

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Community Services and Licensing Budget Monitoring Report Q1 2023/24</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the 2023/24 forecast outturn position against the revenue budgets and Capital Programme that the Committee is responsible for, in order to give an expectation of possible variances against budget.			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>The Committee RESOLVES to note the outturn forecast for the General Fund Revenue budget and the Capital Programme for this Committee.</b>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Budget holders have been consulted about the budget issues in their service areas. The feedback has been incorporated into to the report to explain difference between budgets and forecast income and expenditure.			
<b>Report Author</b>	Adele Rudkin, Accountant Tel: 01453 754109 Email: <a href="mailto:adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk">adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk</a>			
<b>Options</b>	None			
<b>Background Papers</b>	None			
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A – Revenue Breakdown Position			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

### 1 Background

- 1.1 This report provides the first monitoring position statement for the financial year 2023/24. The purpose of this report is to notify members of any known significant variations to budgets for the current financial year, highlight any key issues and to inform members of any action to be taken if required.
- 1.2 **Due to the volume of information contained in the report, it would be helpful where members have questions on matters of detail if they could be referred to the report author or the appropriate service manager before the meeting.**

### 2. Summary

- 2.1 The monitoring position for the Committee at 30 June 2023 shows a **projected net revenue underspend of (£65k)** against the latest budget.
- 2.2 The Capital programme is showing a forecast spend of £5.657k against a budget of £5.657k.

2.3 Table 2 shows the capital spend and projected outturn for the Community Services & Licensing Committee for 2023/24.

### 3. Revenue Budget Position

3.1 Council approved the General Fund Revenue budget for 2023/24 in February 2023 including budget proposals of the administration.

3.2 The latest budget for Community Services and Licensing Committee taking into account the adjustments for carry forwards is £4.967m (Original Budget was £4.400m), with a **projected net underspend of (£65k)** against the latest budget, as summarised in Table 1.

3.3 The outturn position is mainly attributable to those items outlined in Table 1 with an explanation of the significant that have arisen (a significant variation is defined as being +/- £20,000 on each reporting line).

3.4 Appendix A provides a more detailed breakdown on the Committee's budget.

**Table 1 – Community Services and Licensing Revenue budgets 2023/24**

	Para Refs	2023/24 Original Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Community Services Committee</b>						
Community Safety	3.5	160	193	(157)	350	0
Cultural Services - Arts and Culture	3.6	493	493	456	0	(37)
Cultural Services - Community Health & Wellbeing		176	551	624	(68)	5
Cultural Services - Sports Centres	3.7	372	372	71	0	(301)
Customer Services	3.8	438	438	546	(66)	42
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	3.9	350	360	419	(60)	(1)
Licensing	3.10	(20)	(20)	(38)	20	3
Public Spaces	3.11	1,496	1,646	1,619	0	(27)
Revenues and Benefits	3.12	816	816	1,067	0	251
Youth Services		118	118	118	0	0
<b>Community Services and Licensing TOTAL</b>		<b>4,400</b>	<b>4,967</b>	<b>4,726</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>(65)</b>

Table contains roundings.

3.5 **Community Services - £350k reserve transfer**  
(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, [angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk))

#### Careline - £350k reserve transfer

Funding of £350k (GCC) has been awarded to implement a new Careline system in 2024/25, this will be a reserve transfer as part of the Capital programme for next financial year. The Head of Community services will be updating members with her report on the project at this committee meeting.

#### Neighbourhood Wardens – (£66k) salary saving

Recruitment has proved difficult in the current climate; the role has now been successfully recruited to, with a start date of July 2023. A Senior Warden post remains vacant while the service is undertaking a restructure. This position is currently being filled on an interim basis by one of the existing wardens. This amount has been factored into the overall corporate vacancy saving figure reported to Strategy & Resources Committee.

### 3.6 Cultural Services – Arts & Culture – (£37k) underspend

Kevin Ward, [kevin.ward@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.ward@stroud.gov.uk)

A detailed exercise was undertaken at budget setting to reflect the national cost of living crisis for utility prices for the 2023/24 budget. In April 2023 a new Utilities contract was signed with a notable reduction in rates for both gas and electric, initiating a favourable forecast variance for the rest of this financial year.

Air source heat pumps are being installed in December at several sites including the Museum in the Park.

### 3.7 Cultural Services – Sports Centres – (£301k) underspend

(Darren Young 01453 540995, [darren.young@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:darren.young@stroud.gov.uk))

(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, [angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk))

The main variance is directly related to the potential savings on the Utilities contract.

A detailed exercise was undertaken at budget setting to reflect the national cost of living crisis for utility prices for the 2023/24 budget. In April 2023 a new Utilities contract was procured with a notable reduction in rates for both gas and electric, initiating a favourable forecast variance for the rest of this financial year.

Air source heat pumps are being installed in December at several sites including The Pulse and SPLC.

A saving is also being projected on the SPLC contract. This is in relation to the reduction in energy prices, furthermore within the terms of the of the contract the management fee decreases as it approaches its end date, so an additional saving has been forecast to reflect this.

A corporate maintenance saving (£45k) is forecast due to Salix grant monies supporting works that normally have been funded through the planned maintenance budget. The Salix schemes to replace the boiler plant and remove the mains gas supply at The Pulse and Stratford Park Leisure Centre makes the combined heat and power unit redundant.

### 3.8 Customer Services – £42k overspend/ £66k reserve transfer

(Liz Shellam, xtn 4234, [liz.shellam@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:liz.shellam@stroud.gov.uk))

Members will recall that two fixed term contract posts (2 years) were agreed at budget setting last financial year to be funded from reserves. Additionally, as part of the agreed Contact Centre Vision, two new posts have been created to allow us to centralise customer contact. The budget will be reviewed at budget setting later in the year.

### 3.9 Grants to Voluntary Organisations – £60k reserve transfer

(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, [angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk))

This funding from reserves was agreed to resource activity that is supporting Stroud residents in the Cost of Living crisis. Small voluntary Community Hubs are leading the response in their neighbourhoods, additional support and guidance will be provided to them by more experienced organisations in their locality. This will be provided by GL11 Community Hub, The Keepers Community Hub and Stroud Town Council's Community Development team. This extra resource will be overseen by a newly formed partnership of organisations who have an investment in the Community Hubs network and by the SDC Cost of Living Working Group.

### 3.10 Licensing - £20k reserve transfer

(Rachel Andrew xtn 4401, [rachel.andrew@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.andrew@stroud.gov.uk))

This reserve transfer is directly linked to COMF monies proposed to be carried forward to 24/25 to fund supporting commercial business, licensed premises, and the event sector, to bounce back safely post pandemic.

### 3.11 Public Spaces – (£27k) underspend

(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, [angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk))

This variance is directly attributable to Public Conveniences A detailed exercise was undertaken at budget setting to reflect the national cost of living crisis for utility prices for the 2023/24 budget. In April 2023 a new Utilities contract was signed with a notable reduction in rates for both gas and electric, initiating a favourable forecast variance for the rest of this financial year.

### 3.12 Revenues & Benefits – £251k unachieved income/underspends

(Simon Killen 01453 754013, [simon.killen@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:simon.killen@stroud.gov.uk))

Additional budget was actioned as part the budget setting process for 2023/24 for the shortfall on housing benefit subsidy claims. However a significant variance of £281k has been forecast, which relates to supported and temporary accommodation. There is a higher rent allowable in supported accommodation, where the cost of housing is significantly higher than the amount allowable under housing benefit, this cannot all be claimed back through housing benefit subsidy and part of the cost is borne by the local authority. This will continue to be monitored and the situation is subject to change throughout the year as housing benefit claims change and are difficult to predict.

Unbudgeted grant income from DWP has been received supporting the Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative. Concentrated work to undertake activity related to HB Full Case Reviews, Housing Benefit Matching Service referrals, Self-Employed Earnings Reviews and the correct recording of case information on IT systems.

## 4. Capital

Table 2 below shows the 2023/24 Capital Programme for this Committee.

**Table 2 – Capital Outturn forecast**

		2023/24 Original Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Community Services Capital Schemes</b>	<b>Para Refs</b>				
Community Buildings Investment	4.1	100	100	100	0
Decarbonisation SPLC/MIP/The Pulse	4.2	5,400	5,356	5,356	0
Stratford Park Lido	4.3	0	201	201	0
Stratford Park Tennis Courts		128	0	0	0
<b>Community Services Capital Schemes TOTAL</b>		<b>5,628</b>	<b>5,657</b>	<b>5,657</b>	<b>0</b>

### 4.1 Community Buildings Investment -

Subject to a robust business plan, officers are entering into negotiations with Kingshill House Limited with a view to agreeing Heads of Terms for a revised lease. If a new lease is agreed the Trust is likely to require ongoing support to maintain the structure and fabric of the building. Heads of Terms agreed and any additional funding will be subject to a further report to Strategy & Resources Committee in November.

#### 4.2 **Decarbonisation – Sports Centres**

Members will recall that Salix funding was secured ( <https://www.salixfinance.co.uk/>) to decarbonise the three sites (The Pulse, Stratford Park Leisure Centre and the Museum in the Park), The project is progressing and remains on programme and will be completed by 31st March 2024 in line with the requirements of the funding agreement. The total grant sum is £4,690,518 with the council contributing the requisite 12% sum of £609,549. Preliminary works started in 2022/23 with the mainstay of the project completed in this financial year.

#### 4.3 **Stratford Park Lido**

A conditions survey has been commissioned so that the scope of the requirements of the capital investment are fully understood. The results are expected in September which will enable us to decide how we progress the project on this facility alongside a clearer understanding of the spend profile this financial year.

### 5. **IMPLICATIONS**

#### 5.1 **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report as it reports on previous financial activities and expected forecasts.

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#### 5.2 **Legal Implications**

There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

One Legal  
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#### 5.3 **Equality Implications**

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision

#### 5.4 **Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.