

Appendix F – Strategy, Workforce and Localities

Lead Members:

- Governance and Communications: Cllr Bill Revans
- Resources, Procurement & 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

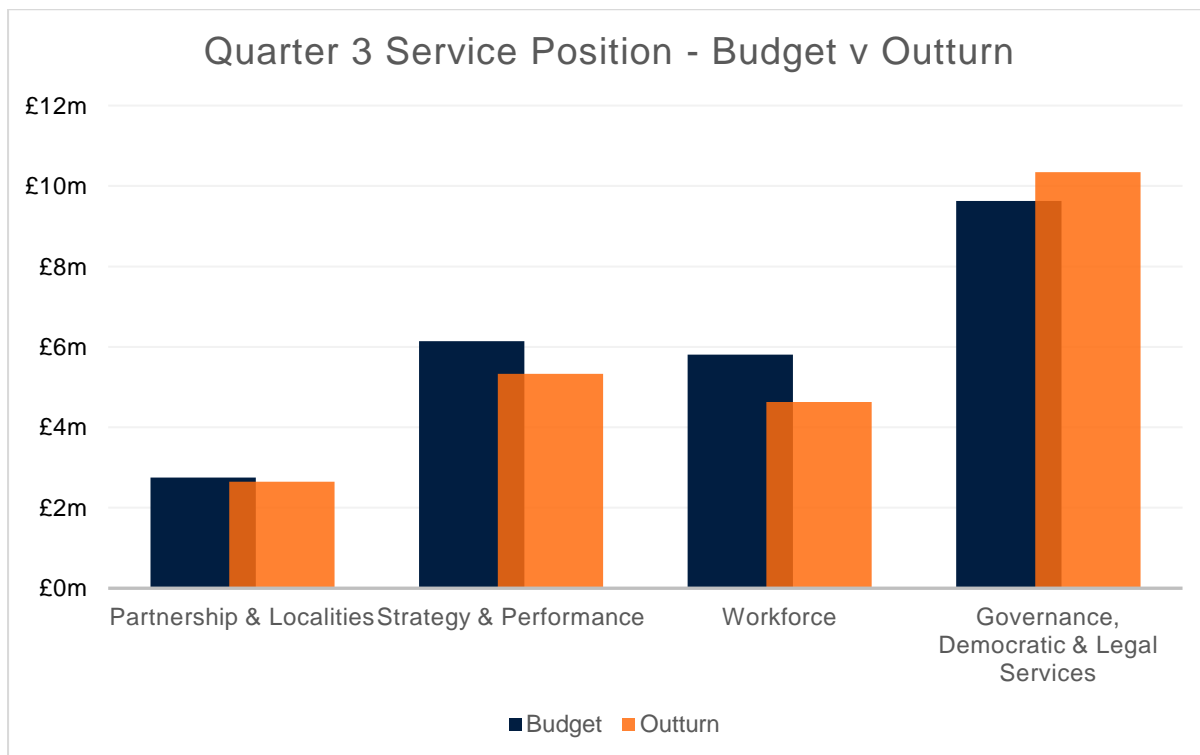


Table 1: 2024/25 Strategy, Workforce and Localities as at the end of December 2024 (Quarter 3)

- 2024/25 net budget £24.324m, forecasting an underspend £1.375m, a decrease of £0.664m from Month 7
- 2023/24 net budget £25.7m, outturn underspend of £0.8m.

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Service Area	Current Expenditure Budget £m	Current Income Budget £m	Current Net Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Quarter 3 Variance £m	Overspend / (Underspend)	RAG Status	Ongoing Pressure £m	One-off Pressures £m	Movement From Month 7 £m
Partnership & Localities										
Localities	1.464	(0.224)	1.240	1.340	0.100	Overspend	Red	-	-	0.100
Strategic Partnerships	1.512	(0.001)	1.511	1.310	(0.201)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.201)
sub total	2.976	(0.225)	2.751	2.650	(0.101)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.101)
Strategy & Performance										
Communications	1.643	(0.255)	1.388	1.325	(0.063)	Underspend	Green	-	-	-
Transformation & Change	4.814	(0.782)	4.032	3.366	(0.666)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.039)
Performance	0.740	(0.022)	0.718	0.637	(0.081)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.081)
sub total	7.197	(1.059)	6.138	5.328	(0.810)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.120)
Workforce										
Human Resources & Organisational Development	6.880	(2.106)	4.774	3.968	(0.806)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.172)
Learning & Development	2.889	(1.857)	1.032	0.661	(0.371)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.173)
sub total	9.769	(3.963)	5.806	4.629	(1.177)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.345)
Governance, Democratic & Legal Services										
Democratic Services	4.404	(0.469)	3.935	3.602	(0.333)	Underspend	Green	-	-	(0.035)
Legal Services	4.990	(0.791)	4.199	5.409	1.210	Overspend	Red	-	0.767	(0.113)
Info Governance	0.765	(0.195)	0.570	0.445	(0.125)	Underspend	Green	-	-	-
Elections	0.935	(0.010)	0.925	0.886	(0.039)	Underspend	Green	-	-	0.050
sub total	11.094	(1.465)	9.629	10.342	0.713	Overspend	Red	-	0.767	(0.098)
Strategy, Workforce & Localities Total	31.036	(6.712)	24.324	22.949	(1.375)	Underspend	Green	-	0.767	(0.664)

Strategy, Workforce & Localities – Key explanations of variances

Strategy, Workforce & Localities are forecasting an underspend of £1.375m, an increase of £0.664m from Month 7.

Partnerships & Localities

This service is forecasting an underspend of £0.101m, an increase of £0.101 from Month 7. This is due to the Local Community Network (LCN) operational budgets overspending by £0.100m which is being offset by new unbudgeted income of £0.201m within Strategic Partnerships from the NHS and Public Health towards staffing costs and contract payments.

Strategy & Performance

Communications is forecasting an underspend of £0.063m, there is no change from Month 7. This is due to updated full year forecasts for staffing costs and more analysis of legacy council Communications budgets and due to 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 £0.666m, an increase of £0.039m from Month 7. This is due to additional savings from staffing 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 another 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.

Performance is forecasting an underspend if £0.081m, an increase of £0.081m from Month 7. This is due to savings from staffing.

Workforce

Workforce is forecasting an underspend of £1.177m, an increase of £0.345m from Month 7. This is due to the decentralisation of Employee Insurance that can be absorbed by individual services and an increase to the forecast income to be achieved from the purchase of additional leave, 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 £0.713m, a decrease of £0.098 from Month 7. This is due to the updated forecast position for Legal Services.

Legal Services is forecasting an overspend of £1.210m, a decrease of £0.113m from Month 7. 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 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. 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 the forecast underspends from Democratic Services, Information Governance and Elections Services of £0.497m, a decrease of £0.015m from Month 7. This is due to holding staff vacancies, as well as underspends across both Strategy, Workforce & Localities and Resources & Corporate Services as a whole.

Strategy, Workforce and Localities – Actions and mitigations

Table 2: Service Management Actions included in the forecast outturn

Service Management Actions	Month 7 £m	Quarter 3 £m	Movement £m	Comments
None	-	-	-	-
Total Management Actions	-	-	-	

Table 3: Mitigating actions identified, not yet included in the forecast outturn

None

Strategy, Workforce and Localities – Key performance cost drivers

None

Strategy, Workforce and Localities - Key risks, future issues & opportunities