possible. | Green |

## 10.0 Procurement Implications

## Any procurement arising from this report will be supported by the procurement team and will be undertaken compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules.

## 11.0 Legal Implications

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that without prejudice to section 111, every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs”. Section 28 of the Local government Act 2003 imposes a statutory duty on a billing or major precepting authority to monitor, during the financial year, its income and expenditure against budget calculations.

Additions to the Capital Programme are dealt with in B48 of the Financial Regulations, the additions above are within the thresholds allowed for Cabinet.

## 12.0 Financial Implications

Financial matters are integral to this report.

## 13.0 Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

13.1 Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Cabinet has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

13.2 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

* eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
* advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
* Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

13.2 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

* remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
* take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
* Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

* Tackle prejudice, and
* Promote understanding.

13.3 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

• Age

• Disability

• Gender reassignment

• Pregnancy and maternity

• Race,

• Religion or belief

• Sex

• Sexual orientation

• Marriage and Civil partnership

13.4 Equality assessments were undertaken for the budget proposals agreed by Council listed as part of the MTFS process and an overall equality assessment was undertaken on the MTFS. There is only recommendation in this report for decision “That Cabinet approve the proposed amendments to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraphs 3.33 to 3.41” it is not considered that this will have a detrimental equalities impact.

It is not considered that this report will have any further equality implications.

14.0 **Council Priorities**

The Council’s vision:

**Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow**

This report deals with the Revenue monitoring which is key to delivering the Council’s new priorities:

* Making a difference for the vulnerable
* Making a difference for communities
* Making a difference for local business’s
* Making a difference for families

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

**Statutory Officer: Dawn Calvert**

Signed by the Chief Financial Officer

**Date: 26/11/21**

**Statutory Officer: Jessica Farmer**

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

**Date: 30/11/21**

**Chief Officer: Charlie Stewart**

Signed by the Corporate Director

**Date: 1/12/2021**

**Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta**

Signed by the Head of Procurement

**Date: 30/11/21**

**Head of Internal Audit: Susan Dixson**

Signed by the Head of Internal Audit

Date: **30/11/21**

## Mandatory Checks

### Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

### EqIA carried out: NO

### EqIA cleared by: N/A

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Sharon Daniels, Head of Strategic and Technical Finance (Deputy S151), Telephone 020 8424 1332, [Sharon.Daniels@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.Daniels@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:**

* [**2021/22 Budget Report**](https://moderngov.harrow.gov.uk/documents/s169323/Final%20202122%20Budget%20Report%20February%20Cabinet-1.pdf)

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**NO**