

Appendix F – Strategy, Workforce and Localities

Lead Members:

- Governance and Communications: Cllr Bill Revans
- Finance, Procurement and Performance: Cllr Liz Leyshon
- Transformation, Human Resources, Localities and Digital: Cllr Theo Butt Philip

Executive Director: Alyn Jones

Service Directors:

- Partnership and Localities: Sara Skirton
- Strategy and Performance: Sara Cretney
- Governance, Democratic and Legal Services: David Clark
- Workforce (interim): Dawn Bettridge

Chart 1: Budget versus forecast outturn graph

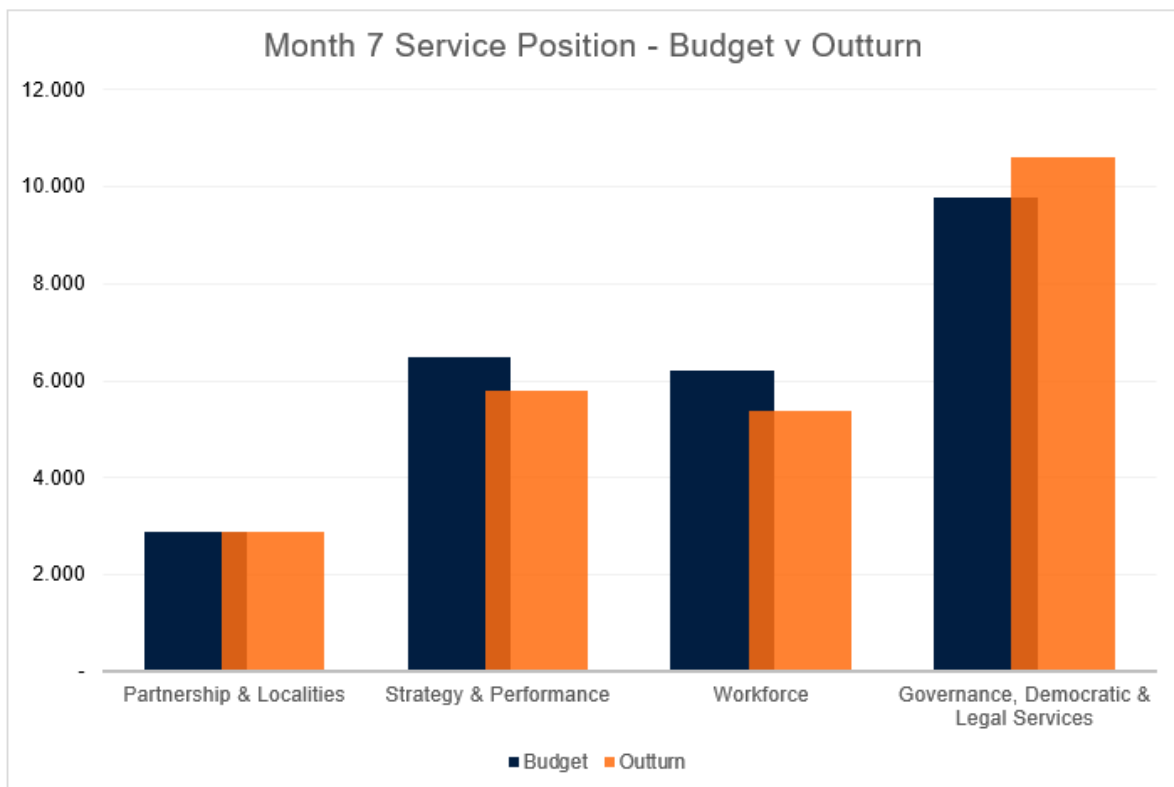


Table 1: 2024/25 Strategy, Workforce and Localities as at the end of October 2024 (Month 7)

- 2024/25 net budget £25.381m, forecasting an underspend £0.711m, an increase of £0.096m from Quarter 2
- 2023/24 net budget £25.7m, outturn underspend of £0.8m.

Service Area	Current Expenditure Budget £m	Current Income Budget £m	Current Net Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 7 Variance £m	Overspend / (Underspend)	RAG Status	Ongoing Pressure £m	One-off Pressures £m	Movement From Month 6 £m
Partnership & Localities										
Localities	1.509	(0.224)	1.285	1.285	-	On-budget	Green	0.037	-	-
Strategic Partnerships	1.600	(0.001)	1.599	1.599	-	On-budget	Green	-	-	-
sub total	3.109	(0.225)	2.884	2.884	-	On-budget	Green	0.037	-	-
Strategy & Performance										
Communications	1.752	(0.255)	1.497	1.434	(0.063)	Underspend	Green	0.040	-	-
Transformation & Change	4.950	(0.782)	4.168	3.541	(0.627)	Underspend	Green	0.100	-	-
Performance	0.842	(0.022)	0.820	0.820	-	On-budget	Green	-	-	-
sub total	7.544	(1.059)	6.485	5.795	(0.690)	Underspend	Green	0.140	-	-
Workforce										
Human Resources & Organisational Development	7.297	(2.106)	5.191	4.557	(0.634)	Underspend	Green	-	-	-
Learning & Development	2.889	(1.857)	1.032	0.834	(0.198)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.048)
sub total	10.186	(3.963)	6.223	5.391	(0.832)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.048)
Governance, Democratic & Legal Services										
Democratic Services	4.549	(0.469)	4.080	3.782	(0.298)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.028)
Legal Services	4.976	(0.791)	4.185	5.508	1.323	Overspend	Red	1.300	0.023	-
Info Governance	0.794	(0.195)	0.599	0.474	(0.125)	Underspend	Green	-	-	-
Elections	0.935	(0.010)	0.925	0.836	(0.089)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.020)
sub total	11.254	(1.465)	9.789	10.600	0.811	Overspend	Red	1.300	0.023	(0.048)
Strategy, Workforce & Localities Total	32.093	(6.712)	25.381	24.670	(0.711)	Underspend	Green	1.477	0.023	(0.096)

Strategy, Workforce & Localities – Key explanations of variances

Strategy, Workforce & Localities are forecasting an underspend of £0.711m, an increase of £0.096m from Quarter 2.

Partnerships & Localities

Currently forecasting on budget for Quarter 2. The ongoing pressure of £0.037m relates to income budgets not yet achieved in connection with St Matthews Fair and is currently being absorbed by the service during 2024/25.

Strategy & Performance

Communications is forecasting an underspend of £0.063m, no movement from Quarter 2. This is due to updated full year forecasts for staffing costs and more analysis of legacy council Communications budgets and due holding vacancies and a decrease in printing and publicity costs mainly due to an interim structure being in place. These savings have been offset by the ongoing pressure of £0.040m due to reduced income from Public Health arising from the realignment of the Public Health grant which was an MTFP decision in 2023/24.

Transformation and Change is forecasting an underspend of £0.627m, no movement from Quarter 2. This is due to updated full year forecasts for staffing costs once more knowledge was gained about redundant posts in 2024/25 and due to holding vacancies which have been offset by reduced income generation in Digital Services, mainly due to the limitations of an interim structure. Also offsetting this underspend is the ongoing pressure of £0.040m of reduced income from Public Health due to the realignment of the Public Health grant, which was an MTFP decision in 2023/24, as well as income not yet achieved of £0.060m in Digital Services.

Workforce

Workforce is forecasting an underspend of £0.832m, an increase of £0.048m from Quarter 2. This is due to an increase to the forecast income to be achieved from the purchase of additional leave and the newly reported underspend on the training budget

and due to holding vacancies pending the implementation of the proposed new structure and an underspend on the corporate training budget.

Governance, Democratic and Legal Services

Governance, Democratic and Legal Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.811m, an decrease of £0.048m from Quarter 2. This is due to updated full year forecasts for staffing costs and a slight decrease in the forecast position for Legal Services.

Legal Services is forecasting a net overspend of £1.323m, this is mainly due to the costs incurred for the provision of the legal childcare support, which is a statutory and demand led service. This is an area of specialism which is extremely difficult to recruit to and as a consequence the Council is currently reliant on locums. The uncertainty of the wider transformation and increase programme has led to further staff departures across the wider legal service, with these positions difficult to recruit to, thereby inevitably increasing reliance on a temporary or locum workforce. As was the case in previous years, the use of remote locums tends to lead to an increase in Counsel fees (note: the use of local counsel can be a cost-effective way to cover some in person hearings).

The overspend in Legal Services is being mitigated in year in part by £0.512m of underspends in Democratic Services, Information Governance and Elections Services from holding staff vacancies, as well as underspends across both Strategy, Workforce & Localities and Resources & Corporate Services as a whole.

Resources & Corporate Services – Actions and mitigations

Table 2: Service Management Actions included in the forecast outturn

Service Management Actions	Quarter 2	Month 7	Movement	Comments
	£m	£m	£m	
None	-	-	-	
Total Management Actions	-	-	-	

Table 3: Mitigating Actions Identified, not yet included in the forecast outturn

In-Year Mitigation Proposed	Quarter 2	Month 7	Movement	One-Off Mitigation	Ongoing Mitigation	Comments
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
To be Mitigated	0.859	0.811	(0.048)			Overspend in Governance, Democratic &

						Legal Services
Strategy & Performance	(0.075)	-	0.075	-	-	Reported underspends within Strategy & Performance are being held to fund the overspend in Legal Services.
Workforce	(0.784)	(0.811)	(0.027)	(0.811)	-	Reported underspends within Workforce are being held to fund the overspend in Legal Services.
Total Mitigations Identified to be Actioned	(0.859)	(0.811)	0.048	(0.811)	-	
Still to be Mitigated	-	-	-			

Resources & Corporate Services - Key risks, future issues & opportunities

As mentioned above there are ongoing pressures in Partnerships & Localities of £0.037m and Strategy & Performance of £0.140m, which the services are able to mitigate by offsetting this against ongoing savings within service from 2025/26 onwards.

There is an ongoing pressure in Legal Services of £1.300m. To address the ongoing pressure in Legal Services, several strategic measures are being implemented. This includes redesigning the service structure and conducting a thorough review of childcare cases and their associated processes. Additionally, work to collaborate with the courts to explore ways to expedite cases and minimise the need for lengthy procedures has commenced. These efforts aim to enhance efficiency and reduce costs while maintaining the quality of legal services provided.