

Decision Report - Executive Decision

Forward Plan Reference: FP/24/06/20

Decision Date - 2 September 2024

Key Decision - No



2024/25 General Fund Capital Budget Monitoring Report as at end of June 2024 (Qtr. 1 - Month 3)

Executive Member(s): Cllr Liz Leyshon, Deputy Leader and Lead Member on Resources and Performance

Local Member(s) and Division: All

Lead Officer: Nicola Hix, Director of Finance & Procurement

Author: Nicola Hix, Director of Finance & Procurement

Contact Details: nicola.hix@somerset.gov.uk

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a forecast of the 2024/25 year-end spend (Outturn) against the Council's approved Capital Programme Budget as it stands as at the end of June 2024, and to explain projected variations against individual projects and the Programme as a whole.
2. The revised capital programme was approved by Members in February 2024 alongside the MTFP for 2024/25. This report details how the programme has changed since February 2024 and has been updated to include the carry forwards from 2023/24.
3. The forecast outturn for 2024/25 as at the end of June is spend of £195.0m against an original budget of £268.7m, therefore currently giving a forecast outturn variance of £73.7m. The total budget incorporates the slippage from 2023/24 of £196.890 which has been reprofiled over the current and future years. **Table 1** provides a summary of budget, projections, and variances on a directorate basis (with Climate and Place split further due to the size) with further detail and mitigations being taken by the responsible director outlined in the body of the report.

Table 1: 2024/25 Summary Budget Monitoring Report as at the end of June 2024 (Qtr. 1)

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr 1	Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Reprofiled into future years	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adults and Health	4.689	0.435	4.132	(0.557)	0.557	
Children's Services	40.556	2.554	34.973	(5.583)	5.583	
Climate & Place Other Services	7.733	0.352	2.746	(4.987)	4.987	
Climate & Place Economy and Regeneration	83.358	4.359	73.870	(9.488)	9.488	
Climate & Place Infrastructure	92.701	2.340	65.241	(27.460)	27.460	
Community Services	18.689	1.583	4.444	(14.245)	14.496	0.251
Resources & Corporate Services	20.625	0.764	9.368	(11.257)	11.257	
Strategy and Workforce	0.370		0.235	(0.135)	0.135	
Total	268.721	12.387	195.009	(73.712)	73.963	0.251

4. Members will note from the Capital Outturn Report from 2023/24, it has been suggested that a further review of the schemes included in this programme is carried out during the year due to the significant slippage incurred, but also to ensure that the Council has the capacity to be able to deliver schemes agreed in prior years. This review may lead to the capital programme reducing and therefore forecast spend for the financial year reducing.
5. In the meantime, the Finance Business Partnering Team have worked closely with budget holders to review their capital schemes, with particular focus on the spend profile against that budgeted for 2024/25 to try and forecast more accurately the spend this year and that unlikely until future years, the initial effect of which can be seen with the £73.9 reprofiling above. This will also allow our Treasury Management Team to forecast more accurately the borrowing requirement for the year.

6. Any variances to the original 2024/25 budget position are explained in Appendix A under the relevant Directorate heading.

Recommendations

7. That the Executive:
 - a) Notes the contents of the report and appendices.
 - b) Approves the slippage of £73.963m from 2024/25 into 2025/26 and beyond whilst a further review of the capital programme takes places during 2024/25.
 - c) Approves £11.400m of changes to the capital programme approvals, as detailed in Section 25 of this report.
 - d) Approves a £0.528m virement to the capital programme, as detailed in Section 26 of this report.

Reasons for recommendations

8. To ensure that the Council continues to maintain tight financial control over its budget and mitigates as far as possible the forecast budget pressures.

Other options considered

9. No other options were considered.

Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan

10. The 2024/25 Capital Budget was approved by Council in February 2024 alongside the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and is the financial resourcing plan to deliver the Council Plan. Monitoring of the agreed programme has been delegated to Executive and is undertaken on a quarterly basis.

Financial and Risk Implications

11. There are two relevant Strategic Risk which are ORG0070 Budget Overspend in the current financial year and ORG0057 Sustainable Medium-Term Financial Plan. For these risks the current scores are:

ORG0070	Likelihood	3	Impact	2	Risk Score	6
ORG0057	Likelihood	4	Impact	5	Risk Score	20

12. In the initial stages of any development, major capital projects will have significant uncertainties. For example, these may relate to the planning process,

the views and interest of residents and stakeholders who must be consulted, ground conditions, or the costs of rectifying or demolishing existing buildings. Construction companies and developers contracting with the Council which experience financial instability, particularly an issue following Post Covid-19 pandemic pressures, Brexit and the war in Ukraine and the impact of cost inflation.

13. Suppliers may not be able to raise sufficient finance to cash flow operations, any potential insolvency process could lead to a costly process of changing suppliers without any guarantee of remaining within overall budget. Consequently, the Council could suffer direct financial loss and any defects or other issues may not be resolvable as anticipated. To mitigate this the Council carefully considers the financial robustness of any contractor and requests appropriate financial standing assurance and support wherever possible.
14. Large scale capital projects can operate in environments which are complex, with a range of variables, and continually evolving. Effective risk identification and control within such a dynamic environment includes populating a project risk register. In addition, it requires amplifying the known risks so that they are not hidden or ignored, demystifying the complex risks into their more manageable sum of parts and anticipating emerging risks which can escalate rapidly are all necessary components of good capital programme risk management.

Legal Implications

15. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

HR Implications

16. There are no specific HR implications arising from this report.

Other Implications:

VAT

17. The Council needs to carefully consider its VAT partial exemption calculation and the risk of breaching the partial exemption threshold. Capital projects represent the bulk of this risk. A breach would likely cost the Council several million pounds

per year if in breach. Finance is working closely with departments to ensure that partial exemption risks are considered as part of significant capital projects.

Other Implications

18. There are no other implications arising from this report.

Scrutiny comments / recommendations:

19. This report will be presented at the meeting of Scrutiny for Corporate & Resources Committee on the 28th August 2024.

Background

20. This report is for the General Fund and does not include anything in relation to the Council's Housing Revenue Account. The General Fund (GF) mainstream programme cuts across the departments and represents schemes which are funded from Council resources (capital receipts or borrowing). It is the area of the programme where the Council has the greatest discretion.

21. A high-level update on the significant schemes that are planned to be delivered is provided. Each scheme has a nominated budget holder who is responsible for ensuring the scheme stays within budget, and who provides the projected spend figures, working with the Corporate Finance team and Finance Business Partnering Team.

22. Capital investment decisions are now required to be underpinned by a robust business plan that sets out the full costs and risks and any expected financial return alongside the broader outcomes including economic and social benefits. Where possible the PIDS/business cases have been collected to provide details on each project. Officers are responsible for monitoring and delivering projects within approved budgets and reporting variances.

Capital Spend for 2024/25

23. Total spending for 2024/25 is estimated to be **£195.0m**; this is £73.7m (27%) less than the original £268.7m of planned expenditure for the year. Of the £73.7m variance, £73.9m has been reprofiled into future years, with the remaining £0.2m being shown as an overspend. **Table 2** provides a Directorate level breakdown of the 2024/25 budget and spend against it.

Table 2 – Directorate summary of 2024/25 spend against budget

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr 1	Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Reprofiled into future years	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adults and Health	4.689	0.435	4.132	(0.557)	0.557	
Children's Services	40.556	2.554	34.973	(5.583)	5.583	
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24. A high-level detail and summary per Directorate can be seen in **Appendix A**.

Revisions since Outturn 2023-24

25. There have been additions of £11.400m to the capital programme which Members are recommended to approve:

- £6.092m of Department for Transport grant funding towards Highway capital improvements. This has been allocated from the DfT's Network North reallocations.
- £2.797m of Department for Education grant funding from their High Needs Capital Allocations.
- £1.865m of Department for Education grant funding towards Homes for Children.
- £0.645m of Department for Education grant funding towards Schools DFCG projects.

26. One virement (budget transfers) have also been processed in the quarter:

- £0.528m of grant approval from Highways Major Projects to Yeovil Refresh to aid in the delivery of walking and cycling initiatives.

Virements are the movement of approvals between budget lines. Virements are examined to identify their purpose; they do not require formal ratification by members as they are classed as technical changes. Virements are undertaken to enable the effective management of generic approvals by creating individual projects as detailed proposals are developed and cost estimates become available.

Financing of the 2024/25 Forecast

27. The financing of the 2024/25 forecast is shown in Table 3 and Chart 2 below. It is positive that 76% of our in-year capital spend is funded by grants and third-party contributions.

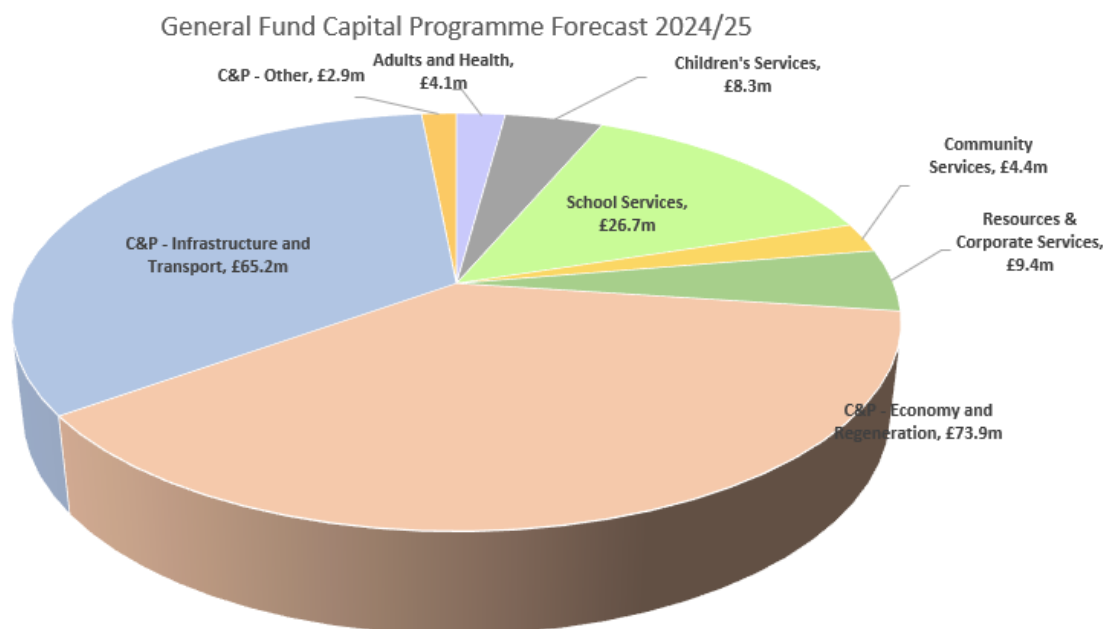
Table 3: Financing of the 2024/25 Budget

Financing Source	£m
Borrowing	42.3
External Contributions (CIL, S106, Other)	11.3
Capital Fund (Earmarked reserve)	2.8
Capital Receipts	1.3
Capital Grant from central Government	137.3
Total Financing Required	195.0

Capital Forecast for 2024/25

28. Chart 1 shows the 2024/25 forecast by directorate .

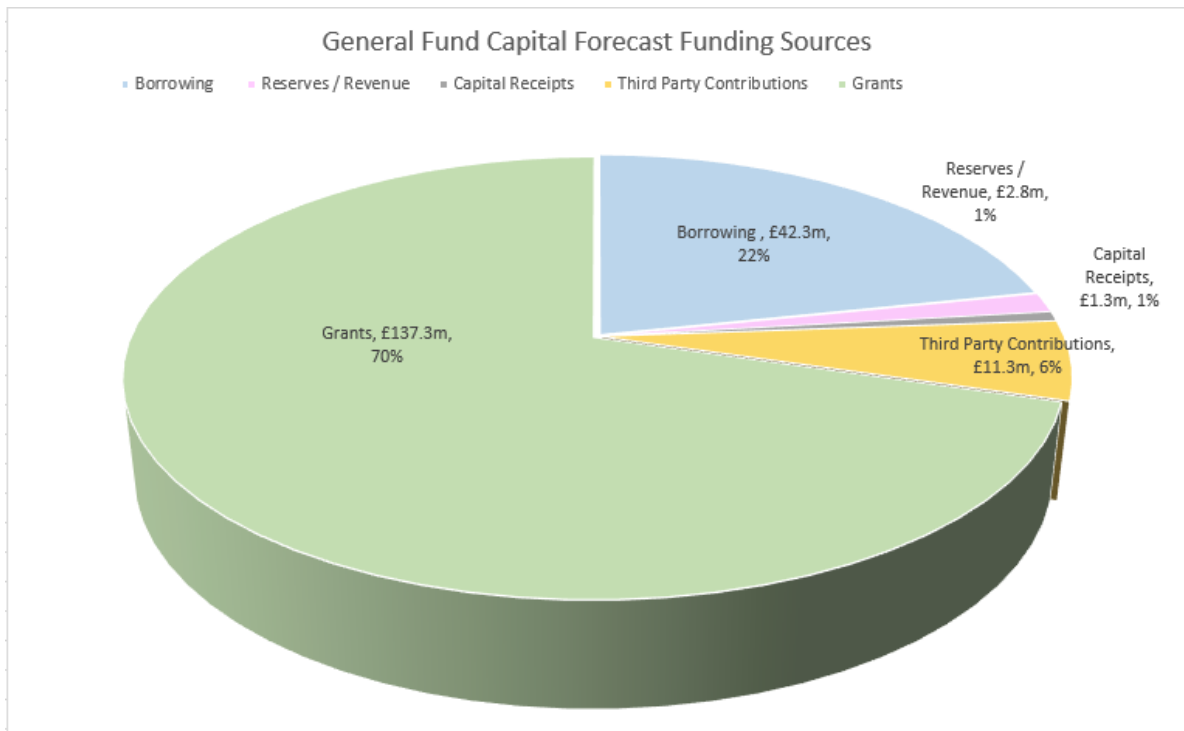
Chart 1- Summarising the 2024/25 forecast totals by Directorate/ Service Area



Financing of the Capital forecast for 2024/25

29. The financing of the forecast for 2024/25 is shown in Chart 2. It is positive that 76% of our capital programme is funded by grants and third-party contributions.

Chart 2 - Funding sources for the 2024/25 forecast



Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2027/28

30. Appendix B shows the total capital programme for 2024/25 to 2027/28, in terms of the anticipated spend for each year, which may move depending on reprofiling of schemes or slippage incurred.

Background Papers

- 2024/25 General Fund Capital MTFP Budget report to Corporate & Resources Scrutiny, Executive, and Full Council February 2024
- 2023/24 Month 12 (Qtr. 4) Capital Budget report to Corporate & Resources Scrutiny & Executive September 2024

Appendices

- Appendix A - High level detail and summary per Directorate
- Appendix B - General Fund Capital Programme Forecasts 2024-25 to 2027-28

Report Sign-Off

	Officer Name	Date Completed
Legal & Governance Implications	Scott Wooldridge	21/08/2024
Communications	Sara Cretney	21/08/2024
Finance & Procurement	Nicola Hix	19/08/2024
Workforce	Dawn Bettridge	N/A
Asset Management	Oliver Woodhams	14/08/2024
Executive Director / Senior Manager	Jason Vaughan	15/08/2024
Strategy & Performance	Sara Cretney	21/08/2024
Executive Lead Member	Cllr Liz Leyshon	20/08/2024
Consulted:	Councillor Name	
Local Division Members	All	
Opposition Spokesperson	Cllr Mandy Chilcott Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Opposition Spokesperson for Resources and Performance	Sent 14/08/2024 OOO 2/9/2024
Scrutiny Chair	Cllr Bob Filmer, Chair - Scrutiny Corporate & Resources Committee	Sent 14/08/2024

APPENDIX A

Table 1 - Adults and Health and Children's Services Overview

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr. 1	Revised Q1 Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Slippage into future years	(Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adults Residential Programme	1.616			(1.616)	1.616	
Disabled Facilities Grant	2.939	0.435	4.032	1.093	(1.093)	
Learning Disabilities	0.099		0.065	(0.034)	0.034	
Housing Technology Grant	0.035		0.035			
Adults and Health Total	4.689	0.435	4.132	(0.557)	0.557	
Children's Residential	2.344	0.197	2.015	(0.329)	0.329	
Homes for Children with Disabilities Phase 2	1.500			(1.500)	1.500	
Children Looked After	0.305		0.200	(0.105)	0.105	
Special Education Needs	6.992	0.162	5.500	(1.492)	1.492	
Schools Access Initiative	0.111	0.054	0.111			
Early Years	0.477	0.037	0.477			
Schools Services	28.827	2.104	26.670	(2.157)	2.157	
Children's Services Total	40.556	2.554	34.973	(5.583)	5.583	

Adults and Health

The Disabled Facilities Grant programme had a higher slippage value from 2023-24. This has resulted in the higher than original budget spend that is profiled for this at Qtr. 1.

Children's Services

Some slippage has been reported within the School Services programmes (Basic Need and Condition Programme) as works are dependent on contractor availability and timings with School Holidays.

Table 2 - Climate and Place - Other Services

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr. 1	Revised Q1 Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Slippage into future years	(Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Flood & Water Management (Non SRA)	3.923	0.086	0.468	(3.455)	3.455	
Somerset Waste Partnership	2.358	0.256	1.689	(0.669)	0.669	
Chard Reservoir Dam Works	0.054	0.010	0.054			
North Hill Cliff Stabilisation	0.963		0.100	(0.863)	0.863	
Birchfield Gas Control System	0.435		0.435			
Climate & Place Other Services Total	7.733	0.352	2.746	(4.987)	4.987	

Flood Prevention schemes for the Taunton area, brought forward from the Somerset West and Taunton capital programme are now likely to commence in the second half of 2024.

North Hill Cliff Stabilisation Works

A contractor has been appointed to complete the design of the North Hill Minehead rock catch fence which is now complete. The rock catch fence will prevent cliff falls causing injury to any persons or property below. The next step is to understand land ownership, biodiversity net gain requirements and submit a planning application for the works.

Table 3 - Climate and Place – Economy and Regeneration

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr. 1	Revised Q1 Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Slippage into future years	(Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Business Growth Fund & Other Projects	2.712	0.159	0.750	(1.962)	1.962	
Taunton Digital Innovation Centre	0.555	0.068	0.225	(0.330)	0.330	
Bridgwater Town Deal	11.433	0.226	12.713	1.280	(1.280)	
Bridgwater Levelling Up Fund	11.326	0.092	11.310	(0.016)	0.016	
Glastonbury Town Deal	11.477	0.969	10.000	(1.477)	1.477	
Taunton Town Centre Regeneration	0.977			(0.977)	0.977	
Nutrient Mitigation Projects	9.600		9.600			
Firepool Development FHSF Phase	5.867	0.320	3.500	(2.367)	2.367	
Chard Regeneration	0.814			(0.814)	0.814	
Yeovil Refresh	12.001	2.525	10.001	(2.000)	2.000	
Staplegrave Housing Infrastructure Fund	14.216		14.216			
Contribution to CDS Broadband	0.550			(0.550)	0.550	
Frome Enterprise Centre	0.825		0.550	(0.275)	0.275	
UK Shared & Rural England Prosperity Funds	1.005		1.005			
Climate & Place Economy and Regeneration Total	83.358	4.359	73.870	(9.488)	9.488	

Yeovil Refresh Programme

The Yeovil Refresh Programme is forecast to complete the majority of works during 2024-25, with some retention payments and final costs expected in 2025/26. Below is an update on the progress with the various schemes.

Public Realm Works

In quarter one, works in Middle Street west were completed up to the junction with Bond Street. Snagging and final elements of the work will continue through quarter two. The remaining live section at the Triangle is expected to be complete by the end of quarter two. The Triangle will see the creation of a new public space. A section in Middle Street remains unfinished due to the presence of a dangerous structure at 47 Middle Street preventing work commencing.

Active Travel – Cycling and Walking

Contract signed in Quarter one. These works will create new shared cycling and walking facilities in Hendford, upgraded facilities including crossings in Southwestern Terrace/Middle Street/Central Road, drainage and patching on route to Pen Mill station via Yeovil Country Park route. Preliminary works are underway with main works to commence in August/September.

Future High Streets Fund Development projects

Approval received from MHCLG to Project Adjustment request. Projects to acquire and demolish Glovers Walk to provide meantime use and three development projects with a focus on delivery of residential key worker units with ancillary commercial space. Expenditure expected to commence end of Qtr. 2 and throughout remaining quarters of 24/25.

Town Deal Programmes

Within the Bridgwater Town Deal programme, planning permission has been granted for the Celebration Mile and Carnival Regeneration projects.

Glastonbury Town Deal is entering an exciting phase with construction work well underway at the Sports & Leisure Hub, Glastonbury Abbey and most recently St Dunstan's House. In addition to these projects, work is already progressing well at Bridie's Farm and will start shortly at the largest project, Baily's Buildings

Firepool Development

Glastonbury Town Deal is entering an exciting phase with construction work well underway at the Sports & Leisure Hub, Glastonbury Abbey and most recently St Dunstan's House. The Firepool Development Future High Street Fund (FHSF): the development of the site continues and currently the Southern Boulevard works are being tendered.

In addition to these projects work is already progressing well at Bridie's Farm and will start shortly at the largest project, Baily's Buildings

Table 4 - Climate and Place - Infrastructure and Transport

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr. 1	Revised Q1 Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Slippage into future years	(Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Bridge Structures	6.467	0.510	6.467			
Road Structures	40.570	0.513	31.000	(9.570)	9.570	
Highways Decarbonisation - Live Labs	1.110	0.167	1.110			
Traffic Control	1.822	0.626	1.822			
Traffic Control - Signal Obscure Funds	0.585		0.585			
Traffic Signal PSTN Project	1.100		1.100			
Signing and Lining Programme	0.500		0.500			
Active Travel	5.272	0.037	3.495	(1.777)	1.777	
Integrated Transport	(0.288)	0.004	(0.288)			
Small Improvement Schemes	0.326	0.222	0.326			
Highway Lighting	1.011	0.012	1.011			
Rights of Way	2.261	(0.046)	1.250	(1.011)	1.011	
Car Parks & Parking Services	0.237		0.237			
M5 Junction 25 Improvements	2.275	0.002	0.500	(1.775)	1.775	
Toneway Corridor Capacity Improvements	2.216	0.009	0.250	(1.966)	1.966	
Trenchard Way Residual Works						
Major Road Network	1.759	0.003	0.500	(1.259)	1.259	
A38 Chelston Link	4.783	0.003	0.350	(4.433)	4.433	
J23 Dunball Improvements	4.613		4.613			
Blue Anchor Coast Protection	0.158		0.158			
Various Other Schemes	2.456	0.022	1.150	(1.306)	1.306	
Fleet Management	5.363	0.256	1.000	(4.363)	4.363	
Silk Mills Park & Ride Safety Measures	0.125		0.125			
Bus Service Improvement Programme	7.980		7.980			
Climate & Place Infrastructure Total	92.701	2.340	65.241	(27.460)	27.460	

Road Structures

As of April 2024, the Council has begun working with a new set of contractors to deliver its Structural Maintenance Programme (SMP) and is now in the process of developing the capital works programme for the year. This includes finalising design, acquiring road space, diversion routes and works resources for specific schemes.

Bridge Structures

Urgent and Minor Works Schemes and provision of TM/Site Safety measures are currently being progressed by Walters UK Ltd under our Majors Framework Contract. However, scheme delivery has slowed both on inhouse schemes and external consultant schemes due to a number of reasons including resourcing issues.

Traffic Signals

The Traffic Signals Recovery Programme continues to work through the high priority crossing upgrade requirements. The traffic signals at Charlton Crossroads in Shepton Mallett, has been completed ahead of schedule. Works at upper High Street in Taunton are nearing completion. The Taunton works are to be funded from the Future High

Street Funds which will be vired across from Economy and Planning once the final costs are known.

A38 Chelston Link

A38 Chelston Link Resurfacing project has progressed through the pre-construction phase. However, the main construction is now not scheduled to commence until the second half of 2024/25. This is due to the tendering process and availability of road space with several Highways England works planned within the local area.

Blue Anchor Coast Protection

The Blue Anchor Coast Protection scheme has been completed. There is some expenditure expected in 2024/25, with final costs to be settled.

Table 5 - Community Services

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr. 1	Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Slippage into future years	(Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Wellington Library Improvements	0.521	0.473	0.521			
Library Services	0.673		0.200	(0.473)	0.473	
Cultural and Heritage Services		0.002	0.002	0.002		0.002
Grants to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)	0.975		0.975			
IAC Staffing and Support	0.204		0.204			
Energy Efficiency Grants	0.062		0.062			
Home Maintenance	0.108		0.108			
Preventative Grants	0.071		0.071			
GF C HUG 1+2 Home Upgrades	0.260		0.260			
Other Schemes		0.249	0.249	0.249		0.249
Wellington Leisure Centre	1.084	0.721	1.084			
Norton Fitzwarren Playing Pitches (S106)	0.078	0.001	0.078			
Octagon Redevelopment	14.523	0.137	0.500	(14.023)	14.023	
Ports and Harbours - Beacons	0.030		0.030			
Ports and Harbours - Safety Upgrades	0.070		0.070			
Ports and Harbours - Dredging	0.030		0.030			
Community Services Total	18.689	1.583	4.444	(14.245)	14.496	0.251

Octagon Theatre

The revised Octagon Theatre project was approved by Full Council in May and has been added back into the capital programme. A revised business case is to be submitted to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in Autumn 2024, with a final business case to be submitted in February 2025, so the majority of spend on this project has been reprofiled into 2025/26.

Table 6 - Resources and Corporate Services

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr. 1	Revised Q1 Forecast for 2024/25	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Slippage into future years	(Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Corporate ICT Investment	3.117	0.377	3.117			
Property Services General	9.174	0.282	3.300	(5.874)	5.874	
Bridgwater Library Improvements	1.252		0.444	(0.808)	0.808	
Building Compliance Health & Safety	0.398	0.016	0.248	(0.150)	0.150	
Asset Rationalisation	0.200		0.200			
New Somerset Council Signage						
Office Rationalisation	0.473	0.006	0.473			
Building Condition Programme (Non Schools)	2.700		0.418	(2.282)	2.282	
South West Heritage Trust Building Condition	0.250		0.250			
Outdoor Education Centres Building Condition	1.193	0.001	0.533	(0.660)	0.660	
Estate De-carbonisation	0.105	0.082	0.105			
Dulverton Weir Essential Works	0.030		0.030			
Closed Churchyards	0.150			(0.150)	0.150	
Capital Works for Investment Properties	1.583		0.250	(1.333)	1.333	
Resources & Corporate Services Total	20.625	0.764	9.368	(11.257)	11.257	

Corporate ICT Investment

Planned expenditure on Device, Mobile and Network Infrastructure refreshes, along with Sheltered Housing ICT Provision is expected to be achieved in year.

Property Services

The Property Services General consists of a number of schemes, the project management of which is being reviewed in the 2024/25 year to obtain better transparency on the costs related to those schemes.

Table 7 - Strategy, Workforce, and Localities

Service/ Project	2024/25 Budget	Actual Spend at Qtr. 1	Revised Q1 Forecast for 2023/24	Variance to Original Budget	Of which:	
					Slippage into future years	(Under) / Over Spend
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Hinkley CIM Funded SWT Projects	0.100		0.100			
Various Other Schemes	0.135		0.135			
Strategy and Workforce Total	0.235		0.235			

No change in forecasts to report in this area.