

SOCIAL SERVICES AND STRATEGIC HOUSING BUDGET MONITORING 2003/04 – 6 MONTHLY REPORT

Report By: Head of Business Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To inform the Committee of the budget monitoring position for Social Care and Strategic Housing for the first six months of the financial year 2003/04.

Financial Implications

2. As detailed within the report.

Background

3. Following the Council's Performance Management Framework, budget monitoring reports should be made at 4, 6, 8 and 12 months. This is the second budget monitoring report for the financial year 2003/04 to the Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee, and takes into account expenditure incurred up to the end of September 2003.
4. Monthly budget monitoring reports continue to be presented to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee. This is in addition to monthly reports made to the Cabinet Member (Social Care and Strategic Housing), County Treasurer and the directorate management team.

Social Services Budget 2003/04

5. The budget for the financial year 2003/04 was set by Council on 7th March 2003. The total net budget available for Social Care in 2003/04 is £33,262,950. In addition, there are Government grants totalling £6.6million. The directorate objective is to balance the social care budget overall in 2003/04. Managers have been set targets to achieve this.
6. At the last meeting of this Committee on 29th September 2003, the reported projected year end position for Social Care was £466,000 overspent. This figure *included* the £582,000 overspend carried forward from 2002/03.

7. The position at the end of September 2003 shows a continued improvement on the impact of the brought forward overspend from 2002/03. At the end of September 2003, the projected year end position for Social Care indicates an overspend of £376,000, showing some reduction in the “debt” which was carried forward from 2002/03.
8. The potential financial risks identified in the last report to this Committee are still valid. The key risk areas include maximisation of grants and childrens agency placements.

Strategic Housing Budget 2003/04

9. The 2003/04 budget for Strategic Housing is £1,247,000. In addition, an underspend of £191,000 has been carried forward from 2002/03.
10. At the end of September 2003, the projected year end position for Strategic Housing is an underspend of £98,000. This includes the underspend brought forward from 2002/03. Once again key risk areas have been identified within the budget projections, including homelessness expenditure which continues to be a difficult budget to manage.

Summary

11. In summary, whilst the budget settlement for 2003/04 was positive, it must be viewed in the context of continuing service pressures. The Directorate has put in place measures designed to manage expenditure for 2003/04 within budget. It is essential that the risk areas highlighted be continually reviewed to ensure that this target is delivered.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the budget monitoring report for the first 6 months of the financial year be noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None