

## **General Services Budgetary Control Report**

**Period to 15 November 2006**

### **Notes on Variances greater than £25,000**

#### **Chief Executive**

##### Public Relations £31,380 Adv

This adverse variance is a result of the employment of temporary staff to cover for long term sickness absence as well as re-grading of two staff members during the year.

##### Legal & Administration £37,100 Adv

This overspend is mainly due to a combination of long term sick cover, maternity cover and difficulties in achieving the staff turnover to date. The costs of legal practicing certificates were not fully covered within budget.

##### Cost of Collection of Rates £25,830 Fav

This favourable variance is mainly due to additional income received from statutory additions partially offset by higher than anticipated discretionary rates relief.

##### Cost of Collection of Council Tax £45,330 Adv

This adverse variance is mainly due to the income received from statutory additions being less than anticipated due to improved performance in the collection of council tax.

#### **Education and Cultural Services**

##### Central Administration £47,700 Adv

This variance is mainly due to an overspend in advertising costs due to the recruitment costs in respect of the Director's post, and advertising costs in relation to Early Education and Childcare posts. This variance is partially offset by favourable staffing variances elsewhere within the departmental budget.

##### Schools – Primary £187,690 Adv

This variance is mainly due to energy, cleaning and school bus contract costs being higher than anticipated. The cleaning and transport adverse variances are offset by similar favourable variances within Schools (Secondary) but continue to be monitored, with appropriate action being taken where possible.

##### Schools – Secondary £212,910 Fav

There is a favourable variance in employee costs due to average salary variations and non-teaching staff vacancies earlier in the year. There are also favourable variances within cleaning and janitors costs which are being monitored. This is off-set by payments to Scottish Qualifications Authority which have exceeded budget, due to an increase in the numbers of certificates for which students are being presented.

#### Schools – Special

£30,880 Fav

There is an underspend due to teaching staff cover requirements being less than anticipated at this stage in the financial year. This is partially offset by overspends within transport contracts. There are also additional costs due for payments to providers of residential placements.

#### Community Learning and Development

£54,100 Fav

This underspend is mainly due to janitors costs being less than budgeted. This is currently under review.

#### Quality Improvement Service

£31,660 Fav

This underspend is mainly a vacancy held for a number of months. The post is due filled in January 2007.

#### Pre-Five Service

£232,420 Adv

There is an adverse variance on employee costs due to staff increments being higher than anticipated, as well as difficulties in achieving the staff turnover target due to cover requirements. This overspend is also partially due to payment rates for commissioned providers of nursery places having significantly increased, as advised by the Scottish Executive.

#### Libraries

£53,620 Adv

This adverse variance is mainly due to unsociable hour payments made to some members of staff which were not fully anticipated during the budget process. Year to date property costs are also higher than anticipated due to energy cost increases and a rental charge levied to Faifley Library which was not previously charged.

### **Social Work**

#### Operations and Servicing

£39,730 Adv

This overspend is a result of the year to date costs incurred in meeting clients welfare requirements being higher than anticipated within the budget.

#### Residential Accommodation for Young People

£135,190 Adv

This adverse variance is mainly due to additional overtime costs due to sickness cover and additional fostering costs due to a shortage of foster parents (resulting in the use of fostering agencies who charge significantly more than the cost of foster parenting). The foster care issue is likely to be ongoing and will be monitored closely.

#### Residential Schools

£74,980 Adv

This overspend is due to providers rates being increased significantly above inflation. This is partially offset by a lower number of children being placed.

Other Services – Young People £235,860 Adv

There have been additional costs incurred for Youth Justice and ISMS projects which will be fully funded by a redetermination of Revenue Support Grant.

Residential Accommodation – Learning Disability £66,000 Fav

This underspend is mainly due to vacancy savings

Residential Accommodation – Physical Disability £25,570 Adv

This overspend is mainly due to new clients, not known during the budget preparation.

Other Services – Disability £43,450 Fav

This favourable variance is due to underspending in relation to Independent Living Fund costs together with vacancy savings.

Supplementation – Mental Health £44,270 Fav

This underspend is due to vacancy savings and delays in placements of expected clients.

Home Help Service £382,770 Fav

This underspend is due to a provision made for previous year debt to Argyll and Bute Council not actually being required.

## **Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services**

Directorate and Administration £55,730 Adv

Unallocated savings are held within this budget but the actual savings will be made across various service areas as the year progresses.

Architectural & Related Services £48,710 Fav

This underspend is due to vacancy savings partially offset by lower than anticipated recovery of Architects salaries from Central Repairs.

Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit £122,030 Fav

This favourable variance is attributable to staffing vacancies and the receipt of more administration grant than had been anticipated within the budget.

Homeless Persons £165,870 Adv

This adverse variance is mainly due to reduced rental income due to occupancy levels being less than anticipated in the year to date.

Private Sector Housing £32,370 Fav

This underspend is due to a reduction in the allocation of salary recharges following a reassessment of allocation basis.

### Regeneration

£39,890 Fav

This variance is due to higher than anticipated income for building warrants and planning applications, together with savings arising from vacant posts.

### Refuse Collection

£197,080 Adv

This adverse variance is mainly due to higher than anticipated bulky uplifts and income from commercial charges and other accounts of the authority being lower than budgeted.

### Skillseekers

£58,940 Fav

This favourable variance is attributable to additional income received for additional placements

## **Miscellaneous**

### Sundry Services

£94,980 Fav

This favourable variance is a result of the Housing Maintenance and Catering trading operation surpluses being higher than anticipated, partially offset by Grounds Maintenance and Roads surpluses being lower than anticipated.

## **Contingency Fund**

This fund is credited with provisions that were originally included within departmental budgets but where, due to changes in external circumstances, savings will now arise. The balance is made from:-

	£
Pay award – estimated at 3%, agreed at 2.5%	444,970
Loan Charge savings through debt restructuring	72,000
Grounds Maintenance additional spend	<u>(100,000)</u>
	<u>416,970</u>

## **Earmarked Balance**

The balance is earmarked for those staff leaving employment through early retrials and voluntary severance packages at a later date in 2006 than that anticipated during the budget process. These additional costs are absorbed within departmental budgets.