

BUDGET /PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2003/04 – 8 MONTHLY REPORT

Report By: Head of Business Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To report on the budget monitoring and performance indicators position for Social Care and Strategic Housing for the first eight months of the financial year 2003/04.

Financial Implications

2. As detailed within the report.

Background

3. Following the Council's Performance Management Framework, there should be reporting to Scrutiny Committee on performance at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 months. At previous meetings of this Committee there have been separate reports on performance and the budget. This report has consolidated both aspects into one report, and will concentrate on any developments since the last report to Committee on 24th November 2003.

Budget 2003/04

Social Care

4. 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 budget continues to be monitored on a monthly basis, through reports to budget managers, the directorate management team, the Cabinet member and Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee.
5. The directorate aim remains to balance the budget overall. At the last meeting of this Committee on 24th November 2003, the reported projected year end position for Social Care was £376,000 overspent. This figure *included* the £582,000 overspend which had been carried forward from 2002/03.

6. The position at the end of November 2003 (8 months) shows a continued improvement on the impact of the brought forward overspend from 2002/03. At the end of November 2003, the projected year end position for Social Care indicates an overspend of £308,000, showing some reduction in the “debt” which was carried forward from 2002/03.

Strategic Housing

7. The 2003/04 budget for Strategic Housing is £1,247,000. In addition an underspend of £191,000 was carried forward from 2002/03. There continues to be potential financial risks which will affect the year end position. At the end of November 2003, the projected year end position is largely unchanged from the last report. An underspend of £97,000, including the underspend of £191,000 brought forward, is projected.

General

8. The key risk areas identified in the last report remain. These include the volatility of the childrens agency placement budget, the maximisation of grant income and homelessness expenditure.
9. The directorate management team will be reviewing these risks as a matter of priority over the coming weeks. Further action may need to be taken immediately to ensure the achievement of the directorate’s aim of balancing the budget overall by the end of the financial year 2003/04.

Performance Monitoring 2003/04

10. As explained in the last report to the Committee, the Department of Health (DOH) publishes statistical information on the performance of all Social Services departments. There is a national set of 49 performance indicators covering Adults and Childrens services. The DOH ranks performance in bands ranging from Band 5 – “very good” to Band 1 “investigate urgently”
11. Strategic Housing performance is monitored by Best Value indicators and regularly reported to the Government Office of the West Midlands and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
12. The directorate continues to monitor performance throughout the year. However, direct comparison with previous year’s performance is difficult as the DOH continues to introduce new performance measures and refine existing indicators. In addition, the assessment of likely banding can only be carried out assuming the previous year’s banding value applies. Also, some indicators are only measured once a year. The complete list of performance indicators is shown as Appendix A.

Childrens Services

13. Since the last report to Committee, an additional childrens services indicator has improved, and may achieve the top “ Very good” rating:

C19 Health of children looked after – This is an interface indicator with health and is an indication of the successful partnership working arrangements that exist between the two agencies.

Adults Services

14. There has also been some improvement in adults services, with an additional 2 indicators falling into the top “ Very good” rating:

E49 Assessments of older people – there has been a continuous improvement culminating in achieving the top rating at this time.

E50 Assessments of adults and older people leading to provision of service – this indicator has consistently shown good performance and sustained improvement has culminated in the top rating at this time.

Strategic Housing

15. Housing indicators remain consistent as at the time of the last report to Committee. Discussions are taking place to form a number of local performance indicators in addition to the national profile.

Summary

16. The directorate will continue to monitor the budget and performance over the coming months. An assessment of likely “ year end” position on both the budget and performance will be made over the coming weeks. It may be necessary to take action to ensure that the directorate objective of balancing the budget and sustaining improvement in performance is delivered.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the budget monitoring and performance monitoring report for the first 8 months of the financial year be noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None