

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**Report by the Chief Officer – Resources**  
**Council – 25 October 2023**

**Subject: General Services Budgetary Control Report to 31 August 2023  
(Period 5)**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report provides an update on the General Services revenue budget and the approved capital programme to 31 August 2023.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** Council is asked to:

- i) note a current projected annual adverse variance on the revenue account of £2.295m (0.9% of total budget); and
- ii) note that projected expenditure on the capital account is lower than the 2023/24 budget by £8.857m (9.48% of budget), made up of £8.868m (9.49% of budget) of project re-profiling, and an in-year overspend of £0.011m (-0.01% of budget).

**3. Background**

Revenue

- 3.1** At the meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council (the Council) on 1 March 2023, Members agreed the revenue estimates for 2023/2024. A total net budget of £265.160m was approved for General Services.
- 3.2** Since the budget was agreed, additional funding has been provided by the Scottish Government resulting in a revised total net budget of £268.231m.

	<b>Service</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Agreed budget 1 March 2023</b>			<b>265.160</b>
Additional Funding:			
No One Left Behind	Housing & Employability	0.189	
Child Poverty	Housing & Employability	0.078	
SNCT Payaward	Education	2.724	
Summer 23 Programme	Education	0.080	
<b>Total Additional Funding</b>			<b>3.071</b>
<b>Revised budget as at Period 5</b>			<b>268.231</b>

Capital

- 3.3** At its 1 March 2023 meeting, the Council also agreed the updated General Services Capital Plan for 2023/2024 to 2031/32. The three years from

2023/24 to 2025/26 were approved in detail with the remaining years being indicative at that stage. After adjusting for anticipated re-profiling from 2022/23 into 2023/24, the budget agreed for 2023/24 was £79.916m, as noted below.

- 3.4** Since then, budget adjustments have taken place (through further 2022/23 capital re-profiling and additional external funding), revising the 2023/24 annual budget to £93.433m, as follows:

	<b>£m</b>
<b>Agreed budget 2023/24 (Council – March 2023)</b>	<b>79.916</b>
Additional re-profiling from 2022/23 – following year end	11.915
<u>New Funding introduced to Period 3</u>	
Nature Restoration Fund	0.257
Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets	0.561
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport	0.650
Road Safety	0.134
<b>Revised budget 2023/24 as at Period 5</b>	<b>93.433</b>

#### **4. Main Issues**

##### Revenue

- 4.1** The summary report at Appendix 1 highlights a projected annual adverse variance (overspend) of £2.295m (0.9% of the total budget). Appendix 2 provides more detailed service reports by Chief Officer.
- 4.2** Information on projected annual variances in excess of £0.050m are highlighted and noted within Appendix 3, with additional information on action being taken to minimise or mitigate overspends where possible.
- 4.3** A list of agreed management adjustments totalling £11.809m is shown within Appendix 4. Current indications show, £11.584m is on target to be achieved. However, Appendix 4 also shows that it is anticipated that £0.225m will not be achieved and will be funded by the smoothing fund for 2023/24 only, with the expectation that the full saving will be achieved in future years.
- 4.4** A breakdown of the 2023/24 earmarked balances are shown within Appendix 5 and is summarised as follows:

	<b>£000</b>
Earmarked balances brought forward from 2022/23	24.590
Transfers in identified in 2023/24 (includes the balance of the agreed cost of living funds over the next 4 years)	0.975
Transfer out identified in 2023/24 to fund 2022/23 pay	(2.195)
Anticipated forecast spend 2023/24	(12.302)
Amounts due to be released in 2023/24	(0.123)
<b>Balance anticipated to be c/fwd into 2024/25</b>	<b>10.945</b>

- 4.5** The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is currently forecasting a deficit of £2.309m after applying all available reserves. The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 specifies that if an HRA deficit arises in any one year, the local authority must make a contribution to make good the deficit from the General Fund. The HRA would then be expected to repay that contribution from any future surpluses generated.
- 4.6** The Chief Officer for Housing and Employability, in conjunction with the Council's Chief Officer for Resources, is carrying out a detailed review to identify options to reduce the projected deficit with early indications being that there will be viable options to reduce the in year overspend to the extent that no contribution from the General Fund will be required. An update on this will be reported to Council when the BCRs for period 7 are reported in December.

### Capital

- 4.7** The current progress on the capital plan is shown in Appendices 6 to 9.
- 4.8** The overall programme summary report at Appendix 6 shows that planned 2023/24 expenditure is lower than the 2023/24 budget by £8.857m (9.48% of budget), made up of £8.868m (9.49% of budget) of project re-profiling, and an in-year overspend of £0.011m (-0.01% of budget).
- 4.9** Appendix 6 also provides an analysis of the overall programme at each alert status and a summary budgetary control report including detailing the number of projects and corresponding spend as a percentage of the overall programme currently at red, amber or green alert status for project life and the current year. The current projections are based on best judgement as to how these projects will continue in operation during the remainder of the year.
- 4.10** Appendices 7 and 8 detail the financial analysis of projects at red and green status respectively (currently no amber) and provide additional information on action being taken to minimise or mitigate under or overspends where possible. Appendix 9 provides an analysis of resources.
- 4.11** From the analysis within the appendices it can be seen there are a number of projects with identified re-profiling to date. Those with re-profiling valued at greater than £0.500m, are listed as follows:

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Period 5 Re-profiling (£m)</b>
Waste Transfer Station	1.780
Exxon City Deal	6.495

**4.12** For comparison purposes, a summary of the monthly re-profiling position is noted below:

	<b>Period 3</b>	<b>Period 5</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Overall capital plan	92.814	93.433	0.619
Overall variance	0.011	(8.857)	(8.868)
Re-Profiling	0.000	(8.868)	(8.868)
Net over/ under	0.011	0.011	0.000
% Re-Profiling	0%	9.49%	9.49%

## **5. Option Appraisal**

**5.1** No option appraisal was required for this report.

## **6. People Implications**

**6.1** There are no people implications.

## **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

**7.1** The report notes the projected in-year financial position for both General Services revenue and capital budgets.

## **8. Risk Analysis**

**8.1** The main risks are as follows:

- (a) The present variances should be viewed in the knowledge that there are a number of variable factors which could arise between now and 31 March which could affect the year end results for both the revenue and capital budgets;
- (b) As a consequence of current market conditions, capital receipts may either not be received or they may be less than anticipated. The budget assumption is that all capital receipts achieved in 2023/24 will be used to the principal and premium repayments within the loan charges budget. Any shortfall in capital receipts below that budgeted will affect the revenue budget position. This is being closely monitored and any issues will be reported to Council;
- (c) As a consequence of current market conditions, inflation is at an all-time high and interest rates continue to rise. To forecast for the full year costs budget assumptions have been required (particularly around energy and interest costs). These assumptions continue to change regularly and therefore it is likely that the projected year end budgetary position will change from that reported;

## **9. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

**9.1** No equalities impact assessment was required in relation to this report.

## **10. Environmental Sustainability**

**10.1** No assessment of environmental sustainability was required in relation to this report.

## **11. Consultation**

**11.1** All services involved in delivering the revenue and capital budgets have been consulted in the compilation of this report.

## **12. Strategic Assessment**

**12.1** Proper budgetary control and sound financial practice are cornerstones of good governance and support Council and officers to pursue the strategic priorities of the Council's current Strategic Plan. This report forms part of the financial governance of the Council.

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Date: 29 September 2023

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**Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 - Revenue Budgetary Control 2023/24 – Corporate Summary;
- Appendix 2 - Revenue Budgetary Control 2023/24 – Chief Officer Summaries;
- Appendix 3 - Analysis of Revenue Variances over £50,000;
- Appendix 4 - Monitoring of Efficiencies
- Appendix 5 - Monitoring of Earmarked Balances
- Appendix 6 - Overall Capital Programme Summary;
- Appendix 7- Analysis of Projects at Red Status;
- Appendix 8 - Analysis of Projects at Green Status;
- Appendix 9 - Analysis of Capital Resources.

### **Background Papers:**

- Ledger output – Period 5;
- General Services Revenue Estimates 2023/24
- General Services Capital Plan Update - Council 1 March 2023.

**Wards Affected**

All Wards