


## LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Meeting / Date	<b>Cabinet</b> <b>5<sup>th</sup> October 2023</b>	
Report Title	<b>FINANCIAL MONITORING: MONTH 5 (August)</b>	
Cabinet Portfolio	Councillor Paul Douglas, Portfolio Lead Member for Finance and Resources	
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Wards affected	None specifically	
Public Access	OPEN	
Appendices	None	

### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the forecast year-end position in respect of the Council's revenue expenditure. The month 5 monitor currently identifies net pressures of £16.773m which are due to a combination of pressures within Deputy Chief Executive's Directorate, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and SEND Services.
- 1.2 There are currently a number of unknowns around the impacts of inflation, the cost-of-living crisis for residents and the increasing demand for temporary accommodation that could lead to additional pressures for the Council. These could all have an impact on the demand for services, as well as potential impact on the Council's ability to collect income from council tax, business rates, rents and other fees and charges.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
  - 2.1.1 Approve the increase to the charge for replacement waste receptacles within the Neighbourhoods and Environment Directorate, from £20 to £22.50 from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023, due to their current cost exceeding the current charge.

### 3. PROPOSALS

3.1 As at month 5 the projected General Fund outturn is an overspend of £16.773m, this is a small decrease from month 4 mostly driven by decreases within Adult Social Care and Return on Investment. Further details of the overall variance and changes since month 4 are outlined below.

3.2 The Council is monitoring and reviewing how the pressure can be managed to achieve a balanced position by the year end. Directorates are identifying plans to mitigate these pressures, in line with the financial ground rules. The table below shows a summary of the position by Service Directorate.

Service Directorate	Latest Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance Total	Variance Previous Month	Movement
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive	12	12	0	0	0
Deputy Chief Executive	10,201	11,523	1,322	1,347	(25)
People	144,792	160,290	15,498	15,805	(307)
Place	24,210	24,150	(60)	(60)	0
Neighbourhood and Environment	27,875	28,275	400	0	400
Resources	7,055	6,868	(187)	(73)	(114)
Corporate Expenditure	(214,145)	(214,345)	(200)	(200)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16,773</b>	<b>16,773</b>	<b>16,819</b>	<b>(46)</b>

3.3 In addition to the above service pressures, there are additional risks that have not yet been reflected in the monitor. These risks include pay inflations, income pressures and potential increases to those presenting as homeless.

3.4 At the start of 2022/23, the Council embarked on an exercise to identify £10m of savings to help mitigate rising budget pressure and contribute towards the budget gap in future years. As part of the exercise £6.746m was identified for the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 and these savings were removed from the base budget during the 2023/24 budget process. A further £0.525m was identified for 2024/25.

3.5 As at month 5, £0.259m of savings were RAG rated red, or in other words undeliverable, no change from month 4. Services have been asked to find alternative savings to mitigate the in-year pressure. Savings rated amber are at risk of non-delivery or delayed, no change from month 4. Green savings are on track or already delivered. The table below provides a summary of the savings by directorate.

Summary of current MTFS savings 2023/24 to 2024/25						
Directorate	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	Total £'000	Green £'000	Amber £'000	Red £'000
Deputy Chief Executive	1,045	75	1,120	561	301	259
Neighbourhood and Environment	1,355	195	1,550	1,190	360	0
Place	877	255	1,132	870	262	0
People	2,599	0	2,599	2,099	500	0
Resources	870		870	870	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,746</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>7,271</b>	<b>5,590</b>	<b>1,423</b>	<b>259</b>
				76%	20%	4%

- 3.6 These savings will be reviewed monthly, and any new savings approved will also be incorporated.

### DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE - Shazia Hussain

- 3.7 The position for Deputy Chief Executive at month 5 is an overspend of £1.322m. The table below shows forecast spend against the budget.

Deputy Chief Executive	Latest Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance Total	Variance Previous Month	Move-ment
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Deputy Chief Executive	(82)	(82)	0	0	0
Communications and Strategy	580	541	(39)	(58)	19
Technology Services	1,914	1,914	0	0	0
People Organisation Development and Business Support	324	1,127	803	846	(43)
Customer Strategy and Digital Channels	1,599	1,515	(84)	(90)	6
Change, Strategy Insight and Communities	4,997	5,597	600	607	(7)
Climate and Behaviour Change	869	869	0	0	0
Bad Debt	0	42	42	42	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,201</b>	<b>11,523</b>	<b>1,322</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>(25)</b>

### People, Organisation Development & Business Support

- 3.8 The service is forecasting an overspend of £0.803m, the majority of which relates to Business Support. The major variations include:
- 3.8.1 **Families Business Hub;** The £0.559m overspend is mostly due to salaries driven by recruitment to unbudgeted posts, and unbudgeted expenditure upgrading systems and equipment to improve the service.
- 3.8.2 **Corporate Business Hub;** The overspend of £0.191m in this area is mainly due to salary overspends

### Customer Strategy & Digital Change

- 3.9 This service is forecasted to overspend by £0.600m as at month 5. This is mostly in the Libraries, Registrars and Ceremonies service

(£0.627m) due to a shortfall in income against budget and salary overspends in the Library Service, these have been offset by underspends within Quality Assurance (£0.027m) due to part year vacancies.

## **PEOPLE – Heather Flinders**

- 3.10 The month 5 position for People is a projected overspend of £15.805m, a decrease of £0.307m since month 4. Adult Social Care is forecasting an overspend of £7.851m and a further £4.494m relates to Children's Social Care. In addition, SEND Services is forecasting an overspend of £3.421m. These overspends are offset by an underspend of £0.268m in Traded Services. Further detail is provided in the paragraphs below, with a summary shown in the table;

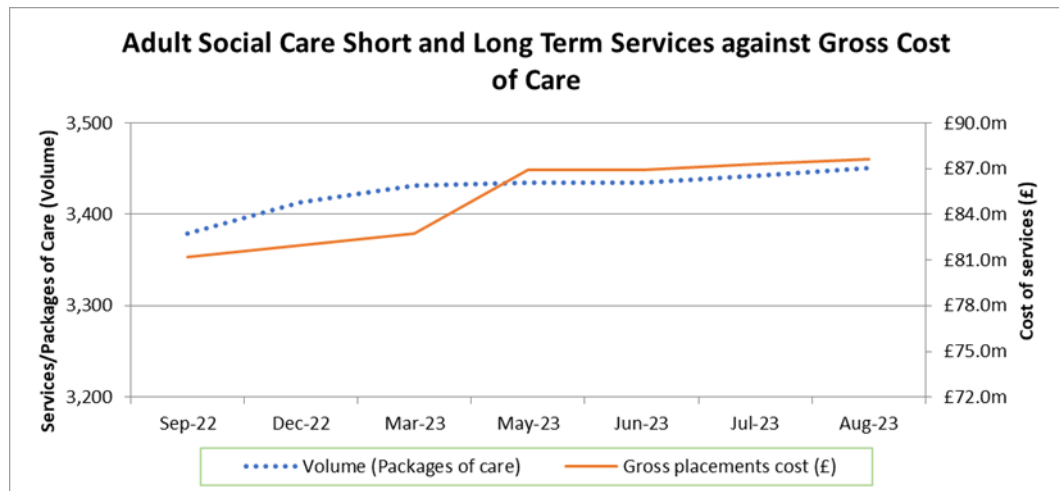
<b>People</b>	<b>Latest Budget</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Variance Total</b>	<b>Variance Previous Month</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Strategic Director of People Division	(1,059)	(1,059)	0	0	0
Children's Social Care	41,530	46,024	4,494	4,513	(19)
Education	1,391	1,391	0	0	0
School Support	17,369	17,369	0	0	0
Early Help	1,687	1,687	0	0	0
Adult Social Care	73,025	80,876	7,851	8,351	(500)
Public Health Ringfenced	(6)	(6)	0	0	0
Public Health Other	322	322	0	0	0
Waltham Forest Traded Services	2,795	2,527	(268)	(268)	0
SEND Services Division	7,738	11,159	3,421	3,209	212
<b>Total</b>	<b>144,792</b>	<b>160,290</b>	<b>15,498</b>	<b>15,805</b>	<b>(307)</b>

## **Adults Social Care**

- 3.11 The service is projected to overspend by £7.851m as at month 5, an improvement of £0.5m from month 4.

<b>Adults Social Care</b>	<b>Latest Budget</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Variance Total</b>	<b>Variance Previous Month</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Home First	9,663	10,890	1,277	1,203	74
Care & Quality Standards	63,362	70,667	7,305	7,148	157
<b>Total</b>	<b>73,025</b>	<b>81,607</b>	<b>8,582</b>	<b>8,351</b>	<b>(500)</b>

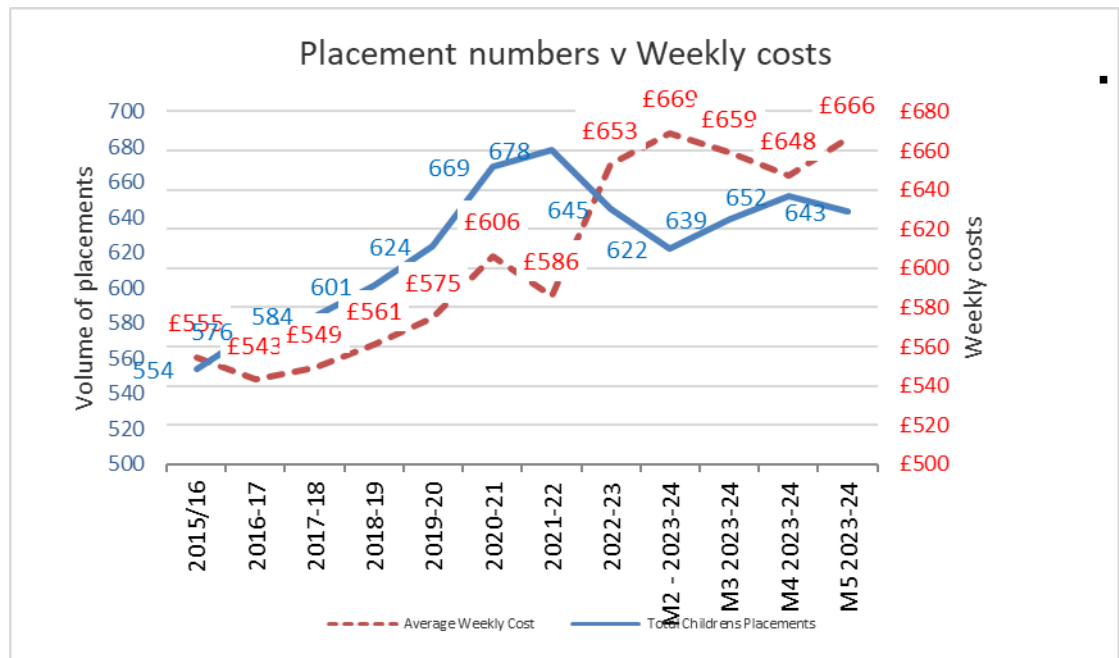
- 3.12 Re-alignment of existing and new grant funding has ensured that there is an improvement of £0.5m from month 4.
- 3.13 The forecast overspend is predominantly related to pressures in Care placements and packages of £6.9m across all Adults cohorts, both 18 to 64 and 65 plus. The remaining pressure in the forecast includes Community Equipment and Telecare, both currently being reviewed.
- 3.14 There continues to be significant and increased pressure on Adult's placement's needs, volume, and costs. There is evidence of inflationary pressures on unit prices and increasing pressure from both 18-64 and 65 plus cohorts. This area is very volatile so a detailed review is carried out each month to refresh the forecast. The forecast includes:
- (a) The full year impact of the net increase in client numbers during 2022/23 of 209 (i.e. 180 net increase for working age and 29 net increase in 65+). The estimated impact of this, on the forecasts for 2023/24 is approximately £1.7m.
  - (b) Assumptions of increased demand and inflationary uplifts for the full year 2023/24 is approximately £2.5m and have been built into the month 5 forecast. This will be reviewed each month, checked against actual movement, and adjusted where relevant to do so. The net increase in client numbers at month 5 is 61 and 160 is assumed in the full year forecast.
  - (c) The continuation of the discharge to assess protocol and the review of the use of reablement which should reduce ongoing costs.
  - (d) The loss of one-off funding (e.g., Hospital Discharge Funding) in 2023/24 compared to last year are contributing to the pressure.
  - (e) Increased complexity of packages and pressures in the provider market, especially the impact of the cost-of-living crisis is seen in increasing rates in newer care packages.
  - (f) Some of these additional costs are mitigated in part by the ASC Precept, the increase in the Market Sustainability Grant and increase in the Social Care Grant allocation for 2023/24. This additional funding broadly covers the increased in year demand and costs for 2023-24.
  - (g) The Graph shows overall External Placements care packages and spend in Adults Social Care.



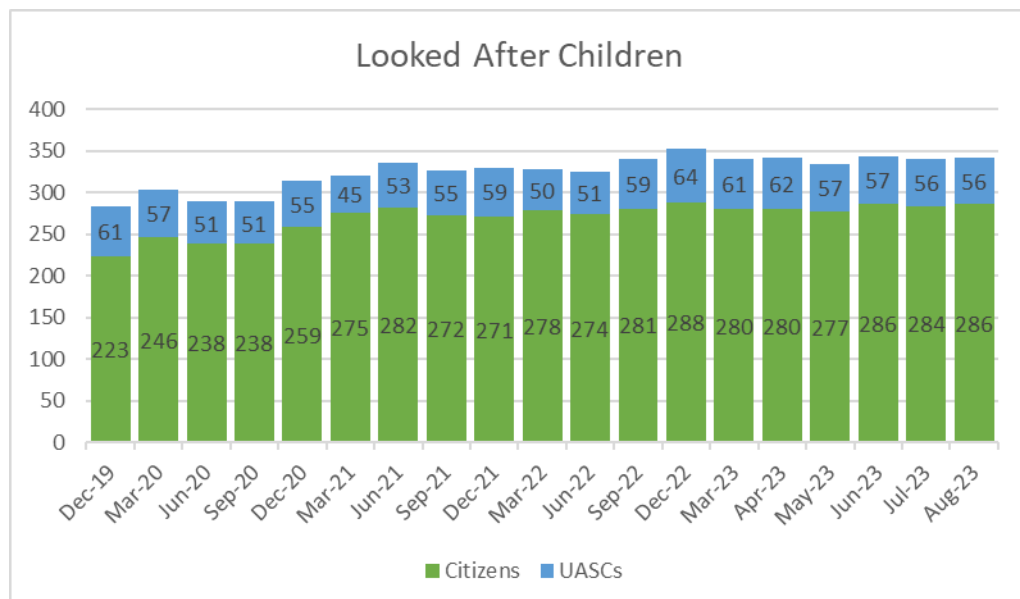
### Children's Social Care

(Inclusive of the Youth and Family Resilience Service)

- 3.15 Children's Social Care is forecasting an overspend of £4.494m against budget. This is £0.019m lower than at Month 4.
- 3.16 Staff costs are currently expected to overspend by £1.47m. This is predominately due to agency costs and unchanged from Month4..
- 3.17 Alternative home costs are forecast to overspend by £2.177m, unchanged from Month 4. This includes an agreed uplift to all In House carers allowances to bring them in line with revised National Guidelines and will be funded from the Social Care Grant.
- 3.18 As reflected in the graph below, average weekly costs have increased from £648 per week to £666 per week due to the increase in In House rates and an increase in the average costs of Residential Homes. However, there was a 9 fte. decrease in the number of young people being accommodated due to care leavers moving on to their own accommodation. (The graph relates to both Citizens and UASCs but excludes remands).



3.19 The number of Looked after Children at the end of August 2023 increased by 2 to 342 compared to 340 at the end of July 2023. The graph relates to both Citizens and UASCs but excludes remands.



3.20 Net of the grant, Remand costs are forecast to overspend by £0.242m as there are currently 2 young people in Youth Justice Secure provision. This is an unavoidable cost to the Council and extremely difficult to predict.

3.21 Section 17 costs are currently forecast to overspend by £0.584m, similar to month 4. A review of Section 17 expenditure has been launched. (Section 17 of Children Act 1989 includes family assessments, temporary accommodation, and subsistence allowances,

all of which should be short-term as well as funding family support workers.)

- 3.22 Unmet Housing needs for citizens are forecast to spend £0.294m, this is partially offset by a forecast underspend for families with No Recourse to Public Funds by £0.174m

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability Service**

- 3.23 The SEND service is forecasting an overspend of £3.421m, an increase of £0.212m compared to month 4.
- 3.24 Travel assistance is forecast to overspend by £1.872m. The overspend comprises the full year effect of the new bus transport contract £0.951m; taxis £0.931m; other Local Authorities and savings in independent travel training (£0.010m). This is an increase on Month 4 of £0.191m and relates to the actual reconciliations of the first six months of the contract together with estimates for the second six months and projected pupil numbers for the academic year 2023/24.
- 3.25 When the new bus contact was let on a cost +5.4% approach, it was recognised that there was the potential for uncertainty around those costs in the first year of operation. The reconciliation process for that first year is continuing and estimates have been included in the projection.
- 3.26 The service is now projecting an overspend of £0.341m for Domiciliary Care, Short Breaks & Direct Payments which is an decrease on month 4 of £0.025m. This is due to an increase in packages being agreed and an estimate for further growth.
- 3.27 Preparing for Adulthood services is forecasting a net overspend of £0.945m, an increase of £0.093m compared to month 4. This net figure includes overspends of £1.089m for places in residential homes and supported living accommodation; and £0.150m for day care offset by extra income of £0.179m from direct payment recoupment, and £0.109m from client contributions.

### **Traded Services**

- 3.28 Traded Services are projected to underspend by £0.268m, unchanged from Month 4. The underspend represents favourable variances to budget across all services with the main underspend, £0.218m, generated by the Catering service.

### **Public Health**

- 3.29 Public Health (both ring-fenced and non-ring-fenced) is forecasting to budget. The Public Health grant for 2023/24 is £17.6m and the reserve currently is £4m.

### **PLACE - Stewart Murray**

- 3.30 As at month 5 Place directorate is forecasting an underspend of £0.060m relating to Housing General Fund and a £0.596m overspend



for Housing Revenue Account which will be funded from HRA balances. The table below shows the outturn position for the services:

Place	Latest Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance Total	Variance Previous Month	Movement
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Strategic Director of Place	173	173	0	0	0
Property & Delivery	5,685	5,685	0	0	0
Regeneration Planning & Delivery	5,392	5,392	0	0	0
Culture & Destinations	3,494	3,494	0	0	0
Housing General Fund	9,466	9,406	(60)	(60)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,210</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Housing Revenue Account</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>596</b>

- 3.31 A key financial risk for Property and Delivery relates to income from commercial properties, which is impacted by the current market conditions. The service will work to identify mitigations to minimise any losses.
- 3.32 There are also budget and income risks within Regeneration Planning and Delivery, but expenditure will be managed within the agreed spending plans.

### **Housing General Fund**

- 3.33 The latest Housing General Fund (HGF) position as at month 5 is shown in the table below and is currently forecasting an underspend of £0.060m. The financial challenges within the HGF budget arise mainly from homelessness demand, although the number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) was on a downward trajectory throughout 2022/23, it is widely expected to increase during 2023/24.

Housing General Fund	Latest Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance Total	Variance Previous Month	Movement
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Housing Advice, Prevention & Supply	3,261	3,401	140	0	140
Nightly, B&B & PSL / Property Mngt	2,670	3,390	720	860	(140)
Private Lettings WF	1,390	530	(860)	(860)	0
Rough Sleepers	(5)	(5)	0	0	0
Other	1,258	1,198	(60)	(60)	0
Overheads & ICT	892	892	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,466</b>	<b>9,406</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>0</b>

- 3.34 Data from 28 London Boroughs shows a worsening homelessness situation across a range of key performance measures. Homelessness presentations in January 2023 saw an 8.3% increase in service demand on the previous year and in Waltham Forest presentations increased by over 50% between May 2023 and August 2023. Data also shows a worsening situation for councils in procuring & retaining suitable accommodation, driving an increase in B&B usage which increased by 167% in February 2023 when compared with the previous year. Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are a significant driver of pressures and have remained frozen since April 2020 despite rising rents and living costs. In 2022/23 less than 7% of available private rented sector properties in Waltham Forest were available at LHA rates. As a result of these factors, there are projected increases in expenditure of approx. 40% (£3.3m to £3.8m) from the previous financial year. If this pressure was to materialise, it would be funded initially by utilising the Homelessness Prevention grant or reserve.
- 3.35 The over-arching strategy to mitigate future demand increases is to accelerate the Council's acquisition programmes and provide a ready supply of housing to support households to exit TA (and reduce the net cost to the HGF budget). The More Homes Waltham Forest joint venture completed its programme of acquisitions during 2021/22 and a second joint venture is also being pursued to follow on from the first and ensure a stream of properties continue to be made available throughout the year.

### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

- 3.36 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) position is detailed in the table below and is currently projecting an overspend of £596k for 2023/24, which will be taken from the HRA general reserve to balance the HRA.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Budget £'000</b>	<b>Forecast £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>
Rents	(64,915)	(65,025)	(110)
Right to Buy	(1,199)	(1,197)	2
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(66,114)</b>	<b>(66,222)</b>	<b>(108)</b>
Housing Strategy & Systems	3,390	3,320	(70)
Housing Management & Assets	33,568	34,430	862
Housing Options & Support	1,313	1,313	0
Housing Delivery	897	579	(318)
Corporate Items	26,946	27,176	230
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>66,114</b>	<b>66,818</b>	<b>704</b>

<b>HRA Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>596</b>
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- 3.37 The overspend of £596k relates to increased costs within Housing Management & Assets due to the Waking Watch service overspending by £404k. This is because of delays in works being carried out, revised completion dates, and the proposed salaries pay award for 2023/24 being higher than originally assumed in the MTFS.
- 3.38 The key risk to have materialised on the HRA was the outcome of the appeal on the Thames Water test case involving the Royal Borough of Kingston (back in October 2020). Refunds have been made to current tenants and the team are currently in the process of issuing refunds for former tenants where applicable.
- 3.39 Some estimates in relation to energy costs, for both gas and electricity, and repairs and maintenance inflation have been revised versus the assumptions included in the business plan.

### **NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE (Debbie Porter)**

- 3.40 The Neighbourhoods and Environment Directorate is forecasting a £0.400m overspend as at month 5.

<b>Neighbourhood and Environment Directorate</b>	<b>Latest Budget</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Variance Total</b>	<b>Variance Previous Month</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>
Strategic Director	178	178	0	0	0
Neighbourhood Services	24,374	24,374	0	0	0
Regulatory Services & Contingency Planning	2,234	2,634	400	0	400
Community Safety and Resilience	1,089	1,089	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,875</b>	<b>28,275</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>400</b>

- 3.41 At Month 5 Community Safety and Resilience is forecasting a breakeven position. Community Safety relies on external funding and recharges to Housing which is currently subject to a review.
- 3.42 Regulatory Services & Contingency Planning are forecasting a £0.400m overspend as at month 5 due to income risks of Selective Licensing which will continue to be monitored during the year.
- 3.43 Neighbourhood Services is reliant on over £30m of income, mainly from parking. Any income risks that may lead to budget pressures are being monitored in anticipation of mitigating within the directorate.
- 3.44 Due to the increase cost of domestic waste receptacles exceeding the current approved charge for their replacement, it is recommended to increase the charge from £20 to £22.50 from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

## RESOURCES - Rob Manning

3.45 As at month 5, the projected outturn position is a £0.187m underspend.

Resources	Latest Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance Total	Variance Previous Month	Movement
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Director of Finance & Governance	8	8	0	0	0
Financial Services	25	25	0	0	0
Audit & Anti-Fraud	8	8	0	0	0
Revenues & Benefits	4,696	4,696	0	0	0
Treasury & Pensions	143	143	0	0	0
Return on Investment	650	555	(95)	0	(95)
Governance & Law	1,525	1,433	(93)	(73)	(19)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,055</b>	<b>6,868</b>	<b>(187)</b>	<b>(73)</b>	<b>(114)</b>

3.46 The outturn position is due to vacancies being held within Return on Investment and the Governance & Law Service, partly offset by projected overspends within the Coroners and Mortuary Services.

## Council Tax

3.47 The table below summarises the collection rate trend for Council Tax.

	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
In year	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
15/16	96.0								
16/17	97.4	96.1							
17/18	98.0	97.4	96.1						
18/19	98.3	97.9	97.3	96.0					
19/20	98.5	98.2	97.8	97.1	95.8				
20/21	98.7	98.0	98.0	97.5	96.5	93.8			
21/22	98.7	98.6	98.2	97.8	97.2	96.2	94.9		
22/23	98.9	98.7	98.4	98.0	97.5	96.7	96.3	95.3	
23/24	98.9	98.7	98.5	98.1	97.6	96.9	96.6	95.8	36.9

## Business Rates

3.48 The table below summarises the collection rate trend for Business Rates.

	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
In year	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
15/16	97.2								
16/17	98.6	97.2							
17/18	99.0	98.4	97.5						
18/19	99.1	98.7	97.7	97.0					
19/20	99.3	98.8	98.4	97.6	96.0				
20/21	99.2	98.8	98.0	97.2	95.3	78.7			
21/22	99.3	99.1	98.5	98.0	96.8	91.0	91.5		
22/23	99.4	99.2	98.8	98.6	97.7	94.9	95.7	95.1%	
23/24	99.5	99.3	99.0	98.7	97.9	95.3	96.1	95.3%	39.2

#### **4. OPTIONS & ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Much of this report is concerned with provision of information, for which alternative options is not a relevant consideration.

#### **5. COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (AND OTHER NATIONAL OR LOCAL POLICIES OR STRATEGIES)**

- 5.1. The entire content of this report contributes to the corporate priority to Achieve Excellence and Ensure Value for Money.

#### **6. CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Executive Directors and Portfolio Holders have been consulted.

#### **7. IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk**

- 7.1.1 The whole report is of a financial nature. The key purpose of the report is to monitor the Council's overall financial performance against assumptions contained in the MTFS. To maintain the robustness of the Council's finances and budget plans, effective budgetary control by services will continue to be essential and will help the Council to maximise the resources available to meet its priorities.
- 7.1.2 Given the nature of the Cost-of-Living emergency and the estimated financial exposure, the Council must have due regard to Section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988. The Section 114 powers of the chief finance officer (CFO) under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 require the CFO, in consultation with the Council's monitoring officer, to report to all the authority's members if there is, or is likely to be, an unbalanced budget. It remains a priority that the Council achieves a balanced budget that is sustainable for each financial year over the medium-term financial strategy period. Where there are significant pressures, it is expected to be mitigated by directorates in line with the ground rules for financial control. The current MTFS including reserves – means that Section 114 is unlikely to be needed in the current year.

If the pressures are established to be on-going, they will need to be picked up in the MTFS refresh and potentially could result in a budget gap that would need to be resolved through the use of reserves or savings. Therefore, it is important that all services tightly control their budgets and bring forward surpluses or efficiencies if possible.

7.1.3 Many of these pressures relate to demand led services. There is a risk for years that these costs become on-going and put pressure on the MTFS. Therefore, it is essential that Strategic Director manage this risk by exploring changes to service delivery that will reduce demand pressures in future and efficiently manage the pressures that we are experiencing (both cost and volume) to protect the provision of services generally.

7.1.4 In relation to sanctions against Russian companies and individuals, the council have taken a high-level approach but have identified no direct link between Russia and the supply chain. The council have also looked at the pension fund and have not identified direct investments in Russia other than a small amount invested through the London Collective Investment Vehicle which is being managed.

## **7.2 Legal**

7.2.1 There are no direct legal implications.

## **7.3 Equalities and Diversity**

7.3.1 An initial equality analysis was undertaken, and if determined there was no negative impact arising from the information or changes proposed in this report on the advancement of equality. The support of No Recourse to Public Funds clients are areas that continue to contribute to the Council's commitment to protecting the most vulnerable and help meet the equality duty.

## **7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)**

7.4.1 A stable financial position means that the Council is more able to fund urgent health priorities as they arise. Services to older people experienced pressures and needed careful management.

## **7.5 Council Infrastructure**

7.5.1 There are no direct council infrastructure implications.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)**

None