

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 13 MARCH 2025

<b>Report Title</b>	Community Services and Licensing Budget Monitoring Report Q3 2024/25			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the 2024/25 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 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 – Detailed breakdown of Committee budget			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	No	No	No

### 1 Background

- 1.1 This report provides the third monitoring position statement for the financial year 2024/25. 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 as at 31 December 2024 shows a **projected net revenue overspend of £167k** against the latest budget.

- 2.2 The Capital programme is showing a forecast spend of £1.428m against a revised budget of £1.478m.
- 2.3 Table 3 shows the capital spend and projected outturn for the Community Services & Licensing Committee for 2024/25.

### 3. Revenue Budget Position

- 3.1 Council approved the General Fund Revenue budget for 2024/25 in February 2024 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 £6.066m (Original Budget was £5.613m) This considers any MTFP adjustments, carry forwards and the recently agreed pay award (£1,290 or 2.5%) which is funded from reserves as set aside by Strategy & Resources Committee.
- 3.3 The outturn position is mainly attributable to those items outlined in Table 1, with an explanation of the significant variations that have arisen (a significant variation is defined as being +/- £20,000 on each reporting line).
- 3.4 Transfer to and from Reserves are also outlined in Table 1. The normal operation of Council business includes movements to and from earmarked reserves including spending existing reserves to fund priority works or placing new funding aside for use in future years. Delegations exist for the S151 Officer to place funding in reserves to meet the expected pressures upon the Council and existing services. Carry forwards (where services need to transfer external funding or budget for specific projects from one year to the next) are also included in reserve transfers figures.
- 3.5 Appendix A provides a more detailed breakdown on the Committee's budget.

**Table 1 – Community Services and Licensing Revenue budgets 2024/25**

	Para Refs	2024/25 Original Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Revised Budget (£'000)	2024/25 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2024/25 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)
<b>Community Services Committee</b>						
Arts and Culture		472	449	465	(9)	8
Community Health & Wellbeing	3.6	299	353	332	1	(20)
Community Safety	3.7	205	579	219	358	(2)
Customer Services		744	734	730	0	(4)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	3.8	330	465	626	(168)	(6)
Licensing		(15)	(18)	(26)	0	(8)
Public Spaces	3.9	1,595	1,698	1,574	150	26
Revenues and Benefits	3.10	1,131	1,119	1,439	0	320
Sports Centres	3.11	743	580	458	(23)	(145)
Youth Services		110	108	107	0	(0)
<b>Community Services and Licensing TOTAL</b>		<b>5,613</b>	<b>6,066</b>	<b>5,923</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>167</b>

table contains roundings.

### **3.6 Community Health & Wellbeing – (£20k) additional income £1k transfer to reserves**

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

Additional income (£20k) is been forecast due to an increase in revenue from Health and Wellbeing classes, this has been reflected in the budget for 2025-26.

The reserve transfer is funding received last financial year from the Integrated Locality Partnership & Integrated Care Board to support delivery on the following priorities:

Children and Young People's workstream, to progress and create projects such as Reading for Wellbeing, Youth Centre Network and Vaping project – Progress has been put on hold due to staff sickness within the team and the team are reviewing the offer. Officers have also had to refresh the financial agreement with support from One Legal to bring it up to date with safeguarding good practice which has taken longer than expected to complete but funding is expected to be released to youth groups by end of March 2025.

Delivery of the Healthy lifestyles scheme and GP referral appointments.

Supporting local voluntary sector organisations and community groups who are supporting children and young people's emotional wellbeing, physical and mental health. Planned delivery of mental health first aid training has now been deferred April 2025. Work on the youth strategy young people's consultation has taken longer to get off the ground which will mean funding to organisations will be going out in April'25 rather than the planned January'25.

Uniformed groups have been invited to apply for funding to support activities and training of staff, this scheme was due to be rolled out in January'25 but due to staff sickness has been delayed until April'25.

The funding in reserves is allocated against key projects for spend during the 2025/2026 financial year.

### **3.7 Community Safety - £358k transfer to reserves**

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

A transfer to reserves is proposed regarding funding received in 2023/24 from (GCC) to implement a new Careline system. Delays with procurement means implementation is now planned for 2025/26.

### **3.8 Grants to Voluntary Organisations – (£168k) transfer from reserves**

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

The transfer from reserves has meant that due to relaxation of the HSF rules allowing a wider scope of money support, we have been able to allocate it to a partnership project with the Citizens Advice to deliver Advice First Aid Training plus more specialist debt advice for the district to meet demand. Additionally, there is some prior year funding from Gloucestershire County Council which is s part of an ongoing work stream to tackle the cost-of-living crisis to match fund Community Hubs outreach support with Stroud Town Council, The Keepers in Wotton and GL11 Community Hub in Cam.

A proposed transfer to reserves is a forecast underspend on Crowd funding. The original project identified two rounds of Stroud Funding, but only one cycle has been viable due to a

delayed start because of the general election. The number of projects and funding requests which have been received, did not require us to apply the full amount. We will be actively encouraging community groups to create projects backed by the local community and enable us to provide more support.

**3.9 Public Spaces - £26k overspend  
£150k transfer to reserves**  
(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, [angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk))

This forecast overspend is concerned with two public liability claims that have been settled by insurers in the last months, one of which required payment of the full £20k excess.

The proposed transfer to reserves is a 2024-25 budget allocation of £150k for the redevelopment of play areas at Stratford Park toddler area, accessible pathways at Stratford Park, Cambridge Avenue and a basket swing at Bunting Hill. UKSPF funding was made available in 2024 which enabled these works to be completed without using the original budget provision. The £150k is expected to be requested to be carried forward to 2025-26 to be spent against the priority order of play areas for re-development.

**3.10 Revenue & Benefits - £320k overspend**  
(Simon Killen xtn 4013, [simon.killen@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:simon.killen@stroud.gov.uk))

An adjustment to the arrears balance is expected to cause an in year financial pressure following an update in reporting from the software provider. This large adjustment is due to the inability to run these reports in recent years (despite chasing the provider) and is the subject of a recent external audit recommendation.

**3.11 Sports Centres – (£145k) underspend/additional income  
 (£23k) transfer from reserves**  
(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))

**Active Lifestyles - Dursley**

Income is still on target to achieve budget but has been impacted by a series of closures necessary to complete necessary Capital improvements. Participation remains strong and we will continue to mitigate any impact of the closure as much as possible. An underspend is forecast on outsourced building cleaning as we make moves towards a higher quality internal solution and utility expenditure due to the move towards natural gas.

**Active lifestyles - Stroud**

The current forecast is an underspend on the SPLC contract sum but with some offsetting overspend on marketing and licences. Income is predicted to achieve a favourable variance.

The £23k transfer from reserves is attributable to the new Leisure review/set up costs for which funding was put aside from the 2022/23 outturn position.

**4. Salary savings**

Table 2 below shows the 2024/25 forecast in-year vacancy savings, where there may be a delay in recruitment, or a post is held empty for a period of time. These are factored into the overall corporate vacancy savings reported through to Strategy & Resources Committee.

**Table 2**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Vacancy Savings (Reported in S&amp;R)</b>
Community Safety	(15)
Customer Services	(116)
Public Spaces	(27)
Revenues and Benefits	(109)
<b>Community Services and Licensing TOTAL</b>	<b>(267)</b>

The vacancy savings are made up of the following:

Community Services, a vacant post within Neighbourhood Wardens in April & May, which has now been recruited to.

Several vacancies within the Customer Contact team have contributed to this underspend, this is due to the service currently being centralised in line with our customer contact vision. It is anticipated outstanding vacancies will be recruited to in Q4 of this financial year.

Community Services have some in year vacancies within the service.

Revenues & Benefits savings attributable to several vacancies within the service. Historically it's been difficult to recruit into the benefit service as the roles are specialised, this is further hampered with the future uncertainty (due to the accelerated national migration) to Universal Credit.

## 5. Capital

Table 3 below shows the 2024/25 Capital Programme for this Committee.

**Table 3 – Capital Outturn forecast**

		<b>2024/25 Original Budget (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Revised Budget (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Forecast Outturn (£'000)</b>	<b>2024/25 Outturn Variance (£'000)</b>
<b>Community Services Capital Schemes</b>	<b>Para Refs</b>				
Community Buildings Investment	5.1	100	100	123	23
Decarbonisation SPLC/MIP/The Pulse	5.2	0	0	(73)	(73)
Stratford Park & Lido Maintenance	5.3	0	1,080	1,080	0
Swimming Pool Support Fund	5.4	0	298	298	0
<b>Community Services Capital Schemes TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>1,478</b>	<b>1,428</b>	<b>(50)</b>

Table contains roundings

### 5.1 Community Buildings Investment

Terms for a new lease to Kingshill House Ltd were approved by Strategy & Resources Committee on 23 November 2023. Under the terms of the new lease, which is due to complete shortly, the council will take responsibility for the roof and structure of the building. This change will place a greater obligation on the council to meet repair costs helping to protect the structure of this Grade II Listed building into the future and these must be included within appropriate budgets.

### 5.2 Decarbonisation – Sports Centres

Salix funding was secured ( <https://www.salixfinance.co.uk/>) to de-carbonise the three sites (The Pulse, Stratford Park Leisure Centre, and the Museum in the Park). The project achieved practical completion at the end of January and the Air Source Heat Pumps have been operating successfully since September 2024. The total grant sum is £4,690,518 with the council contributing the requisite sum of £700k. The final spend is forecast as an underspend of £73k on the total project, the previously forecast overspend has been

minimised as far as possible by amendments to the scope of the works (in particular at the Museum in the Park: ventilation and building works) and further offset by some contractual savings.

### **5.3 Stratford Park & Lido Maintenance**

Members will recall the capital report presented to this Committee in June and subsequently to S&R and Council in July 2024. This outlined the capital commitment needed following a building conditions survey on both facilities. The Lido programme includes repairs and replacement to the pool tank, plant, metering and surrounding area including Stratford Park vital works on the building fabric brickwork, roofing, decoration, doors, and flooring and mechanical and electrical (air conditioning, lighting, external toilet block). The maintenance programme is now underway following a delay whilst the site was successfully insured. Numerous schemes are now in advanced planning stage or implementation, but there will still be a significant slip of the 2024/25 programme into the 2025/26 financial year. The Lido improvement project has required additional scoping works which has been impacted by a resource shortage during the transfer. Competitive tendering will commence in March 2025 with a project start date in September 2025 (date set back in order to protect the lido swimming season)

### **5.4 Swimming Pool Support Fund 'The Pulse'**

The forecast spend for this project will be funded from the Governments Swimming Pool Support grant in full, meaning that there will be no cost to the District Council or variance at year end. The project includes works to The Pulse entrance and the air handling unit. Phase 2 works have now been completed.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

This report is of a financial nature and any financial implications are included in the report.

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### **6.2 Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications with the recommendations in this report.

One Legal

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### **6.3 Equality Implications**

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

### **6.4 Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.