

## Appendix 3 – Community Services

Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture: Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts

Executive Director: Chris Hall

Service Directors:

- Housing: Chris Brown
- Culture: Elizabeth Dawson
- Customers: Jan Stafford
- Regulatory and Operational: Sarah Dowden

**Table 1: 2023/24 Community Services as at the end of September 2023  
(Month 7)**

- 2023/24 net budget £32.4m, nil variance projected, favourable movement £1.3m.

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 7 Variance £m	A/(F)	RAG Status	Movement From Month 6 £m
<b>Housing</b>						
Housing	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Housing Enabling	0.5	0.5	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Housing Strategic	1.1	1.1	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Homelessness	4.3	4.3	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO)	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Somerset Independent Plus	0.2	0.2	0.0	-	Green	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Customer Services</b>						
Customers & Communities	5.4	5.4	0.0	-	Green	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Cultural Services</b>						
Library Service	3.8	3.8	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Heritage Service	1.7	1.7	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Leisure - Sports Centre	1.8	1.8	0.0	-	Green	(0.4)
Museums	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Theatres	0.9	0.9	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Visitor Centres	0.2	0.2	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Tourism	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	Green	0.0
(wellbeing) Community Grants	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>(0.4)</b>
<b>Regulatory &amp; Operational Services</b>						
Registration	(0.2)	(0.2)	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Environmental Health	3.5	3.5	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Bereavement Services	(1.3)	(1.3)	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Harbours	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Ports	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Street Cleansing	4.7	4.7	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Open Spaces	3.2	3.2	0.0	-	Green	(0.9)
(wellbeing) Community Safety	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	Green	0.0
CCTV	0.7	0.7	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Licensing	(0.4)	(0.4)	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Resorts	0.2	0.2	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Coroners	1.3	1.3	0.0	-	Green	0.0
Operational Support	0.6	0.6	0.0	-	Green	0.0
<b>sub total</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>(0.9)</b>
<b>Community Services Total</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>(1.3)</b>

## **Community Services - key explanations, actions & mitigating controls**

The directorate is seeing pressures on budgets, the majority of which are in respect of errors identified when the budgets for the five councils were brought together.

The budget errors cannot be corrected in year.

Service Directors are working to ensure that these pressures are managed in the remaining part of the financial year. It is anticipated that the recovery plans being implemented will result in no variance at year end.

## **Housing Services**

There is a pressure in respect of homelessness, with the expenditure in respect of Bed & Breakfast accommodation anticipated to exceed the budget.

A Bed & Breakfast taskforce and recovery plan is being implemented which will put actions in place to reduce the forecasted overspend.

## **Cultural Services**

There are pressures in respect of income due from the contracted schedule of payments in 2023/24 due to changes in Somerset Council business rate policy, and contractor pension contribution liabilities. There are also utility benchmarking clauses for which the council has some liability. The service is continuing to work with the contractor to find solutions to reduce the impact to the Council.

## **Regulation & Operations:**

Open Spaces functions were previously carried out by the district councils, these include services such as ground maintenance. The in year pressure relates to a reduction in budgeted income associated with the grounds maintenance contract provided by the council to an external client.

This contract ended in 2021/22. The service expenditure budget was reduced as part of the budget setting process, but the income budget was not reduced to reflect this change. Therefore, the income receivable is anticipated to be less than the target. A growth bid has been submitted to amend this income budget estimate going forwards and additional work is underway in year to reduce the impact of this, we anticipate the loss of income to be covered by underspends on other budgets in this area.

In addition, three of the districts delivered the Open Spaces service in-house, whereas Mendip District Council had an external contractor to provide this service. The service is facing an in-year pressure because the contract price increase is more than budgeted.

The service is reviewing all areas to establish in year savings that will offset the budget pressure.