

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 19 JULY

REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2020/21

Cabinet Member Cllr Andrew Moore
Responsible Officer Deputy Chief Executive (S151): Andrew Jarrett

Reason for Report: To present the Revenue and Capital Outturn figures for the financial year 2020/21.

RECOMMENDATION(S): That Scrutiny Committee notes the report and feeds back any areas of concern

Relationship to the Corporate Plan: The financial resources of the Council impact directly on its ability to deliver the Corporate Plan prioritising the use of available resources carried forward from 2020/21. The Outturn Report indicates how the Council's resources have been used to support the delivery of budgetary decisions. All future spending will be closely linked to four key priority areas identified in the 2020 – 2024 Corporate Plan.

Financial Implications: Good financial management and administration underpin the entire document. A surplus or deficit on the Revenue Budget will impact on the Council's General Fund balances. The Council's financial position is constantly reviewed to ensure its continued financial health.

Legal Implications: None.

Risk Assessment: Regular financial monitoring information mitigates the risk of over or underspends at year-end and allows the Council to direct its resources to key corporate priorities. Members will be aware that the Council continues to face a financially difficult and uncertain future. As such, the Strategic Risk Register (monitored by Audit Committee) includes a specific risk relating to this issue:

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues identified for this report.

Impact on Climate Change: No impacts identified for this report.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report contains information relating to the Council's overall financial performance for the 2020/21 financial year. The Outturn figures included are provisional and subject to external audit; the findings of which are to be reported to Audit Committee in September this year.
- 1.2 Monitoring the Budget is an important part of the Council's performance management framework. The aim is to keep a tight control on spending on services within a flexible budget management framework.
- 1.3 The Revenue Outturn position for the financial year 2020/21 is as follows:
 - The General Fund (GF) Revenue Outturn position for 2020/21 is a net overspend of £65k as shown in **Appendix 1**. The table below assumes this transfer.

- The HRA is a “Self-Financing” account for the Council’s Housing Landlord function, which is budgeted to “breakeven” (net of approved transfers to/from HRA Reserves). The HRA Outturn for 2020/21 is a net underspend of £94k as shown in **Appendix 2**.

2020/21 Revenue Outturn Position	31 March 2020 £k	In year movement £k	31 March 2021 £k
General Fund Reserve	2,251	(65)*	2,186
Housing Revenue Account Reserve	2,000	0	2,000

* Pre Audit

- 1.4 Members should note that officers have also identified areas where the carry-forward of some unspent budgets where it will be beneficial to help mitigate the impact of financial pressures and commitments in 2021/22. These are proposed to be transferred into Earmarked Reserves. These are identified within the individual service summaries and within **Appendix 3**.
- 1.5 2020/21 has been an exceptional year for all Councils. The financial effects of Covid-19 have been material with significant variances in expenditure incurred and funding received. The Council has lost income across Council Tax, Business Rates and Service Fees and Charges and has incurred additional spend in providing support to businesses and local communities. It has however been largely compensated by a wide variety of additional grant and compensation schemes. **Appendix 4** summarises the additional funding received by the Council, some of which has been passed directly onto struggling businesses and residents, others have helped offset the additional pressures experienced by the Council itself.
- 1.6 The Capital Outturn position for 2020/21 is an underspend of £29,907k with the vast majority carried forward as shown in Section 6. A summary is included within **Appendix 5**.
- 1.7 A summary of the Council’s Treasury Management year end position is shown in Section 7.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee should note that the Outturn report is fundamentally a set of management reports that show the year-end position on all service areas. The Finance Team then have to turn these management reports into the statutory financial statements which are subject to a wide number of complex accounting rules that often significantly change the final picture of a service’s financial position for the year. However, it is important to note that the bottom-line profit or loss for the year remains constant.
- 2.2 Members will be aware from previous experience that the position can change between “in-year” projections and the final Outturn position, mainly due to demand-led service costs and income levels. The budget monitoring process involves a regular review of budgets. Budget Holders, with support and advice from their Accountants, review the position and update their forecasts based on currently available information and knowledge of service requirements for

the remainder of the year. As with any forecast there is always a risk that assumptions and estimates will differ from the eventual outcome.

- 2.3 During the budget setting process, Budget Holders / Accountants continue to ensure that Revenue Budgets are set on a robust basis and take a prudent view of the likely levels of income and expenditure.

3 Covid-19

- 3.1 All aspects of life in 2020/21 have been dominated by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Just prior to the start of the financial year (20 March 2020) the country was put into full lockdown. Throughout the year, there have been various degrees of restriction which affected people's movement and businesses ability to trade. As a response, the Authority has delivered a wide range of support: from providing Business Rates Relief and Grant Support Payments to supporting the most vulnerable in society through the Community Shielding Hub, the Track and Trace scheme and Vaccination Centres.
- 3.2 The Council's finances has been materially impacted by this. Significant additional grant income of circa £40,000k was received to enable the Council to provide this vital support. Conversely, the closure of the leisure centres and reduction in the use of our car parks due to the retail closures and the work from home guidance has significantly reduced the income collected. This has been partially offset through the Government's Income Compensation Scheme, which replaced up to 75% of the loss, after authorities have absorbed the first 5% loss.
- 3.3 Staff were also materially impacted, with a work from home where possible in place throughout the year. Over 100 staff were furloughed and a further 27 were redeployed to help those most vulnerable through the Community Shielding Hub and assisting with and making our leisure centres available as Lateral Flow Test and Vaccine Centres.
- 3.4 Despite this, our financial position has remained robust and our Revenue Outturn position is very close to Budget, at £65k or 0.56% overspent. Each aspect of the overall finances are covered across the following sections.
- 3.5 Appendix 4 provides a summary of the additional Covid-19 related funding received by the Council during the year. The Council treats these funds differently depending on the control it has over the funds.
- Some of the funding, such as the Business Rates Reliefs are directly passported to Businesses through the claim scheme the Council has put in place. As such the Council is only acting as an "Agent" for this funding and therefore has no control over it. Any unclaimed funding is to be returned to Government. These funds are not included within the "funding" of the Council and any unspent element is held as a creditor on the Balance Sheet
 - The Council has greater control over other aspects of the additional funding, such as the generic Support Grant tranches and Income Compensation. Here the Council is acting as a "Principal" and therefore can retain unspent elements. These are therefore recognised as "funding"

for the Council and any balance is proposed to be held in Earmarked Reserves

- 3.6 The unspent balances on the additional grant funding received has been rolled forward to enable its distribution in 2021/22. In addition, the Government have legislated that the collection fund deficits will be smoothed over three years and have provided grant funding to smooth the cash flow implication of this. Therefore £3,411k have been transferred to reserves and will unwind over that three year timeframe.
- 3.7 The effects of Covid-19 will continue into 2021/22 and probably beyond. In the medium term, external income levels will need to return to pre-pandemic levels, as without this, it will be necessary for the service budgets within the MTFP to be adjusted in future years.

4 The General Fund Reserves

- 4.1 The General Fund Reserve is the major Revenue Reserve of the Council. It is increased or decreased by the surplus or deficit generated on the General Fund in the year. This reserve held a balance of £2.251m at the start of the year. In 2020/21 the final £65k deficit generated in year is proposed to be transferred to this Reserve leaving a balance of £2,186k. If this is approved, the General Fund Reserve will still remain above the recommended minimum level of £2,000k as required by Cabinet agreement on 16 January 2020.
- 4.2 Detailed budget monitoring reports were provided to both senior managers and Members throughout 2020/21. This monitoring focused on significant budget variances (+/- £20k), including any remedial action where necessary leading to an estimated overall Outturn position. The final written monitoring report considered by the Cabinet gave a detailed position as at 31 December 2020 and predicted an end of year deficit of £89k for the General Fund. Therefore the final position improved by £24k.
- 4.3 The table below shows the overall Budget, Actual and Variance, summarised for 2020/21.

Financial Summary for 2020/21	2020/21 Budget £	2020/21 Actual £	2020/21 Variance £
Total Net Cost of Services	11,386,408	11,033,222	(353,186)
Other Income and Expenditure	138,036	7,132,112	6,994,076
TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURE	11,524,444	18,165,333	6,640,889
TOTAL FUNDING	(11,524,444)	(18,100,397)	6,575,953
Net Income and Expenditure	0	64,937	64,937

- 4.4 As described above, there have been some significant variances at an individual service level. A detailed explanation of these key variances is shown in Appendix 1, service by service. This report highlights the major movements to enable Members to appreciate the more significant trends within each service area. Appendix 1 also provides a summary of the key variances at individual service level to enable full transparency of the position.

- 4.5 In addition to the General Fund Reserve, the Council holds a number of Earmarked Reserves (EMRs) where service underspends are kept so that they can be used to help fund anticipated future expenditure commitments. The net movement of £6,559k to these reserves and the end of year balances held on them are shown in Appendix 3.
- 4.6 As described above, a significant amount of the funding transferred to EMR is due to the smoothing of the Collection Fund Deficit over the next three years. In addition, significant additional Covid-19 related grant funding has been received which has also been transferred to EMR to help mitigate future financial pressures.
- 4.7 The Council (in common with other public bodies) continues to face a difficult financial climate, therefore, it is prudent to retain robust balances to smooth the potential effect to the tax payer of further cuts. The level of Earmarked Reserves in this report further supports the forward planning of the organisation. This approach to financial management will help to deliver our corporate priorities during the short to medium term whilst mitigating the effect of any future cuts in Government funding as we move towards becoming a self-financing organisation.

5 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 5.1 This is a ring-fenced reserve in respect of the Council's housing landlord function. It is increased or decreased by the surplus or deficit generated on the HRA in the year. For 2020/21 the Outturn is a net surplus of £94k and Members are requested to approve a transfer to HRA reserves to bring this to zero.
- 5.2 Some of the key variances within this surplus are explained in paragraph 5.4 and the effect of it on the HRA balance is shown below.

HRA Balance

HRA Reserve Summary	£k
HRA balance @ 31/03/2020	(2,000)
Budget saving achieved in 2020/21	(94)
Net transfer to HRA ring-fenced reserves	94
HRA balance @ 31/03/2021	(2,000)

- 5.3 Given the positive closing financial position delivered in 2020/21, it is recommended to transfer a sum of £94k into the ring-fenced HRA reserves. Inclusive of budgeted contributions, this has resulted in a net contribution to the Housing Maintenance Fund of £923k. The above position leaves the HRA balance of £2,000k untouched as at 31 March 2021.
- 5.4 Main budget variances during 2020/21 giving rise to the figure of £94k include:
- £390k salary savings relating primarily due to Covid-19 and a delay in commencing developments;
 - £471k savings due to reduced maintenance and overheads as a result of Covid-19;

- £416k reduced income and recharges for the above reduced maintenance works;
- £624k settlement of a contract dispute; and
- £336k additional contribution to the Major Repairs Reserve above budget

For further details, please see the HRA Outturn Summary for 2020/21, which is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

- 5.5 The Outturn includes a number of accounting entries 'below the line' that don't affect the revenue position for the HRA, such as Depreciation. For presentational purposes these items have been excluded from the report. Members should note that these items will be shown in full in the Statement of Accounts.
- 5.6 In addition to the above, the HRA holds a number of Earmarked Reserves. The movements on these during 2020/21 and their closing balances are shown on Appendix 3. This money is effectively "ring fenced" and will be held to meet expenditure on projects during 2021/22 and beyond.

6 The Collection Fund

- 6.1 Mid Devon is a Collection Authority for Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates, and as such, is required to produce a Collection Fund Account for the Mid Devon area. The Council collects Council Tax on behalf of Devon County Council, Devon Fire and Rescue Service, Devon & Cornwall Police and the Town/Parish Councils.
- 6.2 The Council Tax collection rate for 2020/21 was 97.0% (98.5% in 2019/20). This demonstrates how our Revenues section has consistently been effective in collecting the annual charge in extremely challenging economic times. This resulted in a collection deficit of £1,109k for the year, with Mid Devon's share of this amounting to £92k.
- 6.3 The National Non-Domestic Rates collection rate was 96.8% for 2020/21 (99.2% in 2019/20). Again, this demonstrates how our Revenues section has consistently been effective in collecting the annual charge in extremely challenging economic times. This resulted in a collection deficit of £9,135k for the year, with Mid Devon's share of this amounting to £3,570k.
- 6.4 As highlighted in above, additional Section 31 Grant of £3,411k has been received to smooth the implication of these deficits over 3 years in line with MHCLG legislative requirements.

7 Capital Outturn

- 7.1 A Capital Outturn summary is attached as Appendix 5 to this report. The revised Capital Budget for 2020/21 amounted to £36,961k. At the year-end only £7,054k had been spent leaving the Capital Programme underspent in total by £29,906k. It is important to recognise the difference between a Revenue and Capital under spend; Revenue is an under spend against a cash budget, Capital is an under spend against an outline approval. Therefore this does not necessarily result in a cash balance to carry forward, instead it

generally leads to a lower Capital Financing Requirement (in essence lower borrowing).

- 7.2 Capital Receipts of £376k (this includes general useable Capital Receipts and ring-fenced replacement homes Capital Receipts) were applied to finance the programme with the balance of the expenditure met by a combination of borrowing, external grants and contributions from reserves.
- 7.3 As shown in Appendix 5, there are capital projects totalling £26,041k which have not been completed as at the 31 March 2021. This planned expenditure, therefore, needs to be rolled forward to be included in the 2021/22 Capital Programme. These schemes will continue to be funded as before through a mix of unspent Capital Grants, Capital Earmarked Reserves or Prudential Borrowing. In addition there is £248k relating to Disabled Facilities Grant (including £72k related to HRA), £244k relating to Right to Buy, £128k for Major Repairs to Housing Stock and £114k HRA Renewable Energy that will remain in reserves for future prioritisation.
- 7.4 The Capital Receipts Reserve (note this includes general useable Capital Receipts and ring-fenced replacement homes Capital Receipts) is used to part fund the Capital Programme - the movement on this account for the year is given below:

Capital Receipts Reserve Summary	£k
Balance at 1 April 2020	(5,157)
Sale of Council Houses (10)	(847)
General Fund Sales	(97)
Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts to Government	227
Capital Receipts applied in year	376
Balance at 31 March 2021	(5,498)

Note – the remaining balance of £5.498m is committed in order to fund any slippage, specific projects in ICT and Private Sector Housing and to balance the Capital Medium Term Financial Plan.

- 7.5 The Capital Earmarked Reserve has been set aside from Revenue to fund capital projects; the balance on this reserve now stands at £255k having reduced by the £46k required to fund the 2020/21 Capital Programme. The remaining balance is committed to fund any slippage and to balance the Capital Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 7.6 The Council also holds New Homes Bonus which can be used for either Revenue or to support future Capital Programmes, the balance held at 31 March 2021 is £3,061k; again much of this remaining balance is committed to funding any slippage and to balance the Capital Medium Term Financial Plan.

8 Treasury Management

- 8.1 A review of the 2020/21 investment performance, including the details of interest payable, are included within the separate 2020/21 Treasury Outturn Report was on the Cabinet agenda for 6th July 2021

- 8.2 During the year, the Council maintained an average balance of £21.3m of internally managed funds. These internally managed funds earned interest of £124k giving an average rate of return of 0.25%. The comparable performance indicator is the 3 month LIBID rate¹, which was 0.015%.
- 8.3 As at the 31 March 2021, the Council had short term cash investments totalling £17,500k. In addition, the Council held £5m invested in Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) Property Funds earning dividends of £206k (4.13%) in 2020/21.
- 8.4 The Authority holds a 100% interest in 3 Rivers Development Limited, a private limited company engaged in construction in the Mid Devon area. The Authority advances funds to the Company to facilitate operations with the intention that they are repaid from the proceeds of the sale of the developments.
- 8.5 During the year ended 31 March 2021, a net £1,102k was loaned to the Company and total loan value at this date was £10,163k. During the year £496k interest was received by the Authority in respect of these loans.
- 8.6 These loans are subject to overarching management review on a regular basis with any impairments made reported within both the periodic monitoring reports and in the year-end financial statements. The year-end review, carried out in compliance with IFRS 9 Financial Instruments, concluded that no further impairments above and beyond the £790k impairment made in 2019/20 in respect of one of the project loans and the working capital loan was necessary.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the Revenue and Capital Outturn figures for the financial year 2020/21.

Contact for more information:

Andrew Jarrett
01884 23(4242)
ajarrett@middevon.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Circulation of the Report:

Cllr Andrew Moore
Leadership Team

¹ The London Interbank Bid Rate (LIBID) is the average interest rate at which major London banks bid for eurocurrency deposits from other banks in the interbank market.