Environment & Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



19th January 2024

Neighbourhoods & Climate Change – Quarter 2: Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24

Joint Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources and Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Climate Change

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

To provide details of the forecast outturn budget for this service area highlighting major variances in comparison with the budget, based on the position to the end of Quarter 2 (30 September 2023).

Executive summary

- This report provides an overview of the updated forecast of outturn, based on the position at Quarter 2 for 2023/24. It provides an analysis of the budgets and forecast outturn for the service areas falling under the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee (including Culture, Sport & Tourism which is in Regeneration rather than NCC) and complements the reports considered and agreed by Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
- The updated position is that there is a forecast cash limit overspend of £89,000, against a revised budget of £120.611 million for NCC.

 Culture, Sport & Tourism is forecasting an overspend of £0.104 million.
- The revised service capital budget is £68.955 million with expenditure to 30 September of £16.690 million. Culture & Sport's revised capital budget is £25.934 million with expenditure of £12.898 million

Details of the reasons for under and overspending against relevant budget heads are disclosed in the report.

Recommendation(s)

6 Environment & Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.

Background

- 7 County Council approved the Revenue and Capital budgets for 2023/24 at its meeting on 22 February 2023. These budgets have subsequently been revised to account for changes in grant (additions/reductions), budget transfers between service groupings and budget re-profiling between years (in terms of capital). This report covers the financial position for the following budgets of the services within the scope of this committee:
 - (a) Revenue Budget £120.611 million (original £119.974 million)
 - (b) Capital Programme £68.955 million (original £84.527 million)
 - (c) Culture, Sport & Tourism Revenue Budget £16.822 million
 - (d) Culture, Sport & Tourism Capital Budget £25.934 million
- The summary financial statements contained in the report cover the financial year 2023/24 and show: -
 - (a) The approved annual budget;
 - (b) The forecast income and expenditure as recorded in the Council's financial management system;
 - (c) The variance between the annual budget and the forecast outturn;
 - (d) For the revenue budget, adjustments for items outside of the cash limit (outside of the Service's control) to take into account such items as capital charges and use of / or contributions to earmarked reserves.

Forecast Revenue Outturn 2023/24

9 The service is reporting a cash limit underspend of £89,000 against a revised budget of £120.611 million.

The table below compares the forecast outturn with the budget by Head of Service. A further table is shown at Appendix 2 analysing the position by Subjective Analysis (i.e. type of expense), and further variance explanations are shown in Appendix 4.

Analysis by Head of Service £'000

	Revised Annual Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Items Outside Cash Limit	Earmarked Reserves	Inflation adjust- ment	Cash Limit Variance
Head of Service	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Culture, Sport & Tourism	16,822	21,025	4,203	(1,812)	(2,287)	0	104
NCC							
Environmental Services	60,851	62,269	1,417	(191)	(425)	(508)	293
Highways	13,621	13,778	157	0	256	(12)	400
Community Protection	6,177	5,739	(438)	(32)	166	(22)	(295)
Partnerships & Comm Engagement	5,445	6,996	1,551	0	(1,632)	(15)	(127)
NCC Central Costs	34,516	32,828	(1,688)	0	205	1,301	(182)
NCC Total	120,611	121,610	999	(223)	(1,430)	744	89

- The NCC cash limit overspend of £89,000 takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit such as redundancy costs that are met from corporate reserves and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves.
- 12 The main reasons accounting for the outturn position are as follows:
 - a) Environmental Services is forecast to be £0.293 million overspent. This is mainly due to increased costs of £0.250 million at depots on fuel tank repairs, general maintenance, and security costs, along with £0.144 million of underachieved income in Strategic Waste regarding soil imports that have ceased due to capping of the Joint Stocks site. These overspends are partly offset by underspends across the service relating to vacancies and turnover and exceeding budget targets for income from fees and charges. The underachievement of income

- relating to joint stocks is being addressed in 2024/25 as part of MTFP(14);
- b) Highways is forecast to be overspent by £0.400 million. The main reason for this is a forecast overspend within Highways Trading of £0.269 million due a reduction in anticipated sales relating to major projects. Highways Revenue is also forecast to be overspent by £0.263 million on highways maintenance work, including cyclic works, drainage, bridges and priority action works. This is largely offset by anticipated underspends on Strategic Highways of £0.431 million mainly as a result of overachieving income on enforcement and inspections, road closures, roundabout sponsorship, and fixed penalty notices;
- c) Community Protection is forecast to underspend by £0.295 million, mainly due to unspent growth funding as a result of vacancies and new posts in a restructure that will be filled mid-year. There is also funding within the base budget to accommodate future spinal column point increments causing an underspend currently;
- d) Partnerships and Community Engagement is forecast to underspend by £0.127 million, mainly due to savings from a strategic manager post vacancy, and also a vacancy in the Civil Contingencies Unit along with overachievement of SLA income across the service;
- e) The central contingencies budget within NCC is forecast to underspend by £0.182 million. This budget has been created to fund any cross cutting service pressures within NCC that may arise during the financial year. This budget will be kept under review as the year progresses and transfers made to Heads of Service areas where necessary
- f) Culture, Sport and Tourism is forecast to overspend by £0.104 million against budget. The main reasons are an unrealised MTFP saving of £75,000, a capital contribution of £86,000 for leisure transformation and an anticipated loss of income of £0.121 million at Killhope Museum. These overspends were partially offset by a one-off benefit arising from the agreement to take full control of the gym facilities at seven of our leisure centres.
- A net £1.430 million relating to movement to and from reserves has also been excluded from the outturn. The major items being:
 - (a) £0.400 million drawdown relating to clean and green, Find and Fix, and environmental issues;

- (b) £0.166 million net contribution to Community Protection Reserves relating to Trading Standards and the Horden Together Initiative;
- £1.6 million drawdown from PACE Reserves mainly in relation to Refugee Resettlement and AAP Towns and Village scheme funding;
- (d) £0.256 million contribution to Highways Reserves for Section 38 Income; and
- (e) £0.150 drawdown from the NCC Cash Limit Reserve to fund Towns and Village schemes.
- The forecast Cash Limit Reserve position for NCC at 31 March 2024 is £30,000 after taking the latest outturn position into account.

Capital Programme

- The Neighbourhoods & Climate Change capital programme was revised at year-end for budget re-phased from 2022/23. This increased the 2023/24 original budget to a level of £84.527 million. Since then, reports to the MOWG have detailed further revisions, for grant additions/reductions, budget transfers and budget re-profiling into later years. The revised budget now stands at £68.955 million.
- 16 Summary financial performance for 2023/24 is shown below.

Service	Revised Budget 2023/24 £000	Actual Spend to 30 Sept £000	Remaining Budget 2023/24 £000
Culture, Sport & Tourism	25,934	12,898	13,036
NCC			
Community Protection	384	171	213
Environmental Services	18,826	5,030	13,796
Highways	46,771	10,242	36,529
Partnerships & Community Engagement	2,974	1,247	1,727
NCC Total	68,955	16,690	52,265

Officers continue to carefully monitor capital expenditure on a monthly basis. Actual spend for the first 6 months amounts to £16.690 million.

Appendix 3 provides a more detailed breakdown of spend across the major projects contained within the capital programme.

The key areas of spend during the year to date are on Strategic Highways (£9.203 million) and Low Carbon (£2.279 million). Other areas of the programme are profiled to be implemented during the remainder of the year and at year end the actual outturn performance will be compared against the revised budgets and service and project managers will need to account for any budget variance.

Background papers

Cabinet Report (15 November 2023) –

<u>Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/23 - Period to 30 September</u>

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Council's Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements. This report shows the forecast spend against budgets agreed by the Council in February 2023 in relation to the 2023/24 financial year.

Finance

Financial implications are detailed throughout the report which provides an analysis of the revenue and capital outturn position alongside details of balance sheet items such as earmarked reserves held by the service grouping to support its priorities.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable.

Climate Change

Not applicable.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable.

Staffing

Not applicable.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Councils Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements.

Procurement

The outcome of procurement activity is factored into the financial projections included in the report

Appendix 2: NEIGHBOURHOODS & CLIMATE CHANGE Forecast Outturn at Q2 – Subjective Analysis

NCC Subjective Analysis	Revised Annual Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Items Outside Cash Limit	Earmarked Reserves	Net Inflation adjustment	NCC Cash Limit Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employees	67,468	67,463	(4)	0	0	(129)	(133)
Premises	11,575	10,421	(1,154)	0	0	1,308	154
Transport	21,216	22,829	1,613	(102)	0	0	1,511
Supplies & Services	21,159	23,720	2,561	(89)	0	0	2,472
Third Party Payments	54,130	51,046	(3,084)	0	0	0	(3,084)
Transfer Payments	1,479	4,107	2,628	0	0	0	2,628
Capital	25,188	26,332	1,144	0	0	0	1,144
Central Costs	11,115	11,865	749	(32)	(1,430)	0	(713)
DRF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross Expenditure	213,330	217,782	4,452	(223)	(1,430)	1,180	3,979
Grant	(4,258)	(7,363)	(3,105)	0	0	0	(3,105)
Contributions	(908)	(1,569)	(661)	0	0	0	(661)
Sales	(679)	(704)	(25)	0	0	0	(25)
Charges	(14,781)	(15,579)	(798)	0	0	(435)	(1,233)
Rents	(94)	(108)	(14)	0	0	0	(14)
Recharges	(70,545)	(68,310)	(2,235)	0	0	0	(2,235)
Other Income	(1,453)	(2,539)	(1,086)	0	0	0	(1,086)
Gross Income	(92,718)	(96,172)	(3,454)	0	0	(435)	(3,889)
Total	120,612	121,610	998	(223)	(1,430)	(744)	89

Appendix 3: NCC & Culture, Sport & Tourism Capital 2023/24

NCC	Revised Annual	Actual Spend	Remaining Budget
	Budget	Орена	Daaget
	2023/24	30/09/23	
	£000	£000	£000
Community Protection			
Comm Protection	346	151	195
AAP Schemes-Community Protection	38	20	18
Community Protection Total	384	171	213
Environmental Services			
Strategic Waste	3,229	1,144	2,085
Fleet	102	38	64
Clean & Green	2,054	173	1,881
Crematorium	162	-	162
Environment & Design	1,622	510	1,112
Depots	3,683	862	2,821
Low Carbon	7,038	2,279	4,759
Neighbourhood Protection	661	24	637
North Pennines Partnership	275	-	275
Environmental Services Total	18,826	5,030	13,796
Highways			
Highway Operations	121	108	13
Strategic Highways	35,805	9,203	26,602
Strategic Highways Bridges	10,845	931	9,914
Highways Total	46,771	10,242	36,529
Partnerships & Community Engagement			
Members Neighbourhood Fund	1,629	923	706
Community Buildings	868	1	868
AAP Capital Budgets	407	324	83
AAP Initiatives Other	9	-	9
Consett Comm Facilities	61	-	61
Partnerships & Community Engagement Total	2,974	1,247	1,727
NCC Total	68,955	16,690	52,265
Culture and Sport			
Culture & Museums	13,011	5,528	7,483
Leisure	12,877	7,342	5,535
Outdoor Sports & Leisure Facilities	46	28	18
Culture and Sport Totsl	25,934	12,898	13,036

Appendix 4: Heads Of Service Analysis – Environmental Services

	Variance	Explanation
Head of Environment	0	No variance
Refuse & Recycling	74	£147k overspend on staffing due to high levels of sickness, offset by the number of vacant posts which cost less when covered by Agency staff. £42k overspend on business rates for Waste Transfer Stations. £293k overspend on transport due to increased fuel costs and vehicle daywork repairs in the south, partially offset by a £16k underspend on dayworks recharges for new loading shovels at Waste Trasfer Stations. (£392k) overachieved income mainly on trade waste collections.
Strategic Waste	(88)	£144k under achieved income on Soil Imports (£48k) underspend on staffing due to vacancies and turnover £30k overspend on transport mainly due to spot hire costs with no budget £45k overspend on supplies & services and agency & contracted services. (£103k) underspend after revaluation of business rates at Coxhoe Landfill (£156k) underspend on Tees Valley SPV costs
Clean & Green	244	£26k Overspend in Countryside - underachievement of income on admission/car parking/inventory sales. Underspend on salaries (vacancies) offset by overspend on payment to sub-contractors and machinery hire £235k overspend on vehicle daywork repairs, hires and lease extensions (£212K) underspend on vacancies and new posts not being appointed to £282k overspend on Supplies and Services (includes £34k unbudgeted flytipping/asbestos removal) (£80k) overachieved income on shop sales & SLA Other Housing Providers
Neighbourhood Protection	(41)	128k overspend on employees due to staff turnover savings of £141k, partly offset by an underspend of (£18k) mainly relating to Wardens. £13k overspend on premises mainly due to general repairs, water charges, council tax and rates on Bereavement. £48k overspend on transport, relating to cost of dayworks and spot hire (£28k) underspend on contracted services mainly on bereavement and allotments. (£218k) overachievement of income with the main areas being Fixed Penalty Notices (£47k), fees & charges for Neighbourhood Wardens Default Work (£112k), allotment rents (£10k) and SLAs with other LAs (£23k)
Fleet	101	(£48k) underspend on staffing due to vacant posts £80k overspend on fuel tank works at Chilton Depot £64k underachieved Hire income due to fewer vehicles since budget set
Depots	193	£18k overspend on Rates £28k overspend on additional leasehold costs for M/field and Beechburn £49k overspend on the new security contract £80k overspend on general repairs £18k overspend on equipment repairs and maintenance.
Low Carbon	(128)	(£73k) underspend on staffing due to a number of vacant posts which will be filled once the restructure is finalised. £127k overspend on consultant/professional fees. (£192k) overachieved income mainly due to grant income and SLAs.
Environment & Design	(62)	(£97k) underspend on Tech & Service Development due to vacancies, unspent transport costs and overachievement on income £12k overspend on Landscapes due increased working hours for 1 post and under achievement on staff turnover savings. Also the yearly website hosting cost for Limestone Landscape with no budget. (£15k) underspend on Heritage Coast due to delay in filling post £32k overspend on Archaeology. Mainly due to large overspend on Binchester for premises and supplies & services compared to budget. Also staffing without budget and WHS Coordinator costs. £4k overspend on Ecology - under achievement on recharges for Bat/Species Surveys.
TOTAL	293	

Appendix 4: Heads Of Service Analysis – Highway Services

	Over / (Under)	
Service	£000s	Reason for Variance
Head of Highways	1	
Highways Services Trading	569	Street Lighting (£181k), Commercial Group (£0k), Countywide £750k
Highways Services Non-Trading	262	Overspend of £263k on Highways Revenue maintenance work, including cyclic works, drainage, bridges and emergency action works. Overspend of £20k on employees (staff turnover savings). Overspend of £152k on Agency. Mainly gullies, PAT and Drainage. Under achievement of Income £54k. Management & Admin overspend of £6k - Driven by £46k overspend on employees due to compensation payments. Premises under spend of (£5k) due to not spending general repairs budget. Large underspend on staffing travelling (£24k) and Supplies and Services (£24k), overspend in Agency £9k plus no income contribution expected £3k
Strategic Highways	(431)	Street Lighting - Underspend of (£32k) Overspend of £5k on employees - Staff turnover savings Inflation pressure on Street Lighting electricity budget of £310k - Covered from central Underspend of (£19k) on S&S mainly due to consultancy coming under budget Overachievement of income (£18k) Highways Permit Scheme - (£14k) underspend but moved to reserves. Surplus anticipated from Permit fees of (£253k) in 2023/24. Nil outturn reflects transfer of any surplus into a new reserve (3 years to manage fee levels with surpluses).
		Technical Team - Underspend of (£212k) Underspend of (£62k) on employees - vacancies in team in year, Underspend of (£5k) on Transport - Cost Transferred to 024612, Overspend £2k Agency Overspend of £59k on S&S due to increased advertising costs however recovered in full through income plus admin fee Over achieved Income of (£206k) - Mainly Emergency Road Closures (£55k) and TRO's (£167k) - (£167k) offsets £59k S&S overspend. Other income down such as Street Naming and Numbering and Section 50 licencing £35k Asset Management - Underspend of (£54k) Underspend of (£35k) on employees - Vacancies in team Overspend of £8k on agency - XAIS, Supplies & Services Overspend £36k due to recharge Underspend of (£5k) - Minor variances on Premises, transport, Supplies and Agency Over achieved Income of (£58k) - Roundabout Sponsorship arrears from 22/23,
		Drainage & Coast Protection - Underspend of (£1k) Underspend of (£31k) on employees - Reduction in hours across a few of the team. Overspend on transport of £5k - Short term spot hire of vehicle for full year offset by savings in car mileage reductions. Underspend on S&S (£3k) Overspend on agency of £28k - Drainage contract payments line Income - Projected as per budget Structures - Overspend of £20k Overspend of £32k on employees - 1 unbudgeted apprentices (1 degree apprentice)
		Public Right of Way - Overspend of £81k Overspend of £62k on employees - Definitive Map Officers x 2, plus Walking/Cycling Route Development Officer part funded. Overspends in Supplies & Services & Transpost £8k Under achievement of the services of th
		Enforcement & Inspections - Underspend of (£188k) Underspend of (£15k) on Transport - Fuel, fleet management and car allowances Over achieved Income of (£167k) - Over-recovered income Fixed Penalty notices Highways Adoptions - Underspend of (£46k)
		Underspends on employees (£53k), Transport costs Overspend £7k due to Spot Hire, Over achievement of income (£382k) moved to reserves
GRAND TOTAL	400	

Appendix 4: Heads Of Service Analysis – Community Protection

(295)

GRAND TOTAL

Community Protection 2023/24 Q2 Outturn - Reasons for Variances Over / (Under) £000s Service **Reason for Variance** Head of Community 302 Contribution to reserve of £300k made up £100k unspent growth allocated back to Workforce Protection Development Reserve and £200k to the ICT Capital Reserve. Additional overspend of £2k mainly from overspend on Supplies and Services Business Compliance Management - (£22k) under in staffing due to Strategic Manager starting in July. **Business Compliance** (349) Consumer Safety (£126k) under - (£102k) under in staffing due to vacant posts, £3k over on premises due to markets water charges, £6k over on Supplies and Services mainly due to legal costs over budget, £4k over on subcontractor payments, (£37k) over achievement on income expected mainly due additional public health grant for cosmetic fillers enforcement. Health Protection (£167k) - (£129k) under in staffing due to vacant post and other posts starting part way through the year, (£7k) under on transport, (£22k) under on supplies and services mainly due to additional budget for Natasha's Law, (£11k) under on agency payments and £2k under achievement on income. Enviroment Protection (£18k) - (£25k) under in staffing due to moderated posts, £9k over on transport, £4k over on Air Quality consultants, and (£6k) over achievement of income mainly due to air pollution fees. Better Business for All- (£14k) under in staffing due to post starting in August. Licensing (9) (£81k) under spend in staffing due to posts in secondment and moderated posts, offset by overspend on taxi related costs of £28k and £44k under achievement licencing income Strategic Regulation 60 Stategic Regulation Management - £27k over in staffing due to secondment over budget offset by Stategic Manager starting in July. CP Professional Development - 126k over in staffing due to reserve funded posts funded from the service underspend. Information & Intelligence - (£6k) under in staffing due to career graded posts. Special Investigations (£21k) under in staffing due to moderated posts. Regulatory systems (£58k) under in staffing due to two vacant posts plus underspends in transport of (£8k) NEPPP (0) Income funded area, difference of net costs are put to reserves at yearend. Safer Places Safer Places Management - (£57k) under in staffing due to vacant Tier 5 manager. ASB Interventions -(298)(£34k) under in staffing due to moderated posts, plus trailblaizer income of (£29k) towards officer, minor underspends across transport and supplies (£1k). Safer Communties £2k over on staffing due to redundancy payment offset by saving on subcontractors budget (£17k). Nuisance action team (£19k) under in staffing due to career graded posts. Community action team (£35k) under in staffing due to moderated posts plus underspend on supplies and services of (£14k) and minor underspend in transport (£2k). Housing action team (£68k) under in staffing due to a vacancy and (£4k) saving in transport plus overachievement on HMO licences of (£29k) Horden Together 0 Reserve funded area, difference of net costs are put to reserves at yearend.

Appendix 4: Heads Of Service Analysis – Partnerships & Community Engagement

Partnerships & Comm	nunity Eng	agement Outturn 2023/24 - Q2 Variances
Service	Over / (Under) £000s	Reason for Variance
Head of Service		£8k from Other Pay budget to fund across the service
CCU & Corporate policy		Corporate Policy - (£13k) Additional income from unrecovered 22/23 agency costs £47k over on staffing due MTFP saving not being met and £3k efficency not being met (£13k) under on Supplies and Service due to subscriptions reduction CCU - (£32k) Employee saving - Temporary vacancy Civil Contingencies (£29k) over achievement of income on CCU (£27k) underspend on Supplies and Services £32k unbudgeted Coronation spend covered from contingencies
Humanitarian Support Scheme	(0)	£1.337m surplus balance to be put to reserve at year-end.
Partnerships Team	(86)	Partnerships Team - £6k Employee overspend - not meeting efficiency target Offset by underspends of (£11k) on Suppiles and Services Strategic Manager - (£81k) under due Strategic Manager vacancy expected throughout year.
Strategic Partnerships	(6)	(£6k) underspend on donations Grant aid to the communities
Funding Team & Other AAPs	0	All AAP spend covered by reserves.
AAPs South &East	10	£23k Employee costs - Mainly due to not achieving efficiencies. (15k) underspend on supplies and services
AAPs North & east	11	£18k Employee costs - Mainly due to not achieving efficiencies. (£7k) underspend on supplies and services
GRAND TOTAL	(127)	