



# Public Document Pack


## Southend-on-Sea City Council

Executive Director (Strategy, Change and Governance):

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11 September 2023

Dear Councillor

### **CABINET - MONDAY, 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2023**

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the meeting of the Cabinet taking place on Monday, 18th September, 2023, the following report(s) that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

<b>Agenda No</b>	<b>Item</b>
7.	<b>Finance and Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 to end of July 2023 (Period 4) (Pages 3 - 104)</b> Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources)
13.	<b>Debt Management Position to 31 July 2023 (Pages 105 - 118)</b> Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources)

**Tim Row**

Principal Democratic Services Officer

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Finance and Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 to end of July 2023 (Period 4)</b>
<b>Meeting:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	18 September 2023
<b>Classification:</b>	Part 1
<b>Policy Context:</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Report Authors:</b>	Pete Bates, Director of Financial Services, Caroline Fozzard, Senior Finance Lead (Strategy, Sustainability and Governance), Suzanne Newman, Head of Corporate Strategy Gareth Nicholas, Insights Manager
<b>Executive Councillor:</b>	Councillor Cox, Leader and Cabinet Member for Special Educational Needs & Disability

## **1 Executive Summary**

The finance and corporate performance report is a key tool in scrutinising the Council's overall performance. It is designed to provide an overview to all relevant stakeholders at regular stages throughout the financial year. It is essential that the Council monitors its budgets and assesses its performance regularly to ensure that it is meeting its strategic objectives and providing value for money. This approach highlights where corrective action is necessary and reasonable mitigation is required to try to deliver a balanced financial position by the end of the year.

Given the current operating environment and the significant increases experienced in both service demand and the ongoing unavoidable inflationary cost pressures, this will be an incredibly difficult ambition to achieve in 2023/24. This report summarises the current forecast position at this early stage of the financial year and highlights the need to make some difficult choices and take decisive action.

## **2 Recommendations**

### **2.1 Cabinet notes the unprecedented levels of reported financial pressure and challenges right across the local government sector (appendix 1).**

**That, in respect of the 2023/24 Revenue Budget Performance as set out in appendix 2 to this report, Cabinet:**

- 2.2 Note the forecast outturn for 2023/24 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account as at 31 July 2023.**
- 2.3 Note the plans and intentions to try to reduce the forecast overspend of the Council's revenue budget for 2023/24 and agree that the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Finance & Resources) explore all opportunities within their delegated powers and authority to improve the financial position by the year-end (section 5).**
- 2.4 Approve the planned budget transfers (virements) of £308,600 from earmarked reserves, as set out in section 5.50.**

**That, in respect of the 2023/24 Capital Budget Performance as set out in appendix 3 of this report, Cabinet:**

- 2.5 Note the expenditure to date and the forecast outturn as at 31 July 2023 and its financing.**
- 2.6 Approve the requested changes to the capital investment programme for 2023/24 and future years, as set out in section 4 of appendix 3.**
- 2.7 Note the Corporate Performance Report as at 31 July 2023 set out in appendix 4.**

### **3 Southend-on-Sea City Council's financial situation**

- 3.1** The Council ended the 2022/23 financial year with the largest level of reported overspending since it became a Unitary Authority on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1998. Following years of strong financial management, the Council had sufficient reserves to cope with the impact of this outcome for that year as a 'one-off' critical event. The Council cannot continue to overspend at that level though and the 2023/24 financial forecast is now putting the Council at serious risk and challenging its future viability. The size of the Council's financial challenge now and for the immediate future is the biggest in the Council's history.
- 3.2** The Council's financial situation is challenging, and urgent action needs to be taken immediately. It is in the best interests of the Council for all Officers and Elected Members to work closely and collaboratively together at pace to control all areas of identified overspending and to ensure that any adverse variances are brought back as close as possible to the approved budget for 2023/24.

- 3.3 Despite the difficult circumstances the Council still has its financial destiny and control in its own hands, if it can manage to reduce the forecast overspending significantly throughout the rest of the 2023/24 year. To support this ambition, it is intended to arrange Elected Member briefings to enhance understanding of the current situation, the severity of the challenge, assess the risks and seek their views and co-operation in determining and then implementing budget savings solutions at pace. The Council has also engaged Ernst & Young (EY) to provide additional independent challenge and sector insight to help develop options to mitigate the range of financial pressures that are being faced.
- 3.4 Even at this early stage of the year – urgent action is needed to try to reduce all non-essential expenditure and/or generate extra income. This priority must be achieved whilst ensuring that our most vulnerable residents are looked after appropriately, and our statutory responsibilities are effectively discharged. Like other Local Authorities we also need to consider how we deliver our statutory responsibilities and if changes can be made. Improving efficiency and productivity is essential but the scale of the continuing unprecedented financial pressures will inevitably lead to a reduction in the range, quality, cost and responsiveness of other discretionary Council services as well as challenging our approach to the delivery of our statutory responsibilities.
- 3.5 To help to begin to address and close the estimated budget gap over the next five years the Council will continue to aim to achieve financial sustainability by growing local income sources and relying less on grant support from Central Government in the future. The Council will continue to work collaboratively with its partners, increase its focus on the delivery or joint commissioning of services in a targeted way to ensure that those in most need and who will receive the greatest benefit are the recipients of services. It is vital that we learn from our COVID-19 experience and tailor our services and working practices accordingly.
- 3.6 This report will focus on providing some detail and commentary of the financial variances at a portfolio level that are currently forecast for 2023/24. It should be noted that these estimates have been based on the best information we currently have available and have also been calculated at a very early stage of the financial year.

#### **4 Unprecedented levels of financial challenge right across the Sector**

- 4.1 There is no question that the current national operating environment, particularly for upper tier local authorities has never been so financially challenging with numerous Councils announcing or giving warnings of financial distress. The issuing of a s114 notice was once unheard of and whilst a lot more authorities are highlighting the possibility, it is still a major undertaking which has huge consequences for the local authority concerned. It is effectively a declaration that the organisation is forecasting that it cannot meet all its financial obligations.

- 4.2 It should be noted that since the financial failure of Northamptonshire County Council which was the first authority to be the subject of a s114 notice in over 20 years, the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) now provide an option for local authorities in financial difficulties that are deemed to be unmanageable to apply for Exceptional Financial Support. In practice, this presents an intermediate step to avoid a s114 scenario. This action inevitably results in an escalation of direct intervention by DLUHC in the Council's management, administration and decision-making.
- 4.3 The ultimate consequences of issuing a s114 notice are serious and significant and would immediately result in the cessation of all but the most essential levels of expenditure and then only to meet the statutory minimum level of service and Council liabilities. There would also be the need to develop and deliver a comprehensive Council-wide financial recovery plan. This would need to be considered by a full Council meeting within 21 days of issuing the notice.
- 4.4 There is now widespread concern and risk to the continued delivery and level of public services in many local authority areas. The unprecedented levels of demand and huge increases in costs of maintaining statutory service provision, particularly for support and intervention for vulnerable children and adults has been at such a pace that discretionary universal services are continually being squeezed and are being forced to be significantly reduced to ensure some local authorities remain financially viable.
- 4.5 The summary of headlines shown at Appendix 1, are all stories that have been published over just the last few months. Many more authorities are highlighting that the respective financial resilience and sustainability of their organisation is under serious threat. The Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA) – a collective of 47 urban councils – added to this sector wide raising of the alarm. A recent article in the Guardian, suggested at least 26 of their members are “at risk of bankruptcy in the next two years.”<sup>1</sup>
- 4.6 Given this combination of factors and unheard-of levels of financial distress being raised right across the sector, local authority networks up and down the country are lobbying the Government hard for recognition of the scale of the underfunding problem and the impact on local areas. Authorities are requesting more transparency and a fairer longer term funding deal particularly in the more deprived areas of the country, which are suffering most from huge increases in both the complexity and cost of statutory service demand.
- 4.7 The fact that this scale of financial challenge is so widespread across the country is of little comfort currently though as all Councils, including Southend-on-Sea, wrestle with maintaining the delivery of their key statutory responsibility to operate in a financially sensible and sustainable way.

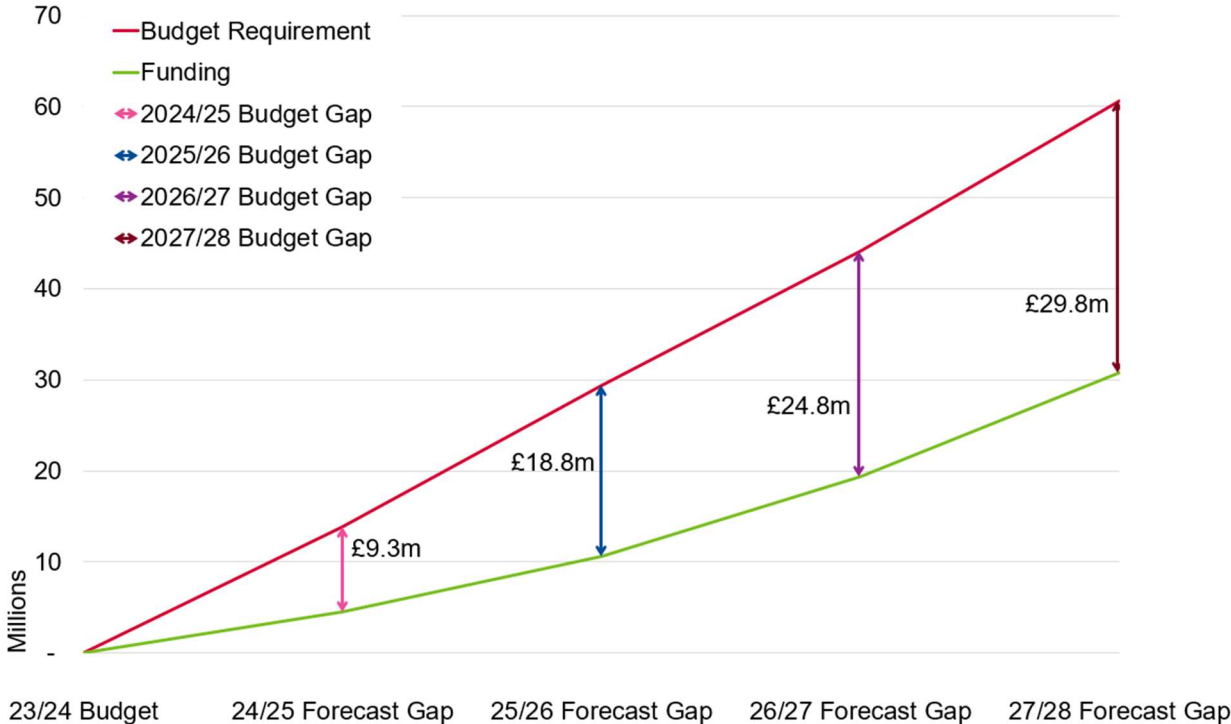
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/aug/28/at-least-26-english-councils-at-risk-of-bankruptcy-in-next-two-years>

**5 Southend-on-Sea City Council Revenue Position – General fund**

5.1 In February 2023, the Council approved a General Fund Revenue Budget requirement for 2023/24 of £143.875M. This report provides details of the current projected outturn position for 2023/24 based on information as at the end of July 2023 (Period 4). In headline terms Council Corporate Budgets and Service Portfolios are currently forecasting a net overspend by the year-end of £14.040M for 2023/24, which is expected to remain at this level, if no action is taken. Action is and will continue to be taken to further mitigate this potential overspend. The total projected overspend currently stands at around 4.0% of the Council’s gross expenditure budget. This level of overspending is unsustainable and puts the Authority at serious financial risk.

5.2 Alongside the 2023/24 budget the Council also approved the Medium-Term Financial Strategy which provided a financial forecast with an estimated budget gap of £29.8M by 2027/28. (2024/25 = £9.3m, 2025/26 = £9.5m, 2026/27 = £6.0m, 2027/28 = £5.0m). The Council’s forecast profile of the estimated budget gap for each of the next five years as at February 2023 is illustrated in the following chart.



5.3 Given the current level of overspending caused by persistent high levels of inflation and service demand pressures experienced so far in 2023/24 – the potential budget gap for future years is also likely to have got significantly larger. Some initial work has been done on re-casting the medium-term financial forecast and the intention is to provide a revised illustration of the potential impact on the Council’s budget over the medium term until 2027/28 in the Period 6 financial performance update which is scheduled to be reported to the Cabinet meeting in November 2023.

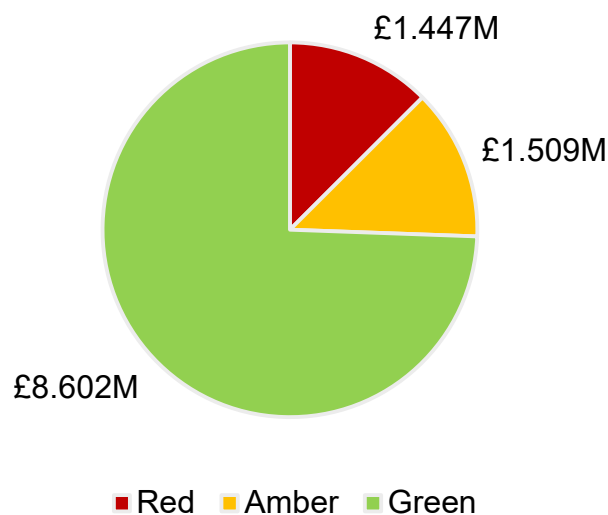
- 5.4 To support the response to the financial challenge in 2022/23 the Executive Director of Finance and Resources developed 12 budget planning principles for the organisation to follow, the 'Dozen Principles'. This approach assisted the organisation by helping to reduce the forecast overspend from £14.5M reported in Period 4 (July 2022) to the final outturn position for 2022/23 of a £6.9M overspend (as reported to Cabinet in July 2023). Although this approach clearly had a positive impact in helping to reduce the overspend for 2022/23, this was still a significant overspend and financial pressures have continued into 2023/24, so further urgent work is now required and an even tighter grip on all spending must be implemented across all Council services, together with more severe targeted interventions in some areas.
- 5.5 A major budget planning intention was to develop a prioritised programme of targeted transformation reviews. The blueprint for this was drawn up with the support of Grant Thornton and is now currently being progressed with the Council's new implementation partner Ernst & Young (EY). The planned transformation programme will assist the Council towards achieving financial sustainability in the medium term, but the focus now is urgently on the position for 2023/24.
- 5.6 Another key principle was around Budget Management, which has already been strengthened through the Finance & Resources sections contained within each Service Plan for 2023/24 that clearly sets out each services approved budget, the savings & income generation initiatives it is responsible for delivering and the areas targeted for overspend reduction.
- 5.7 Given the seriousness of the scale of the Council's financial overspending now forecast for 2023/24, a series of Budget Challenge sessions for each Executive Director and their service leads with the Chief Executive, Executive Director for Finance & Resources and Senior Finance Officer leads will take place between 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Key lines of enquiry for all services to identify opportunities for cost reduction, savings and income generation will be explored. Representatives from EY will also be in attendance to add some independent insight and external challenge. These sessions are aimed at identifying specific actions that can be taken immediately to reduce spending/maximise income for 2023/24 and to highlight potential initiatives where permanent savings can be made, or increased income can be generated across the medium term.
- 5.8 The output and proposals for action from all these sessions will be evaluated in conjunction with Portfolio Holders and where appropriate implemented as soon as possible. The impact on hopefully improving the forecast outturn for 2023/24 will be included in the Period 6 performance report to Cabinet in November 2023.
- 5.9 Depending on the revised predicted financial position for 2023/24 and an evaluation of all action taken following the Budget challenge sessions, it may be necessary to introduce even tougher measures to try to move towards a balanced financial position by year end. Tightening the measures that were introduced in 2022/23 with even greater enforcement or lowering of intervention thresholds may need to be implemented. These actions will include the following activities:-



- Transformation programme – use of technology and still customer focussed.
- Target Operating Model (TOM) Changes, delayering of Management and Supervisors – full implementation of Organisation Design principles.
- Recruitment freeze.
- Essential spending only.
- Close services/reduce services.
- Demand management.
- Driving real value from contract management, procurement and commissioning activity.
- Implementing fair and appropriate charging for all relevant services – inflationary increases where necessary.
- Removing all subsidy from discretionary services.
- Risk managed commercial approach.
- Rationalising our estate and reducing poor quality underutilised front-line provision (Children Centres, Libraries, Leisure etc).
- Capital programme – stop, defer, pause.
- Managing some decline on the highway, sticking to very clear service standards.

### Summary of performance against savings and income generation initiatives

5.10 The 2023/24 approved budget included £11.557M of savings and income generating initiatives. The following pie chart represents the value of savings which have been categorised as Green – will be achieved, Amber – will be partially achieved or Red – unlikely to be achieved based on the current assessment of progress. It is critical that all approved plans are delivered, or alternative options are urgently developed.



5.11 Where savings or income generating initiatives are not currently being achieved, they have been highlighted in the relevant Portfolio service sections within this report.

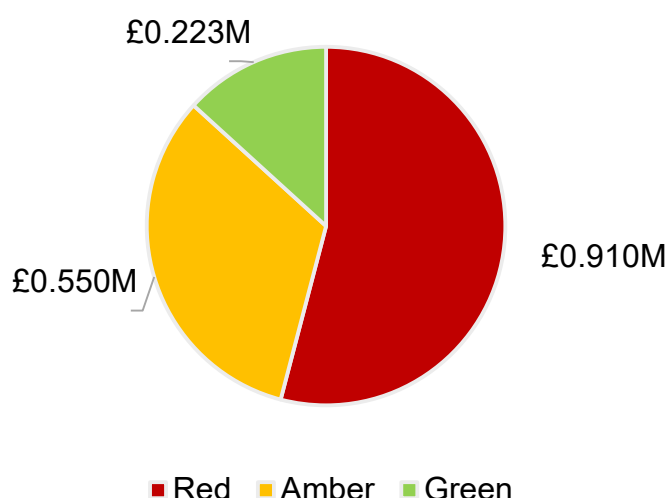
5.12 The table below highlights a summary of the initiatives that are currently classified as Red or Amber. Work is ongoing to try to improve the delivery of these areas and/or alternative proposals are being developed. A further update on progress will be provided in the Period 6 report to November's Cabinet meeting.

Reference	Title of Proposal	£000
EAP-06	System for management of sickness absence	25
SOC-03	Review Travel Centre Operation / Closure	40
SOC-04	Review of public toilet offer with focus on securing external operator	150
IGC-03	Cremation and burial costs for non-residents	100
IGC-09	Sales, Fees & Charges (this includes a saving from 2022/23 ref. PY-FW06-SP)	586
IGC-10	CCTV Control Room commercial activity	25
IGC-12	Charging for car parks that are currently free	25
PY-SW08	Introduce a new strengths-based refresh in 2021/22	200
PY-ES08	Better use of email for communication	8
PY-PJ02-SP	Expectation of saving from waste disposal procurement, increases to £250k in 2023/24	138
PY-SW19-IS	Enhanced In-house Foster Care Offer	150
<b>Red - unlikely to be achieved sub-total</b>		<b>1,447</b>
ORE-03	Staffing Reduction – Corporate Strategy	210
ORE-04	Staffing Reduction – Revenues Service	145
ORE-05	Customer Services/ Revenues and Benefits Structure Review	125
ORE-07	Staffing Review – Senior Leadership Group	165
ORE-09	Staffing Reduction – Digital & ICT	85
ORE-11	Staffing Operational Review – Library Services	30
SOC-01	Review of the operation of fountains in the City's public spaces	15
SOC-02	Review of operation of City Beach Fountains	5
TPP-03	Recruitment Contract (Hays Commercial)	104
TPP-04	Employee Assistance contract for service	10
TPP-05	Occupational Health contract for service	75
IGC-06	Parking charging times and associated enforcement	250
IGC-09	Sales, Fees & Charges (this includes a saving from 2022/23 ref. PY-FW06-SP)	75
IGC-11	Street Lighting Advertising Banners	40
PY-SW16-IS	Learning Disability Services Transformation	75
PY-OP01	Planning Pre-Application Advice	6
PY-OP02	Fast Track or Premium Services	11
PY-OP03	Park Sponsorship	5
PY-OP04	Planning and Building Control Consultancy Service	18
PY-SW17-IS	Shared Lives Expansion	10

Reference	Title of Proposal	£000
PY-CS02-IS	Public Interface Transformation	50
<b>Amber – will be partially achieved sub-total</b>		<b>1,509</b>

### Summary of performance against targeted overspend reductions.

5.13 When setting the budget for 2023/24 it was recognised that there were overspends of £1.683M which occurred in 2022/23 that would need to reduce in 2023/24 for the organisation to operate within the agreed budget. The following pie chart represents the value of overspend reductions which were identified and have been categorised as Green – will be achieved, Amber – will be partially achieved or Red – unlikely to be achieved.



5.14 Where significant overspends are continuing to occur, or have increased, they have been highlighted in the relevant Portfolio service sections within this report. Most of the high values of continued pressure are within our statutory social care services for our most vulnerable children and adults.

### Summary of the major factors contributing to the forecast overspend in 2023/24

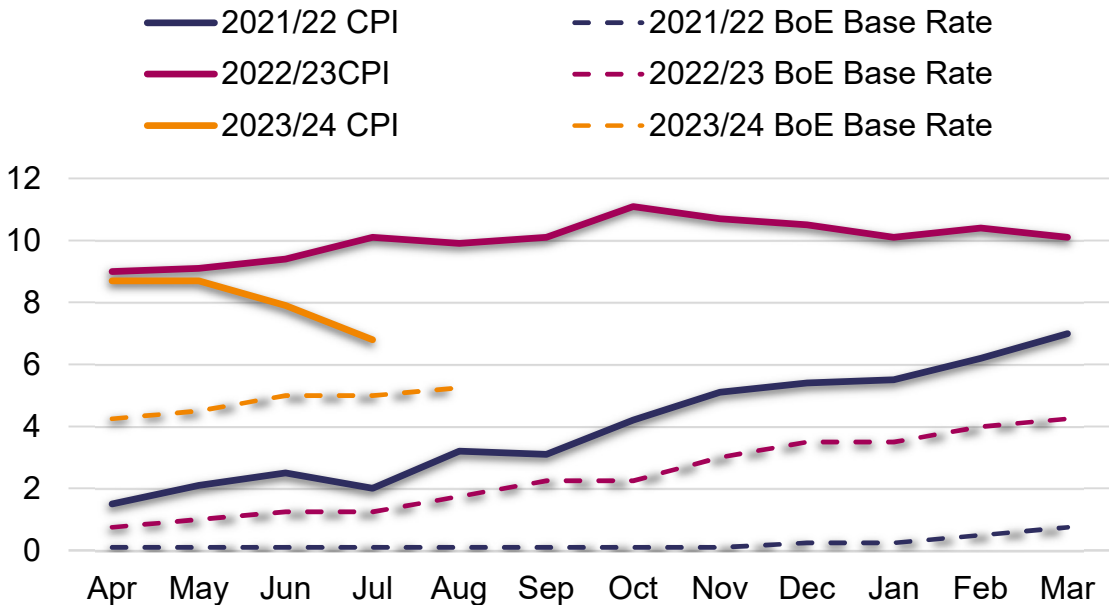
5.15 The forecast revenue overspend of £14.040M is driven by a wide range of factors which are considered in more detail in the remainder of this section.

5.16 The budget provision for both the Pay Award April 2023 and inflationary increases on the majority of existing contracts are currently being held corporately.

5.17 The latest information indicates that the provision made for the Pay Award April 2023 may well be sufficient, although no pay deal has yet been formally agreed. The full amount of the provision £4.425M is being forecast as spent and there are no pressures reported within individual portfolios at this stage of the year.

- 5.18 Stubbornly high inflation continues to drive costs upwards and although the price of energy has not risen as steeply as expected when the budget was set in February 2023 this has been more than offset by price increases elsewhere in the market.
- 5.19 In July 2023 the rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), was 6.8%. Inflation increases are being driven by the cost of both goods and services and although the rates are lower than at the same time last year (see graph below) they are increases now on already higher prices creating a cumulative impact that is stretching most Council budgets to breaking point.
- 5.20 In its efforts to bring inflation back down to its target of 2% the Bank of England has continued to increase interest rates at every opportunity since December 2021. As at 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 the Bank of England Base Rate was 5.25%.

**Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) and Bank of England (BoE) Base Rate**



- 5.21 The increase in the base rate has driven up interest rates being paid on savings and investments. The 2023/24 budget reflected the projected increase with an additional £1.450M of income built into the budget. As at period 4 it is forecast that a further £1.465M will be earned, and this is reported as a favourable variance against Corporate Budgets in Appendix 2.
- 5.22 Rising interest rates are not entirely beneficial to the Council and will impact on the cost of borrowing over time. Perhaps more significantly they will affect resident’s costs of borrowing (i.e. mortgages) and household bills (i.e. food & energy). It is likely that increasing numbers of residents will be pushed into a position of requiring additional Council services, advice and support over the coming months. A key risk that will add further demand pressure on already over stretched services.

## **Leader: Corporate Matters and Performance Delivery**

- 5.23 The main cause of the £494,000 is the support packages for Children With Disabilities (CWD) to provide day and club activities and respite breaks, and in certain cases for additional support costs to support a child with disabilities at their home under section 17 (child in need) where needs are most complex. Smaller pressure is also within this forecast position for required and applicable cover of Education and Health Care plan co-ordinators when on maternity leave within the SEND team.
- 5.24 The 2023/24 budget for Human Resources includes several savings which are not currently being delivered, totalling around £150,000, some of these are a one-off pressure as the savings are part of larger projects that have experienced delays. The service also continues to struggle to meet its income target, the final outturn for 2022/23 showed a shortfall of £74,000 and a similar pressure is forecast for 2023/24.
- 5.25 The Legal Services team have had significant problems with permanent recruitment and as a result expenditure on agency staff to cover vacant roles is forecast to cause a pressure of £120,000. Not having permanent staff has impacted on the services ability to generate income, a shortfall of £60,000 is forecast for 2023/24 (£40,000 in 2022/23).

## **Deputy Leader: Environment**

- 5.26 Residual waste tonnages increased significantly during the Covid pandemic but positively the forecast tonnages the Council needs to dispose of is forecast to return to comparable pre-pandemic levels as the volume is decreasing against the same time period last year. However, the reduction of residual waste is not enough to deliver this service within budget and a pressure of £625,000 is currently forecast. This amount could be decreased further by reducing the amount of residual waste presented by households which brings with it both financial and environmental benefits. This is being currently being explored as part of the waste collection contract procurement.
- 5.27 The pressure of residual waste disposal is being partly offset by the income received from the disposal of food waste for which we receive an income. It is anticipated that this will be somewhere in the region of £300,000.
- 5.28 Based on the income received last year within the Grounds Maintenance service and current income levels it seems unlikely that the service will achieve its income target in 2023/24. This is being offset by holding staffing vacancies and reducing the number of seasonal workers.

## **Adult Social Care, Health, Public Health, and Constitutional Affairs**

- 5.29 Adult Social Care is forecast to overspend by £5.603M, predominantly due to the provision of statutorily required care and support to residents. The support to Older People is forecast to overspend by £2.9M, of which half relates to residential placements. There has been a small rise in the volume of packages, however it is the average weekly placement cost, which is resulting in the overspend, with market forces driving the rate up. At the same time, whilst the rate for homecare is fixed, there has been a volume increase, in line with the trend in the latter part of 2022/23, with several packages requiring double handed care. Support for those with a physical or sensory impairment has increased significantly, with the majority of this being for home care. Meanwhile learning disabilities are forecast to overspend by £1.3M due to the cost of placements for those who have transitioned over in the latter end of 2022/23 and those who will transition this financial year. The Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund – Workforce Fund was announced in July, with the Council awarded £1.2M, which will be received this financial year. Work is underway to identify how this can be utilised to best support the care market in the city.
- 5.30 A £450,000 under spend is reported in Commissioning against the Transitional Supported Housing budgets, this is an early delivery of the 2024/25 saving as the contracts were revised ahead of the original budget profile.
- 5.31 There is a capitalisation budget within Digital and Technology which is not achievable in 2023/24 within the current programme of work, when combined with an unfunded supernumerary role and unmet vacancy factor there is a forecast staffing pressure of £305,000. The rest of the services pressure is due to a forecast shortfall of £400,000 against the income target of £500,000. There have been early discussions with transformation partners EY that suggest income could be increased over the medium-term which means this may not be such a large pressure in future years.
- 5.32 With the transition of the Mental Health Service back to the Council from Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT), there is a £288,000 forecast over spend on the staff/contract budget as the saving will not be fully delivered until the service fully transitions.

## **Arts, Culture, Heritage and Leisure**

- 5.33 Summer visitor numbers to the Pier have remained strong, with income from admission to the Pier tracking slightly above the budget target to date. A £39,000 over achievement of the budget is reported, with the savings built into the 2023/24 budget around the uplift in admission charges and the visitor numbers being delivered. To ensure that there are sufficient staff to support this number of visitors and to mitigate complaints regarding waiting times, the Pier utilises seasonal workers, these are currently forecast to exceed the expenditure budget set by £200,000. The level of staffing needed to maintain the visitor numbers is being reviewed and no further staff will be appointed as the peak season ends. Some premises related budgets are forecast to overspend, including water testing, waste collection and cleaning.

## Children Services, Education and Learning

- 5.34 Consistent with what is a national issue, Children Services expenditure has continued to increase, with the spend pressure from 2022/23 continuing into the 2023/24 opening position for Childrens Services, Education and Learning contributing to a £7.055M forecast pressure, excluding the one off £2.5M specific children earmarked reserve for 2023/24. This is mainly due to the now very and continued high cost of residential care placements and in particular for children in care with complex needs but also whereby average prices as a total have continued to increase into 2023/24. Market forces impacted by increased demand nationally outstripping supply have driven up residential placement costs and this has sustained into 2023/24. The position is also further impacted by the continued and increased reliance on external foster care placements during 2022/23 and that has currently sustained into 2023/24.
- 5.35 Work continues within Children Social Care to seek to reduce these costs where possible and safe for the child, including working with health where a child's needs can meet assessment for health contributions, but equally, it must be noted any further required residential care placements or increased residential costs will add further cost pressure to this current position.
- 5.36 Work building and sustaining capacity within the Inhouse foster carer provision continues and this is promoted by the new, improved and revised Inhouse foster care remuneration offer from April 2023, and work continues to engage regionally with the risks of the costs of the care market to Councils.
- 5.37 Other financial pressures although smaller than the cost pressure of the external cost placement issues for Children in Care do remain from 2022/23, and this includes continued reliance on temporary agency staff to cover critical social work and certain critical social work management posts. Financial pressures have also increased under the national transfer scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children whereby those children have now turned 18 and remain supported in accommodation whilst their home office asylum application is considered. The home office grant to support the costs of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children reduces once that child turns 18. Smaller but further pressures also remain for care experienced children who are in supported accommodation until they are fully and safely transitioned into adulthood.

## Community Safety and Public Protection

- 5.38 As part of the 2023/24 budget package, it was agreed to review the public toilet offer with a focus on securing an external operator. This £150,000 saving will not be delivered this year and the proposal it not being progressed. As yet an alternative saving has not been agreed.
- 5.39 The CCTV service have a very stable core group of staff and because of low staff turnover the employee costs are in excess of the budget. There are also a number of potential commercial opportunities to deliver CCTV services for other organisations / Local Authorities but as yet these contracts have not been finalised and therefore there is an income shortfall projected in this area.

## Economic Growth and Investment

- 5.40 Special Events across the City are forecasting to overspend by £143,000, due to the Herd in the City Sponsorship (£23,000) and the Tour of Britain Cycling Event (£120,000). Additionally, there is an acting up arrangement in place where an officer in the marketing team is assisting in covering a vacancy in the Foreshore team.

## Highways, Transport and Parking

- 5.41 Before COVID-19 there was a slow decline in the use of cash, but the pandemic sped that up considerably. As a result, a significant proportion of parking payment transactions are now made by card or phone app and the impact of that is higher costs for card transaction and processing fees. The overspend for this is expected to be in the region of £300,000. Cash collection costs have not reduced to offset some of this as there is still cash to be collected, just less of it.
- 5.42 The parking enforcement contract is currently overspending by approximately £500,000 due to the volume of variable works undertaken by the contractor and changes made as part of the short-term extension whilst a new contract is procured. The main spend pressures are due to an increase in the number of Civil Enforcement Officers and the wage increases they have received to retain staff.
- 5.43 Concessionary fares payments are linked directly to actual usage on local buses. Due to the reduction in journeys post-pandemic our financial contribution has continued to reduce. The estimated position by the end of the year is currently forecast to underspend by £300,000.
- 5.44 Across our entire estate, street lighting energy costs are the highest cost area for electricity. Although the rate is fixed the inflation on utility costs is resulting in an overspend of £475,000 in this area. This is after the significant LED conversion programme undertaken in recent years, without which the impact of increasing energy costs would have been even greater. The inflation contingency reported under the Corporate Budgets line will be utilised to fund this known pressure and the transfer will be undertaken prior to the next budget monitoring report.
- 5.45 There is also a £125,000 forecast pressure in relation to the repairs of street lighting columns, primarily due to knockdowns from vehicle strikes. Conversations are ongoing as to how this pressure can be mitigated.
- 5.46 The operation of the Travel Centre in Chichester Road continues to bring with it additional cost pressures due to increased security, cleaning and utility costs totalling approximately £60,000.



**Housing and Planning**

- 5.47 The Building Control service exceeded their income budget last year due to some significant works coming into the team in early 2022/23. However, since September 2022 income has been down year on year. As this is a commercial service there is a risk that if the Authority cannot deliver the service on commercial terms the works will go to competitors in the market, and we may struggle to obtain repeat business. The forecast shortfall in income for 2023/24 is £100,000.
  
- 5.48 The Housing Benefits service are forecasting an underspend on staffing of around £160,000 as they continue to hold vacancies across their administration teams where possible, whilst maintaining an acceptable level of service. This forecast may be reduced in future reporting periods if there is significant increase in the number of Southend residents seeking support as additional staff will be needed to maintain the levels of service.

**Regulatory Services**

- 5.49 The refurbishment of the crematorium is underway and due for completion in March 2024 bringing with it greater efficiency, ensuring that the crematorium can function into the future and improving the environmental impact of the service. During the works and to minimise disruption services have been restricted to Tuesday - Thursday so that 4 days a week are available to deliver the scheme. Reducing the operating hours of the crematorium is resulting in a significant reduction in income over this 12-month period with current estimates forecasting a shortfall of £880k. This income reduction is expected to be temporary and when the crematorium is fully operational again it is expected that income levels will return.

**Budget Virements**

- 5.50 All budget transfers (virements) over £250,000 between portfolios or between pay and non-pay budgets are considered and approved by Cabinet. These budget transfers have a net nil impact on the Council’s overall budget. The budget transfers for Cabinet approval this period are as follows.

<u>£</u>	
308,600	Planned transfer from the Technology Transition and Systems Modernisation Reserve
<b><u>308,600</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>

## **6 Revenue – Housing Revenue Account**

- 6.1 In February 2023, the Council approved a balanced 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account budget. This section of the report details the projected outturn position for this year based on actual activity and financial performance as at the end of July 2023 (Period 4).
- 6.2 The forecast for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) at period 4 indicates that the services is forecast to be delivered in line with the approved budget.
- 6.3 There are several variables within the forecasting of this position, mainly the continuing inflationary pressures and volume of responsive repairs. The sustained requirement for rental income to be collected against a background of the continued challenging economic environment for local tenants is a key objective. Appropriate support and advice for any tenant that is struggling with keeping up with their rental payments is being provided.
- 6.4 The assumptions within the budget forecast will continue to be reviewed and refined throughout the year and the key risks will continue to be monitored.

## **7 Capital**

- 7.1 Successful and timely delivery of the capital investment programme is a key part of achieving the Council's Corporate Plan and delivering priority outcomes. The investment contributes to the four main priorities in the following way:
- 7.2 A city that is strong and prosperous – the key investment areas are: the Airport Business Park to deliver benefits for both local businesses and local communities, creating thousands of job opportunities and attracting inward investment; refurbishment works at the Victoria Centre to make a significant contribution to the attraction and amenity of the centre and improve and enhance that end of the City Centre; the Levelling Up Fund projects at Leigh Port, Cliffs Pavilion and City Beach; the refurbishment and enhancement of Southend's historic pleasure pier; the Council's ICT infrastructure to provide core services and to progress the Smart Council project.
- 7.3 A city with a good quality of life – the key investment areas are the schools' high needs and special provision programmes to enhance the facilities and number of places available for children with special educational needs and disabilities or requiring alternative provision.
- 7.4 A city rising to the climate change challenge – the key investment areas are energy saving and efficiency projects; cliff stabilisation, coastal defence, flood prevention and resilience schemes; the investment in the City's highways and transport network, including Better Networks and Better Sustainable Transport projects funded via the Local Transport Plan.
- 7.5 A city delivering genuinely affordable housing – the key investment areas are the construction and acquisition of new council homes and the refurbishment of existing ones via the decent homes programme.

- 7.6 In February 2023 the Council agreed a capital investment programme budget for 2023/24 of £95.4M. The outturn for 2022/23 showed a final spend of £51.8M against a revised budget of £61.8M, an underspend of £10.0M. The proposed budget carry forwards, accelerated delivery requests and other budget re-profiles and amendments at July Cabinet resulted in a revised budget for 2023/24 of £101.7M. Of this amount £71.4M is deliverable directly by the Council and £30.3M is to be delivered by South Essex Homes Limited, Porters Place Southend-on-Sea LLP and Kent County Council.
- 7.7 This amount should be considered in the context that there is a further list of schemes that are not in the approved programme but are subject to viable business cases. This includes schemes where the costs have been estimated, totalling £86M and schemes that are yet to be costed. There may also be urgent health and safety works that might occur that are as yet unforeseen.
- 7.8 The Council is being impacted by the sustained and ongoing inflationary pressures which is affecting the affordability of capital schemes and therefore in some cases the Council's ability to deliver all the expected outcomes. Given this, and the Council's finite capacity to deliver capital schemes, the Capital Programme Delivery Board has been considering how to review all capital projects and programmes and the status of their business cases:  
As a result all capital projects with a budget over £100k will be reviewed and assigned a RAG rating as follows:

<b>RAG rating</b>	<b>Examples of the criteria to be used</b>	<b>Proposed outcome</b>
Red	Project not yet started, no/very low costs incurred, low impact of stopping or pausing the project	Stop, delete the project or move it to the subject to viable business case section
Amber	A project or programme for which the scope can be adjusted, some work started and costs incurred (e.g. consultation started, planning permission sought), can be stopped or paused but implications need to be considered	Further review required
Green	Key political priority, urgent health and safety works, project underway and progressing well (i.e. materials delivered, contractors on site), time limited grant conditions	Continue

- 7.9 A generic approach to the programme as a whole would not be appropriate, as each project is different in its nature, extent and impact. The way that projects are funded also needs to be considered as grant and third-party funding would have to be returned if not spent or if delayed beyond the agreed expenditure timeframe. It is also recognised that these options need to be considered alongside any forthcoming capital challenge sessions, the timing and format of which are yet to be agreed.

- 7.10 The capital investment programme should continue to be subject to continuous review and re-prioritisation to ensure resources are aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan, recovery priorities and administration priorities. This will inevitably lead to some difficult decisions having to be made regarding the programme with the delivery of some schemes being scaled back, delivered over a longer timescale, paused or removed.
- 7.11 Progress of schemes will be reassessed, and some schemes may be removed from the main programme entirely and others held as 'subject to viable delivery plans' until it can be demonstrated that there is the capacity and resources to deliver them in the timescales indicated. Schemes can then be brought back into the main programme as and when it is appropriate to do so.
- 7.12 As this review progresses via challenge meetings, the Capital Programme Delivery Board and the Investment Board, re-profiles and other adjustments to the programme for 2023/24 and future years will be put forward for approval.
- 7.13 The results of the early stages of this review are included in this report but the review is on-going and further changes will be included in the Period 6 performance report to Cabinet in November. Capital challenge sessions are due to take place with the Leader in early October and the resulting requested changes to the capital investment programme from those sessions will be included in the Period 6 performance report to Cabinet in November.
- 7.14 Approximately 49% of the capital investment programme is financed by Government grants and external developer and other contributions and at the end of July nearly 50% of that had been received. The rest of the programme is funded by capital receipts, the use of reserves or by borrowing. Funding schemes by borrowing has a revenue consequence of approximately £70k p.a. for every £1M borrowed.
- 7.15 This report details the projected outturn position for 2023/24 based on information as at the end of July (period 4). The report includes details of progress in delivering the 2023/24 capital investment programme and in receiving external funding relating to that year.
- 7.16 This report includes any virements between schemes, re-profiles across years, additions to the programme and any new external funding.
- 7.17 The progress of schemes for 2023/24 is detailed in sections 1 to 3 of Appendix 3 with Section 4 setting out the resulting requests to:

For schemes to be delivered by the Council:

- Carry forward £6,246,000 of 2023/24 scheme budgets, £4,746,000 into 2024/25 and £1,500,000 into 2025/26.
- Add scheme budgets totalling £92,000 into 2023/24, £1,360,000 into 2024/25, £1,160,000 into 2025/26, £1,160,000 into 2026/27 for new schemes and additions.
- Add scheme budgets totalling £1,361,000 into 2023/24 and £1,467,000 into 2024/25 where new external funding has been received.
- Action virements of budget between approved schemes.

For schemes to be delivered by Subsidiary Companies, Partners and Joint Ventures:

- Add scheme budgets totalling £56,000 into 2023/24 where new external funding has been received.

7.18 As at the end of July the capital outturn for 2023/24 is currently estimated at £66,676,000 for schemes to be delivered by the Council and £30,333,000 for schemes to be delivered by subsidiary companies, joint ventures and partners. The amount to be delivered by the Council is expected to reduce following the on-going review of the capital investment programme as highlighted in 6.8 to 6.11. An updated assessment will be included in the Period 6 performance report and presented to Cabinet in November 2023.

7.19 The 2023/24 capital budget is part of the wider capital investment programme spanning several years. The table below shows the revised programme if all the above requests are approved:

**Programme to be delivered by the Council (GF and HRA):**

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Total £000
At July Cabinet	71,441	54,377	5,927	5,400	560	137,705
Amendments	(4,793)	7,573	2,660	1,160	0	6,600
Revised programme	66,648	61,950	8,587	6,560	560	144,305

**Programme to be delivered by Subsidiary Companies and Joint Ventures:**

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Total £000
At July Cabinet	30,277	9,524	9,579	9,666	0	59,046
Amendments	56	0	0	0	0	56
Revised programme	30,333	9,524	9,579	9,666	0	59,102

## 8 Corporate Performance

8.1 The Corporate Performance Period 4 2023 report (**Appendix 4**) covers performance indicators that link to the Resourcing Better Outcomes financial report. The report shows our performance predominantly up to the period of July 2023, with some exceptions where data is unavailable at this time. Data has been rated against targets using Red, Amber Green (RAG) ratings where applicable and compares our current position to the previous month and previous year where data is available. It is presented by the current four Corporate Plan priorities: *a city that is strong and prosperous; a city with a good quality of life; a city rising to the climate change challenge; and a city delivering genuinely affordable housing.*

8.2 The key performance indicators (KPIs) currently showing as red on their RAG status, indicate that they are at risk of missing target. These indicators are noted below by way of exception:

### **A city that is strong and prosperous**

#### 8.3 **Rate of suppliers paying their staff at least Living Wage [Quarterly snapshot]**

The council continues to struggle to gather the position from suppliers on paying their staff the living wage. Although there has been an increase in reporting of this number (improving by 7 suppliers, increasing total to 26 confirmed in quarter 1 2023/24 against the 19 confirmed in 2022/23), the council is still only aware of 14.5% of those in scope. This could be symptomatic of potential labour shortages and a reduction in economic activity associated with the cost-of-living crisis (see 3.12).

#### 8.4 **Take up of the NHS Health Check programme [Cumulative YTD]**

Since restarting the NHS Health check programme in 2021 numbers have steadily increased with successful take-up more than double when compared against last year (1170 in July 2023 compared against 542 in July 2022) and is shy of target by 282. Engagement and improvements in partnership working (i.e. with Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System) has commenced to further improve the take up.

#### 8.5 **Immunisation- MMR two doses at 5 years old [Cumulative YTD]**

Immunisation rates fell by 5.8% from quarter 4 2021/22 (88.9% 2021/22 to 83.1% in 2022/23); in 2021/22 Southend was behind the East of England by 0.3% (88.9% compared with 89.2%) and was ahead of the England average by 3.2% (88.9% compared with 85.7%). MMR clinics are being used to boost uptake.

## 8.6 High Street occupancy [Quarterly snapshot]

According to the British Retail Consortium's report in 2023 Southend's high street is maintaining occupancy broadly in line with the national average (Southend at 85.8% compared with the national average of 86.2%). East of England, Greater London and the Southeast have had the lowest vacancy rates for the past five years, which points to a larger geographical trend.

There are a number of projects based around: no use empty, shop front grant scheme; progressing a number of planning applications for changes of use in town centre premises, to support improvement for this indicator.

### A city with a good quality of life

## 8.7 Percentage of placements in residential and PVI settings [Monthly snapshot]

Percentage of placements remains broadly the same. On the 1st April 2023 the service launched the new in-house fostering offer in an attempt to increase the number of in-house fostering carers. This, along with the areas focus where possible to return children and young people home to their birth family, is an attempt to reduce the reliance on PVI/residential placements.

## 8.8 Average length of pre-proceedings for the Public Law Outline (PLO) process (weeks)

The indicator as of July 2023 is at 18.7, above the target of 14 by 4.7 due to late expert assessments. Management oversight is being provided to ensure no further delays occur.

## 8.9 Rate of children in care per 10,000 population under 18 years old [Monthly snapshot]

More children and young people have entered the Local Authorities care over the last quarter. service demand continues to outweigh provision, as more children enter care than leave, therefore this Performance Indicator continues to be above target. This is demonstrated by the increase by 1.9 percentage points comparing quarter 1 2022/23 with quarter 1 2023/24 to the previous year (79% compared to 80.9%). The service are regularly reviewing the number of children and young people in the local authority's care and are utilising different approaches to support exiting children and young people from its care such as: discharge of care, special guardianship and reunification.

## 8.10 People in receipt of long-term support for more than 12 months that have received a review in the last 12 months [Cumulative YTD]

This measure is below target due to increased demand of public services. The service is currently prioritising the completion of overdue reviews for people with a learning disability and has recently increased staffing levels to improve performance (quarter 1 2023/24 performance of 70.4% has improved by 5.2% percentage points compared to quarter 1 2022/23 of 63.7%).

## **A city delivering genuinely affordable housing**

### **8.11 Families with children in B&B for over 6 weeks [Quarterly snapshot]**

Work is underway to explore options to improve the council's temporary accommodation offer (including the establishment of a hostel improvement plan task and finish group) as this measure has risen from 2 to 8 from the last reporting period.

There is a national trend of a lack of alternative housing resulting in B&B usage increasing across England by 110% between April 2022 to April 2023.

Locally this pressure is being further impacted by high volumes of out of area placements by other local authorities into Southend, the pressures arising from central govt. refugee resettlement and asylum policy, frozen Local Housing Allowance rates and a declining private sector rented offer.

### **8.12 Percentage of council homes not meeting Decent Home Standard [Cumulative YTD]**

This measure has risen from 5.0% in February 2023 to 5.3% in June 2023. It is expected that this figure will reduce as the year progresses as more works are undertaken on properties to ensure that they meet the decent homes standard.

### **8.13 Percentage of property voids and non-reletable [Quarterly snapshot]**

This measure is being impacted by the holding of properties in the Queensway Site. When excluding these properties, the figure reduces to 0.67% (current figure is 1.4% overall against a target of 1.1%).

### **8.14 Percentage of property void and reletable [Quarterly snapshot]**

This measure is being partly impacted by the Queensway development, when this is excluded, the figure reduces to 1.2% (current figure is 1.8% against a target of 1.0%).

8.15 The following table sets out corporate risks affiliated to KPIs. The KPIs with associated risks can be read throughout the SCC Corporate Plan Performance Report (appendix 4), the remaining corporate risks are overarching and therefore not linked to KPIs (1 – Covid-19 pandemic, 4 – Public services landscape, 5 – Workforce, 6 – a) Cyber security b) Data protection, 11 - LGA peer review of SEND & CWD, 15 – Southend Travel Partnership); the full risk register reference key can be found on SCC Corporate Plan Performance Report page 33 (**Appendix 4**):



Corporate Risks associated with KPIs	
2 – Financial sustainability	13 – Adult social care
3 – Inflation and cost of living pressures	14 – Social cohesion
7 - Capital investment programme delivery	16 – Housing
8 – Mitigating for and adapting to climate change	17 – House building programme
9 – Waste Management	18 – Local Plan
10 – Safeguarding responsibilities and child welfare	19 – Regeneration and major projects
11 – Health inequalities	20 – Visitor destination and major events
	21 - Economic recovery and income inequalities

8.16 The following breakdown provides an overview of the corporate risks aligned to KPIs that are not meeting target. This illustrates what impacts there may be as a result of performance not meeting target:

Corporate Risks with KPIs not meeting target		
Corporate Risk	Proportion of KPIs that are Red or Amber	Potential impact
3 – Inflation and cost of living pressures	1/12 KPIs rated red (8%)	<i>This may impact on the council's supply chain with potential labour shortages; a reduction in economic activity.</i>
8 – Mitigating for and adapting to climate change	6/23 KPIs rated amber (26%)	<i>This may impact the council's ability to make an adequate contribution to the reduction in carbon emissions required.</i>
10 – Safeguarding responsibilities and child welfare	2/12 KPIs rated red (17%); 3/23 KPIs rated amber (13%)	<i>This could cause a failure to deliver the outcomes anticipated for vulnerable people that need support.</i>
11 – Health inequalities	2/12 KPIs rated red (17%); 2/23 KPIs rated amber (9%)	<i>This may impact on widening health inequalities in the city.</i>
13 - Adult social care	1/12 KPIs rated red (8%); 3/23 KPIs rated amber (13%)	<i>This could cause difficulty in meeting increasing demand for support, resulting in worsening outcomes for those in need of support.</i>
16 – Housing	4/12 KPIs rated red (33%); 4/23 KPIs rated amber (17%)	<i>This may impact on the council's ability to address rising homelessness, particularly with the ongoing cost of living pressures.</i>

17 – House building programme	1/23 KPIs rated amber (4%)	<i>This may impact pressure on the local housing market and the ability to deliver the anticipated housing supply.</i>
18 - Local Plan	1/23 KPIs rated amber (4%)	<i>This could cause an inability to manage development effectively and deliver upon the Council's outcome priorities.</i>
19 – Regeneration and major projects	1/12 KPIs rated red (8%); 4/23 KPIs rated amber (17%)	<i>This may impact on the City's ability to meet the needs of residents or provide a suitable destination for visitors; a reduction in economic.</i>

## 9 Reasons for Decisions

- 9.1 The regular reporting of Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring information provides detailed financial information to members, senior officers and other interested parties on the financial performance of the Council. It sets out the key variances being reported by budget holders and the associated management action being implemented to address any identified issues.
- 9.2 It also informs decision making to ensure that the Council's priorities are delivered within the approved budget provision.
- 9.3 It is important that any adverse variances are addressed in order for the Council to remain within the approved budget provision or where this cannot be achieved by individual service management action, alternative proposals are developed, and solutions proposed which will address the financial impact. Members will have a key role in approving any actions if the alternative proposals represent significant changes to the service delivery arrangements originally approved by them.
- 9.4 The challenge of delivering a balanced financial outturn for 2023/24 is significant. Even at this very early stage of the year – urgent action is needed to try to reduce all non-essential expenditure and/or generate extra income. This priority must be achieved whilst ensuring that our most vulnerable residents are looked after appropriately, and our statutory responsibilities are effectively discharged. Improving efficiency and productivity is essential but the scale of the unprecedented financial pressures will inevitably lead to a reduction in the range, quality, cost and responsiveness of other discretionary Council services, as well as challenging our approach to statutory services.

## 10 Other Options

- 10.1 The Council could choose to monitor its budgetary performance against an alternative timeframe, but it is considered that the current reporting schedule provides the appropriate balance to allow strategic oversight of the budget by members and to also formally manage the Council's exposure to financial risk. More frequent monitoring is undertaken by officers and considered by individual service Directors and the Council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) including the implementation of any necessary remedial actions.

## **11 Financial Implications**

- 11.1 As set out in the body of the report and accompanying appendices.

## **12 Legal Implications**

- 12.1 The report provides financial performance information. It is good governance and sensible management practice for the Council to consider monitoring information in relation to plans and budgets that it has adopted.
- 12.2 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires the Council as a best value authority to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. Monitoring of financial and other performance information is an important way in which that obligation can be fulfilled.
- 12.3 The Council is required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council is also required by section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 to monitor its budget and take corrective action, as necessary. The Council’s chief finance officer has established financial procedures to ensure the Council’s proper financial administration. These include procedures for effective budgetary control. To comply with these best practice arrangements, it is important that Cabinet receive information and comment accordingly on the performance of the revenue and capital budgets as set out in the report.

## **13 Carbon Impact**

- 13.1 None arising from this report.

## **14 Equalities**

- 14.1 Some of the actions may have equality and diversity implications and these will be considered as part of our normal equalities impact assessments.

## **15 Consultation**

- 15.1 Engagement has already been made with staff and cabinet members and now with full councillors and this will continue as options to mitigate for 2023/24 are progressed as well as options for delivering a robust balanced budget for 2024/25.

## **16 Background Papers**

Approved 2023/24 Budget – Report to Council 23 February 2023

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28

## **17 Appendices**

Appendix 1 Summary of Local Government Headlines

Appendix 2 Period 4 – July 2023 Revenue Budget Performance 2023/24

Appendix 3 Period 4 – July 2023 Capital Investment Programme  
Performance 2023/24

Appendix 4 Corporate Performance report – Period 4 2023-24

## Summary of Local Government headlines in just the last few months

Ctrl+Click on captions to follow links to online articles.



### Coventry faces issuing s114

25/08/2023

Coventry is at risk of having to issue a section 114 notice, the city council has warned Michael Gove.



### Thurrock commissioners call for sector-wide change

15/06/2023

The team from Essex CC led by Tony McArdle have made recommendations for the wider sector in its Best Value report on Thurrock, published today.



### Kent CC faces 'challenging' £86m shortfall

14/07/2023

A report by auditors Grant Thornton into Kent CC's finances has been described as 'challenging' after it identified a need for the authority to save £86m.



### Woking staff face redundancy

10/08/2023

All Woking BC staff will go through redundancy consultations by the end of the year as the struggling local authority seeks to tackle its financial problems.



### BCP Council in bankruptcy warning

14/08/2023

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council has warned tough budget decisions are needed if the council is to avoid bankruptcy.



### Reserves 'critical' at Middlesbrough

16/08/2023

'Critically low' levels of reserves have left Middlesbrough Council in danger of issuing a section 114 notice.



### Birmingham City Council stops all non-essential spending

06/07/2023

Birmingham City Council will stop all non-essential spending to deal with its equal pay liability and the fallout from the implementation of its IT system.



### Southampton at risk of section 114

12/07/2023

Southampton City Council has been warned it risks having to issue a section 114 notice this financial year as it battles to save £20m from its budget.



### Kirklees spending controls to avert s114

09/08/2023

Senior councillors will be asked to implement a series of cost-cutting measures to combat in-year overspending.



### Hastings' financial controls 'not fully developed'

31/07/2023

Senior Hastings BC councillors will be urged next week to 'bring in and embed more stringent financial controls and accountability to urgently reduce spending'.

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## Appendix 2

### Budget Monitoring & Reporting 2023/2024

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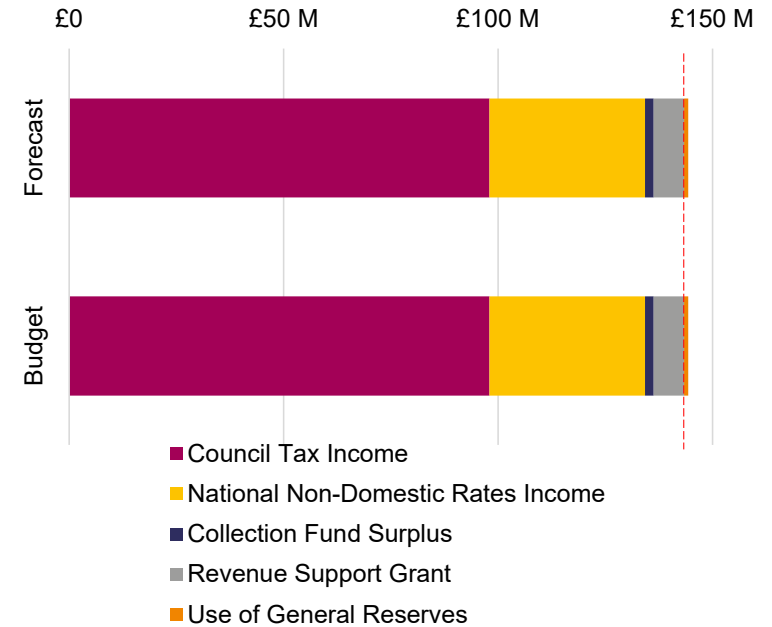
#### Period 04 - July 2023 Revenue Budget Performance



## Summary

Last Reported Variance £M	Portfolio	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Leader: SEND	15.272	16.278	1.006
0.000	Deputy Leader: Environment	18.711	19.127	0.416
0.000	Adult Social Care, Health, Public Health, and Constitutional Affairs	61.025	67.423	6.398
0.000	Arts, Culture, Heritage and Leisure	4.625	4.737	0.112
0.000	Childrens Services, Education and Learning	32.176	39.231	7.055
0.000	Community Safety and Public Protection	1.827	2.059	0.232
0.000	Economic Growth and Investment	0.803	0.928	0.125
0.000	Highways, Transport and Parking	(0.591)	0.592	1.183
0.000	Housing and Planning	3.733	3.651	(0.082)
0.000	Regulatory Services	1.906	2.867	0.961
<b>0.000</b>		<b>139.487</b>	<b>156.893</b>	<b>17.406</b>
0.000	Corporate Budgets	26.971	23.605	(3.366)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>166.458</b>	<b>180.498</b>	<b>14.040</b>
0.000	Contribution to / (from) earmarked reserves	(2.755)	(2.755)	0.000
0.000	Revenue Contribution to Capital	0.471	0.471	0.000
0.000	Non Service Specific Grants	(19.837)	(19.837)	0.000
<b>0.000</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>144.337</b>	<b>158.377</b>	<b>14.040</b>
0.000	Funding (including Collection Fund)	(143.337)	(143.337)	0.000
0.000	Planned contributions from reserves	(1.000)	(1.000)	0.000
<b>0.000</b>		<b>0.000</b>	<b>14.040</b>	<b>14.040</b>

## Sources of funding





Portfolio services are currently forecast to overspend by £17.406m, the contributing reasons for this pressure are explained in more detail over the following pages.

Positively higher than predicted receipts from investments as interest rates have increased faster and by more than expected account for (£1.465m) of the underspend against Corporate Budgets. This is directly due to the Bank of England's response to try to reduce the rate of inflation.

Provision of £2.950m for CPI % increases on existing contracts and rises in energy costs was provided centrally within Corporate Budgets. Estimated inflationary pressures are being reported within individual services but are being partially offset by the underspend reported within the Corporate Budgets line (£1.950m). The difference of £1.0m reflects the amount already agreed and allocated for specific contracts. This full budget will be allocated to services before the next reporting period.

There is a £4.425m provision for the Local Government Pay Award April 2023, which has not been agreed at the time of writing this report. When this cost is known the budget will be allocated to services and the amount shown here will reduce. Any award above an average of 5% will result in an additional pressure for the organisation. This provision is sufficient to cover the current 'final' employers offer but this has currently been rejected by trade unions.

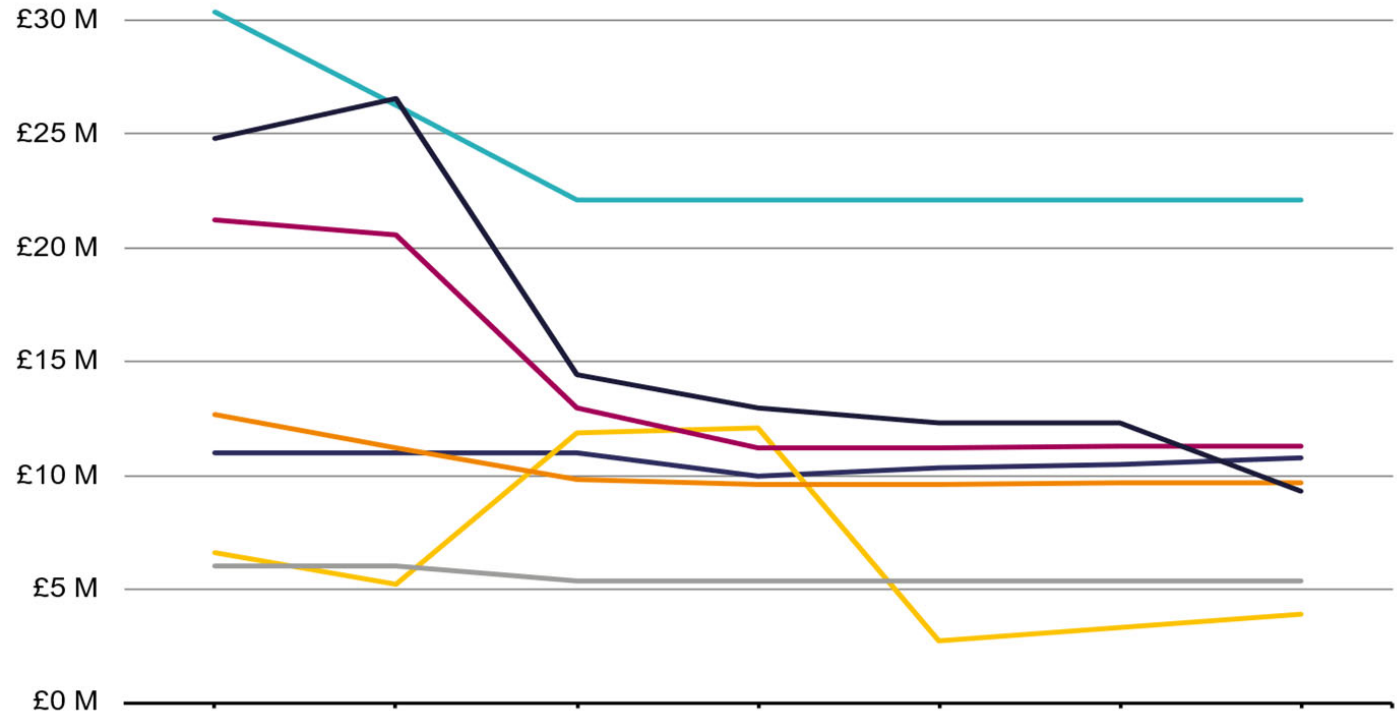
A small overspend of £0.049m on the Coroners Court levy for 2023/24 combined with the underspends mentioned above gives the current net forecast favourable variance on Corporate Budgets of (£3.366m).

# Reserves

The Council maintains General Fund reserves between £10M and £12M in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy. This provides a working cashflow balance and allows a degree of financial security in the case of unexpected events or emergencies.

Earmarked Reserves are set aside to fund future projects and to mitigate specific risk. The level of these reserves will fluctuate as grants are received, risk is realised or effectively managed and planned projects are progressed/delivered.

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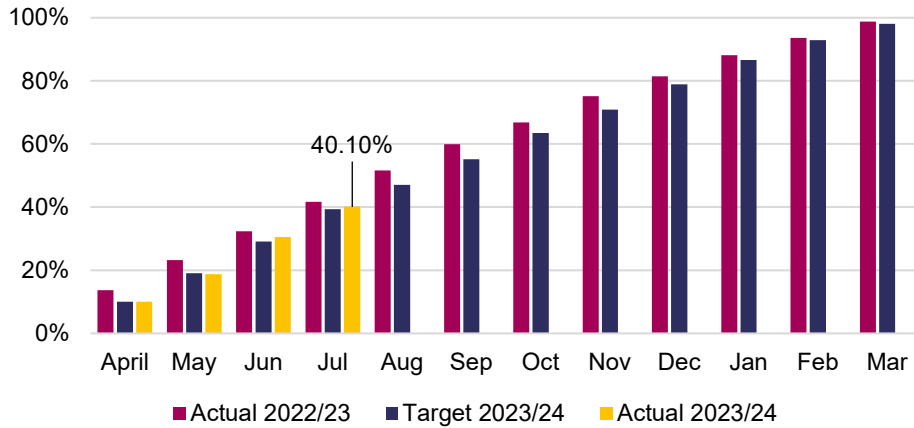


Reserves in £M	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
General Reserves	11.0	11.0	11.0	10.0	10.3	10.5	10.8
Capital Reserves	6.6	5.2	11.9	12.1	2.7	3.3	3.9
Corporate Reserves	21.2	20.6	13.0	11.2	11.2	11.3	11.3
Grant Reserves	30.4	26.3	22.1	22.1	22.1	22.1	22.1
Insurance Reserves	6.0	6.0	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4
Service Reserves	12.7	11.2	9.8	9.6	9.6	9.7	9.7
Technical Reserves*	24.8	26.6	14.4	13.0	12.3	12.3	9.3
	<b>112.7</b>	<b>106.9</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>83.4</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>72.5</b>

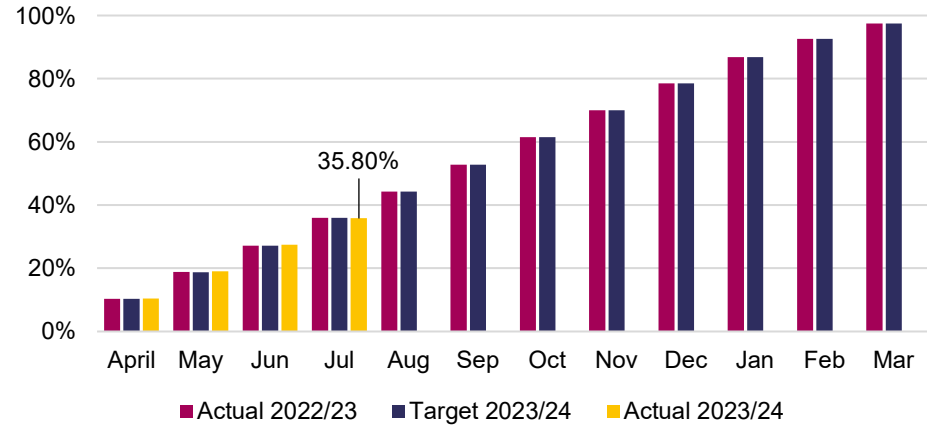
\* Technical Reserves are held to even out the Council's finances and reduce in year volatility

# Collection Rates

## Council Tax Collection

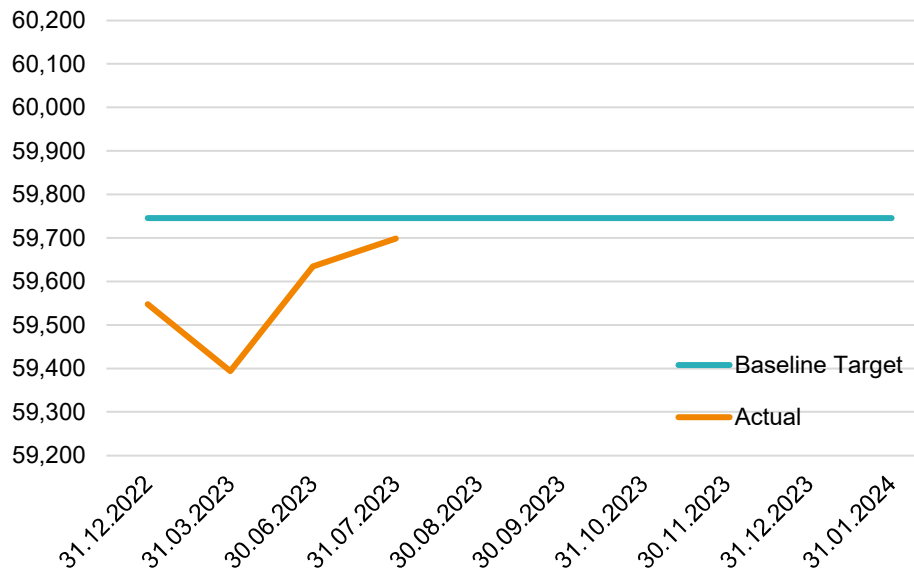


## Business Rates Collection



35

## Council Tax Base



The Council Tax Base reflects a slight decrease in comparison to the base setting figure, with a reduction of 46 Band D equivalent properties. This is primarily due to the difference in single person discounts, with an increase of 591 discounts in comparison to the base setting position. Ongoing eligibility reviews of discounts have prevented the previous growth trend. Work continues to be implemented to ensure the eligibility and appropriateness of all discounts applied.

Council Tax collection is 0.1% (£135k) lower than the current year target for the period. This does not represent a significant risk of reduced non-collection at this stage.

Business rates in year collection is 0.8% (£325k) above target for the financial year representing a positive start to the year, with confidence that the year-end collection target can be achieved.

# Leader: Corporate Matters and Performance Delivery

**10.33%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

**£1.0M**

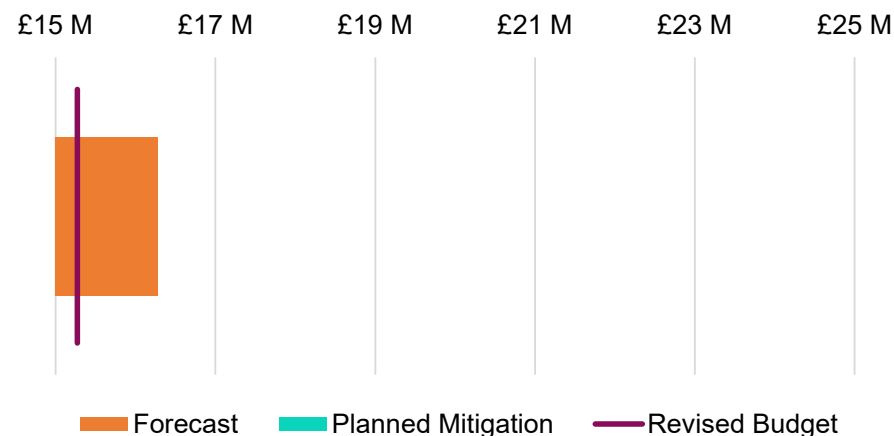
Forecast Adverse Variance

**6.59%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio  
Service Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Children with a special educational need and disability (SEND)	2.443	2.937	0.494
0.000	Home to School Transport Contract	2.611	2.611	0.000
0.000	Passenger Transport / Vehicle Fleet	0.114	0.209	0.095
0.000	Audit	0.766	0.525	(0.241)
0.000	Civic Affairs	0.993	1.063	0.070
0.000	Corporate Budget and Resources Planning	0.858	0.809	(0.049)
0.000	Corporate Planning and Strategic Directio	1.562	1.645	0.083
0.000	Council Tax and Business Rates	0.176	0.231	0.055
0.000	Human Resources	1.677	2.009	0.332
0.000	Learning and Workforce Development	0.824	0.743	(0.081)
0.000	Performance Delivery	1.467	1.426	(0.041)
0.000	Transformation	0.167	0.167	0.000
0.000	Emergency Planning and Business Continuity	0.252	0.252	0.000
0.000	Legal Services & Land Charges	1.362	1.651	0.289
<b>0.000</b>		<b>15.272</b>	<b>16.278</b>	<b>1.006</b>

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Gross Expenditure	36.248	37.160	0.912
0.000	Gross Income	(20.976)	(20.882)	0.094
<b>0.000</b>		<b>15.272</b>	<b>16.278</b>	<b>1.006</b>



The main cause of the Children with a special need and disability (SEND) pressure is the support packages for Children With Disabilities (CWD) to provide day and club activities and respite breaks, and in certain cases, for additional support costs to support a child with disabilities at their home under section 17 (child in need). Smaller value pressures have also been experienced for the required applicable cover of Educational Health and Care Plan Co-ordinators when on maternity leave within the SEND team.

The internal audit team currently has five full time vacancies which is resulting in a significant underspend, only partly offset by additional spend on external agencies.

There is significant pressure on the Human Resources budget caused by a variety of factors, the most notable are; £147,000 of savings not expected to be achieved due to additional demand and unavoidable delays in system developments, a £70,000 estimated shortfall against the Service's income target and a £55,000 pressure on staffing budgets caused by agency covering vacant positions, market supplements etc.

Legal Services have a substantial pressure of £120,000 caused by agency staff covering vacant establishment roles. The lack of permanent staff has impacted on the ability to generate income and a £60,000 shortfall is currently expected.

Income from Local Land Charges has been adversely affected by the slow down in the housing market and the cost of living crisis. The £100,000 shortfall expected is only partially offset by an underspend on staffing (£31,000).

## Deputy Leader: Environment

**5.74%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

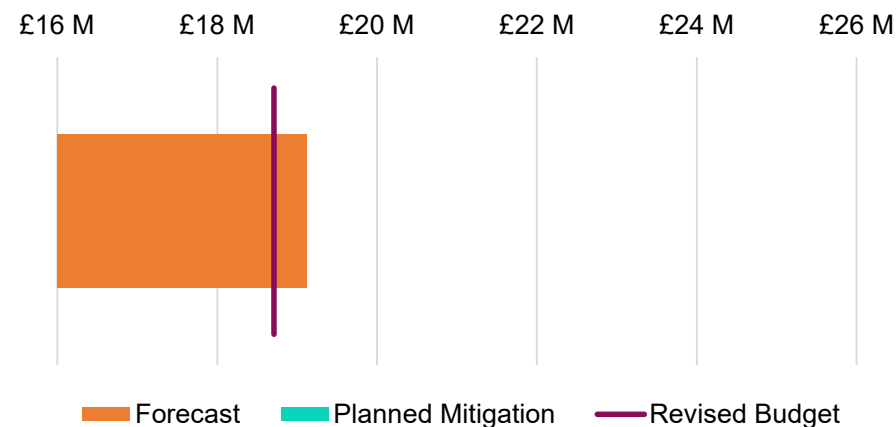
**£0.4M**

Forecast Adverse Variance

**2.22%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	All matters relating to trees, plants, grass verges and other flora	0.559	0.537	(0.022)
0.000	Cleansing of highways and public realm	1.595	1.656	0.061
0.000	Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Energy Saving	0.088	0.070	(0.018)
0.000	Parks and Open Spaces, Grounds Maintenance	4.848	4.826	(0.022)
0.000	Waste collection, disposal, management, recycling & sanitation	11.621	12.038	0.417
<b>0.000</b>		<b>18.711</b>	<b>19.127</b>	<b>0.416</b>
38	Gross Expenditure	20.135	20.347	0.212
0.000	Gross Income	(1.424)	(1.220)	0.204
<b>0.000</b>		<b>18.711</b>	<b>19.127</b>	<b>0.416</b>



The cost of waste disposal continues to be the largest driver of financial pressure within this portfolio area. Although tonnages have reduced by 3% on a year on year basis, the volume of residual waste continues to be higher than the budget position can sustain. Tonnages are starting to return to levels similar to that seen pre-covid and the recent waste disposal procurement has seen the costs of disposal and haulage reduce as well as improving the environmental impact of its disposal.

# Adult Social Care, Health, Public Health, and Constitutional Affairs

**29.38%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

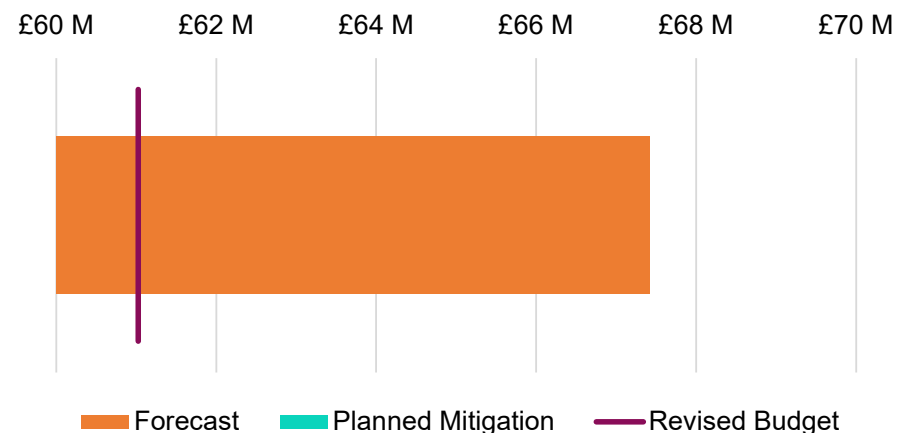
**£6.40M**

Forecast Adverse Variance

**10.48%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Adult Social Care	41.106	46.709	5.603
0.000	Commissioning	3.970	3.520	(0.450)
0.000	Community Cohesion and community assets	0.016	0.031	0.015
0.000	Customer Contact	4.810	4.948	0.138
0.000	Digital and Technology	4.137	4.847	0.710
0.000	Domestic Abuse (Social Aspects)	0.064	0.064	0.000
0.000	Mental Health Services	4.993	5.323	0.330
0.000	Public Health	0.015	0.015	0.000
0.000	Democratic Services	0.776	0.828	0.052
0.000	Transformation	1.138	1.138	0.000
<b>0.000</b>		<b>61.025</b>	<b>67.423</b>	<b>6.398</b>
0.000	Gross Expenditure	103.088	109.235	6.147
0.000	Gross Income	(42.063)	(41.812)	0.251
<b>0.000</b>		<b>61.025</b>	<b>67.423</b>	<b>6.398</b>



Care packages are forecast to overspend, with transitions from late in 2022/23 causing a continued budget pressure. Residential placements are increasing significantly in price, whilst volumes have only marginally increased. At the same time, the demand for home care has increased, with the trend from the last quarter of 2022/23 increasing across both Older People and Physical and Sensory Impairment.

Commissioning is reporting an underspend of £450,0000 primarily against Transitional Supported Housing budgets, this is an early delivery of the planned 2024/25 saving as the contracts were revised ahead of schedule.

There is a capitalisation of officer time within Digital and Technology which is not achievable in 2023/24 within the current capital programme, when combined with an unfunded supernumerary role and unmet vacancy factor target there is an overall forecast staffing pressure of £305,000. The rest of this Service pressure is due to difficulties in securing around £400,000 of external income in 2023/24. There have been early discussions with transformation partners EY that suggest income could be generated over the medium-term which means this may not be such a large pressure in future years.

With the transition of the Mental Health Service back to the Council from Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT), there is a £288,000 forecast over spend on the staff/contract budget as the saving will not be fully delivered until the service fully transitions and consideration needs to be given to increases in demand.



## Arts, Culture, Heritage and Leisure

**2.04%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

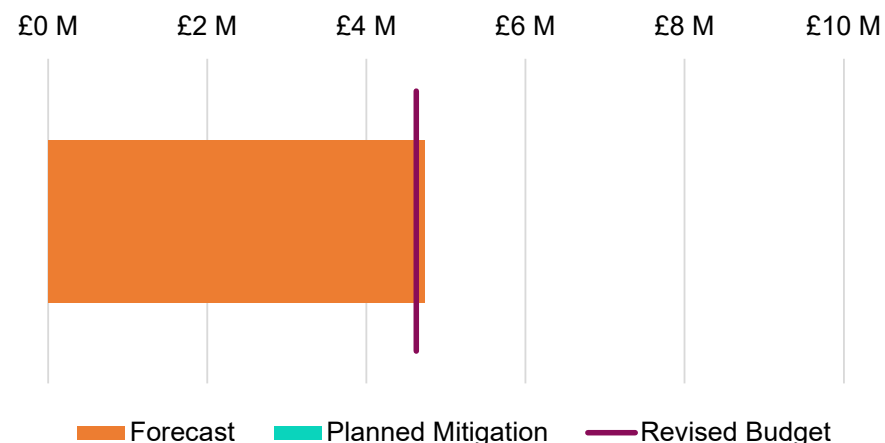
**£0.1M**

Forecast Adverse Variance

**2.42%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Museums and Galleries, Theatres and Libraries	4.460	4.381	(0.079)
0.000	Pier and Foreshore	0.292	0.479	0.187
0.000	Sport Development	(0.127)	(0.123)	0.004
<b>0.000</b>		<b>4.625</b>	<b>4.737</b>	<b>0.112</b>
0.000	Gross Expenditure	7.144	7.229	0.085
0.000	Gross Income	(2.519)	(2.492)	0.027
<b>0.000</b>		<b>4.625</b>	<b>4.737</b>	<b>0.112</b>



Summer visitor numbers to the Pier have remained strong, with income from admission to the Pier tracking slightly above the budget target to date. A £39,000 over achievement of the budget is reported, with the savings built into the 2023/24 around the uplift in admission charges and the visitor numbers being delivered. To ensure that there are sufficient staff to support this number of visitors and to mitigate complaints regarding waiting times, the Pier utilises seasonal workers, these are currently forecast to exceed the expenditure budget set by £200,000. The level of staffing needed to maintain the visitor numbers is being reviewed and no further staff will be appointed as the peak season ends. Some premises related budgets are forecast to overspend, including water testing, waste collection and cleaning.

## Childrens Services, Education and Learning

**24.45%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

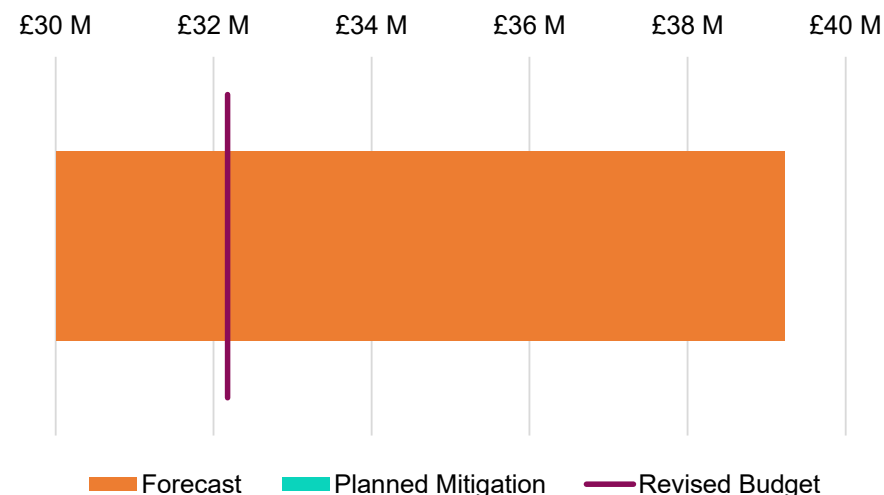
**£7.1M**

Forecast Adverse Variance

**21.93%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Adult and Community Learning	0.062	0.062	0.000
0.000	Children's Safeguarding	0.068	0.068	0.000
0.000	Children's Services	27.571	34.855	7.284
0.000	Family Centre, Early Years and Childcare	1.144	1.104	(0.040)
0.000	Schools, Education and Learning	1.057	0.987	(0.070)
0.000	Youth and Connexions	0.752	0.747	(0.005)
0.000	Youth Justice Service	1.522	1.408	(0.114)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>32.176</b>	<b>39.231</b>	<b>7.055</b>
42				
0.000	Gross Expenditure	85.795	93.287	7.492
0.000	Gross Income	(53.619)	(54.056)	(0.437)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>32.176</b>	<b>39.231</b>	<b>7.055</b>



The significant spend pressure trend continues from 2022/23 into 2023/24. For Children in Care, Residential Care placement costs continue to rise as an average and particularly for those cases that are most complex. The independent market is stretched and short of supply which is contributing to some very high placement prices. The increased reliance on external foster care placements during 2022/23 has now translated into a full year cost impact into 2023/24. The intention remains targeted to reduce reliance on external foster care placements by building and sustaining capacity within our own inhouse fostering service promoted by the new and improved inhouse foster care offer from April 2023. The cost of external care placements continues to be the main cause of this significant overspend pressure. A trend that is unfortunately represented across many areas of the country.

Other financial pressures within Children Services for 2023/24 have remained and includes continued reliance on temporary agency staff to cover critical social work and certain social work management posts. Financial pressures have also increased under the national transfer scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum seekers where those children have now turned 18 and remain supported in accommodation whilst their asylum application is considered. The home office grant to support their costs reduces once the child turns 18. Smaller but further pressures also remain for care experienced children who are in supported in accommodation until they are fully and safely transitioned into Adult hood.

Whilst the safety and wellbeing of Children remain the paramount importance the Council continues to explore opportunities to reduce costs where safe and possible, but it also has to be highlighted that residential care placements are already a significant high cost so any new placements or further increases in existing placement costs will have a further negative financial impact on the Service's position.

# Community Safety and Public Protection

**1.20%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

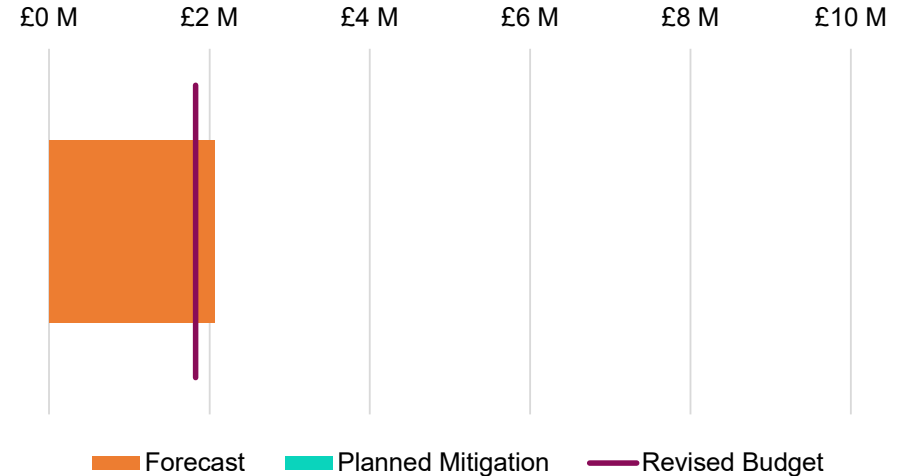
**£0.2M**

Forecast Adverse Variance

**12.64%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Closed Circuit Television	0.491	0.574	0.083
0.000	Community Safety	0.835	0.832	(0.003)
0.000	Drugs and Alcohol Service	0.000	0.001	0.001
0.000	Public Toilets	0.382	0.532	0.150
0.000	Town Centre Management	0.120	0.120	0.000
<b>0.000</b>		<b>1.828</b>	<b>2.059</b>	<b>0.231</b>
0.000	Gross Expenditure	4.223	4.265	0.042
0.000	Gross Income	(2.395)	(2.206)	0.189
<b>0.000</b>		<b>1.828</b>	<b>2.059</b>	<b>0.231</b>



The original £150k saving target related to a review of the public toilet offer is not being progressed which leaves this service area unable to be delivered within its approved budget for 2023/24. An alternative saving is yet to be identified but if one is developed and viable then this pressure could be mitigated.

The CCTV service is delivered by a stable group of staff and as such staff turnover is very low. This is contributing to a budget pressure on staffing costs and although there is still the desire to deliver some services commercially - no formal contracts have yet been signed to bring in any additional income. The market is still being explored.

# Economic Growth and Investment

**0.29%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

**£0.1M**

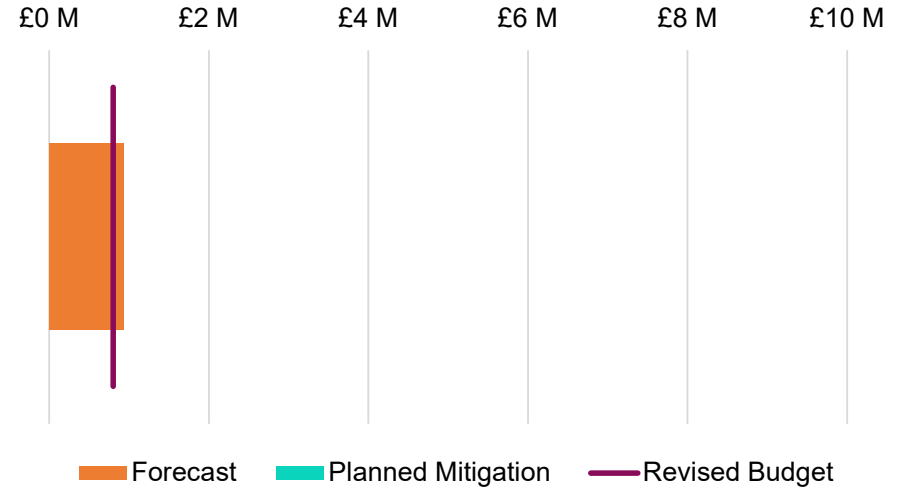
Forecast Adverse Variance

**15.69%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Marketing (Place Branding/Tourism)	0.379	0.563	0.184
0.000	Regeneration and business growth	0.424	0.366	(0.058)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>0.803</b>	<b>0.929</b>	<b>0.126</b>
0.000	Gross Expenditure	1.026	1.152	0.126
0.000	Gross Income	(0.223)	(0.223)	0.000
<b>0.000</b>		<b>0.803</b>	<b>0.929</b>	<b>0.126</b>

45



Additional special Events across the City are forecasting to overspend by £143,000, including the Herd in the City Sponsorship (£23,000) and the Tour of Britain Cycling Event (£120,000). Additionally acting up arrangements have been put in place where an officer in the marketing team is assisting in covering a vacancy in the Foreshore team.

## Highways, Transport and Parking

**3.40%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

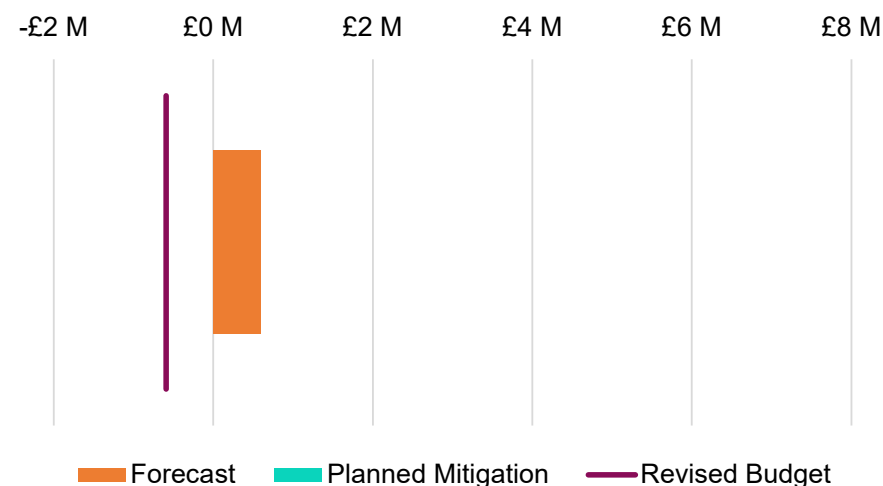
**£1.2M**

Forecast Adverse Variance

**200.17%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Car parks and all car parking matters	(8.789)	(8.053)	0.736
0.000	Concessionary Fares	2.840	2.540	(0.300)
0.000	Engineering (Bridges and Structures)	0.051	0.051	0.000
0.000	Highways (including maintenance)	4.233	4.894	0.661
0.000	Highways and Transport	(0.303)	(0.355)	(0.052)
0.000	Public Transport	0.139	0.282	0.143
0.000	Transport (including Transport Policy and Licensing)	1.238	1.233	(0.005)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>(0.591)</b>	<b>0.592</b>	<b>1.183</b>
<sup>46</sup> 0.000	Gross Expenditure	11.944	13.911	1.967
0.000	Gross Income	(12.535)	(13.319)	(0.784)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>(0.591)</b>	<b>0.592</b>	<b>1.183</b>



The parking enforcement contract is currently overspending significantly due to the volume of variable works undertaken by the contractor and changes made as part of the short term extension whilst a new contract is procured. The main spend pressures are due to an increase in the number of Civil Enforcement Officers and the national wage increases they have received in order to match the market expectations for these roles.

Car parking income to the end of July is in line with the assumed budget profile but expenditure pressures in relation to transaction fees, bank charges and security at University Square car park are continuing in 2023/24.

Concessionary fares payments are linked directly to actual usage on local buses. Due to the reduction in journeys post-pandemic our financial contribution has continued to reduce. This will continue to be monitored.

The utility inflationary increase in relation to street lighting is shown on the Highways (including maintenance) line, however the inflation contingency will be utilised to fund this known pressure which was estimated as part of the 2023/24 budget development. Other spend pressures in this area include the repair costs associated with damaged street lighting columns and a shortfall in the amount of eligible staff time which can be charged to delivering the approved capital programme.

The public transport service is forecast to overspend due to spend pressures on the bus shelter maintenance contract and the costs in relation to the travel centre. Works are currently underway to mitigate some of this during 2023/24.

## Housing and Planning

**19.78%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

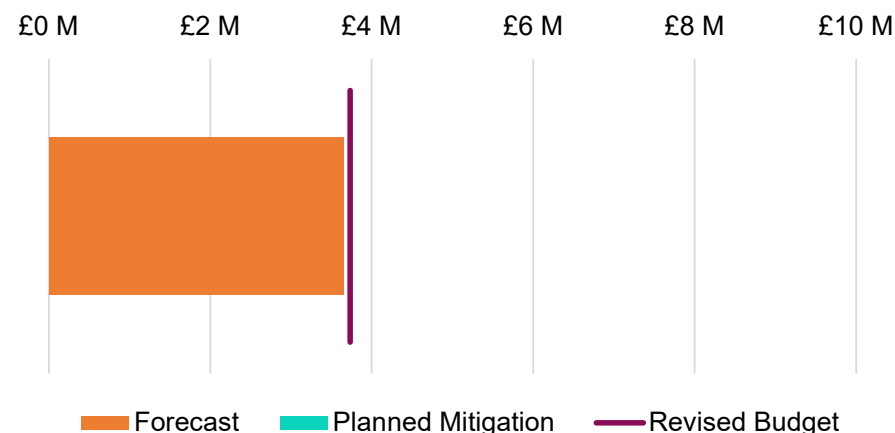
**(£0.08M)**

Forecast Favourable  
Variance

**-2.20%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping	0.365	0.335	(0.030)
0.000	Housing Benefit	1.643	1.484	(0.159)
0.000	Housing Management	0.082	0.082	0.000
0.000	Housing Strategy	0.360	0.381	0.021
0.000	Planning Policy and Planning Control, Building Control	0.297	0.365	0.068
0.000	Private sector housing standards and grants	0.585	0.573	(0.012)
0.000	Queensway Development	0.000	0.000	0.000
0.000	Sea and Foreshore Defences	0.401	0.431	0.030
<b>0.000</b>		<b>3.733</b>	<b>3.651</b>	<b>(0.082)</b>
0.000	Gross Expenditure	69.406	69.465	0.059
0.000	Gross Income	(65.673)	(65.814)	(0.141)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>3.733</b>	<b>3.651</b>	<b>(0.082)</b>



There are multiple planned vacancies in the Benefits Administration and Essential Living Fund teams, both sitting in the Housing Benefits service, which are being held by management where possible whilst continuing to maintain an acceptable level of service, despite increases in demand.

The Building Control service exceeded their income budget last year due to some significant works coming into the team in early 2022/23. However, since September 2022 income has been down year on year. As this is a commercial service there is a risk that if the Authority cannot deliver the service on reasonable commercial terms the work will go to competitors in the market. A review is being undertaken on options to maintain/enhance our market share.



# Regulatory Services

**3.39%**

of Total Gross Revenue  
Service Budget

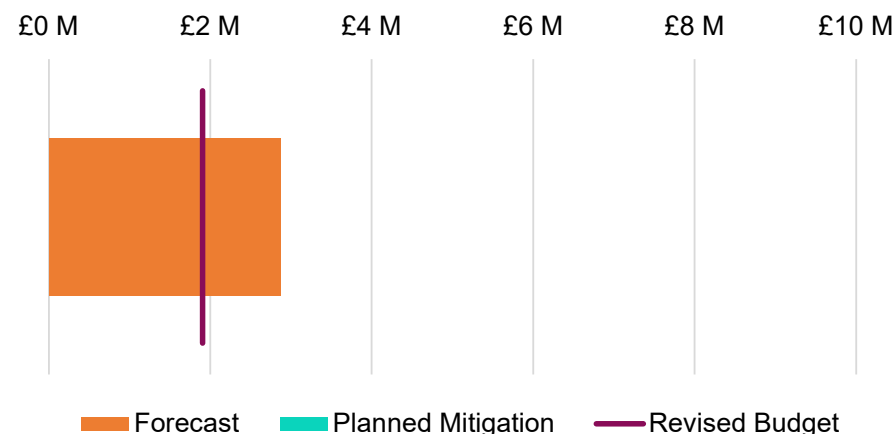
**£0.96M**

Forecast Adverse Variance

**50.42%**

Variance as % of Net Portfolio Service  
Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Asset Management	0.618	0.379	(0.239)
0.000	Cemeteries, Crematoria and Bereavement	(1.759)	(0.769)	0.990
0.000	Corporate Procurement	0.940	0.940	0.000
0.000	Financial Services (including Insurance etc.)	2.704	2.530	(0.174)
0.000	Property and Commercial	(1.625)	(1.243)	0.382
0.000	Registration Services	(0.145)	(0.114)	0.031
0.000	Regulatory services	1.173	1.144	(0.029)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>1.906</b>	<b>2.867</b>	<b>0.961</b>
0.000	Gross Expenditure	11.900	12.932	1.032
0.000	Gross Income	(9.994)	(10.065)	(0.071)
<b>0.000</b>		<b>1.906</b>	<b>2.867</b>	<b>0.961</b>



Asset Management have a reduced staffing complement due to acting up arrangements across the team operating without backfill. There is a knock-on impact of reduced levels of staff time being capitalised against the budget but the net impact is still a substantial underspend.

The refurbishment of the crematorium is underway and due for completion in March 2024 bringing with it greater efficiency, ensuring that the crematorium can function into the future and improving the environmental impact of the service. During the works and to minimise disruption services have been restricted to Tuesday - Thursday so that 4 days a week are available to deliver the scheme. Reducing the operating hours of the crematorium is resulting in a significant reduction in income over this 12 month period with current estimates forecasting a shortfall of £880k. This income reduction is expected to be temporary and when the crematorium is fully operational again it is expected that income levels will return.

There are five vacancies which are currently being held across Financial Services which is creating an underspend.

The Council is responsible for service charges for vacant lots at the Airport Business Park, based on current occupancy levels this will be a cost of £100,000 for the year, occupied lots are generating income above budgeted levels offsetting this cost by an expected £66,000.

Within Property and Commercial there is a net £140,000 pressure coming from lower levels of staff time being capitalised than budgeted for. This is consistent with the previous years performance and is exacerbated by staff vacancies and long-term sickness.

Whilst Delaware House is sold the site needs to be kept secure, this is forecast to cost around £80,000 for six months and is a one-off budget pressure.

A forecast energy pressure of £60,000 across multiple sites is being reported here however the inflation contingency will be utilised to fund this known pressure which was estimated as part of the 2023/24 budget setting.

## Housing Revenue Account

**£0.0M**

Forecast Neutral Position

**0.0%**

Variance as % of Gross Operating Expenditure

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.000	Gross Expenditure	28.449	28.449	0.000
0.000	Gross Income	(32.556)	(32.556)	0.000
<b>0.000</b>	<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(4.107)</b>	<b>(4.107)</b>	<b>0.000</b>
0.000	Revenue Contribution to Capital	7.384	7.384	0.000
0.000	Contribution to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	(3.277)	(3.277)	0.000
<b>0.000</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>

HRA Reserves 2023/24	Opening Balance	Forecast Movement	Closing Balance
Capital Investment Reserve	29.6	(3.3)	26.2
Major Repairs Reserve	9.3	0.1	9.4
Repairs Contract Pension Reserve	0.7	0.0	0.7
HRA Reserve	3.5	0.0	3.5
<b>HRA Reserves Total</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>(3.3)</b>	<b>39.8</b>

Trading conditions remain difficult in light of inflation pressures and the cost of living crisis. Significant work is being concentrated on the repairs and maintenance contract to ensure that works are undertaken in a timely and efficient manner.

As per a report to Cabinet in July 2023 the rates for utility costs are lower than anticipated and any costs which are funded through service charges will be recalculated to pass this benefit on to tenants from 4th September onwards.

Rental income collection remains on track but this will be reviewed closely and all support available to tenants will be offered where applicable.

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# Budget Monitoring & Reporting 2023/24

## Period 4 – July 2023 Capital Investment Programme Performance



# Capital Investment Programme Performance Report

## 1. Overall Budget Performance by Investment Area

The table below shows the revised capital budget for the 2023/24 financial year which includes all changes agreed at July 2023 Cabinet and the proposed capital budget at September 2023 Cabinet if all the requested changes in section 4 are approved:

Schemes	Revised Budget at July Cabinet	Proposed Budget at September Cabinet
	2023/24 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Total Schemes Delivered by General Fund	46,834	48,266
Total Schemes Delivered by General Fund Funded by the Levelling Up Fund	6,411	6,411
Total Schemes Delivered by Housing Revenue Account	18,196	11,971
Total Schemes Delivered by Subsidiary Companies and Joint Ventures	30,277	30,333
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>101,718</b>	<b>96,981</b>

Actual capital spend as at 31 July 2023 is £10.278 million representing approximately 10% of the revised budget. This is shown in section 5. (Outstanding creditors totalling £0.334 million have been removed from this figure).

The expenditure to date has been projected to year end and the outturn position is forecast to reflect the Project Manager's realistic expectation. This is broken down by type of investment area on the following pages.

**Total Schemes Delivered by General Fund**

Investment Area	Revised Budget 2023/24	Outturn to 30 June 2023	Current Variance to 30 June 2023	Expected outturn 2023/24	Latest Expected Variance to Revised Budget 2023/24	Amended Budget 2024/25 to 2027/28
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Housing	705	166	(539)	705	0	2,960
Social Care	263	28	(235)	291	28	0
Schools	5,681	178	(5,503)	5,681	0	3,474
Enterprise & Regeneration	5,616	653	(4,963)	5,460	(156)	10,250
Southend Pier	4,690	323	(4,367)	4,690	0	3,550
Culture & Tourism	531	243	(288)	846	315	0
Community Safety	314	150	(164)	314	0	0
Highways & Infrastructure	16,271	2,922	(13,349)	17,099	828	17,826
Works to Property	6,812	1,011	(5,801)	6,864	52	3,230
Energy Saving	562	16	(546)	627	65	0
ICT	4,368	1,223	(3,145)	4,368	0	4,241
S106/S38/CIL	1,021	24	(997)	1,349	328	1,104
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,834</b>	<b>6,937</b>	<b>(39,897)</b>	<b>48,294</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>46,635</b>

**Total Schemes Delivered by General Fund – Funded by the Levelling Up Fund**

Investment Area	Revised Budget 2023/24	Outturn to 30 June 2023	Current Variance 30 June 2023	Expected outturn 2023/24	Latest Expected Variance to Revised Budget 2023/24	Amended Budget 2024/25 to 2027/28
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Enterprise & Regeneration	6,411	201	(6,210)	6,411	0	17,289
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,411</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>(6,210)</b>	<b>6,411</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17,289</b>

### Total Schemes Delivered by Housing Revenue Account

Investment Area	Revised Budget 2023/24	Outturn to 30 June 2023	Current Variance to 30 June 2023	Expected outturn 2023/24	Latest Expected Variance to Revised Budget 2023/24	Amended Budget 2024/24 to 2027/28
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Housing New Build Programme	7,932	16	(7,916)	2,534	(5,398)	8,883
Council Housing Acquisitions Programme	9,420	1,002	(8,418)	8,593	(827)	3,891
Council Housing Refurbishment – Disabled Adaptations	844	147	(697)	844	0	959
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,196</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>(17,031)</b>	<b>11,971</b>	<b>(6,225)</b>	<b>13,733</b>

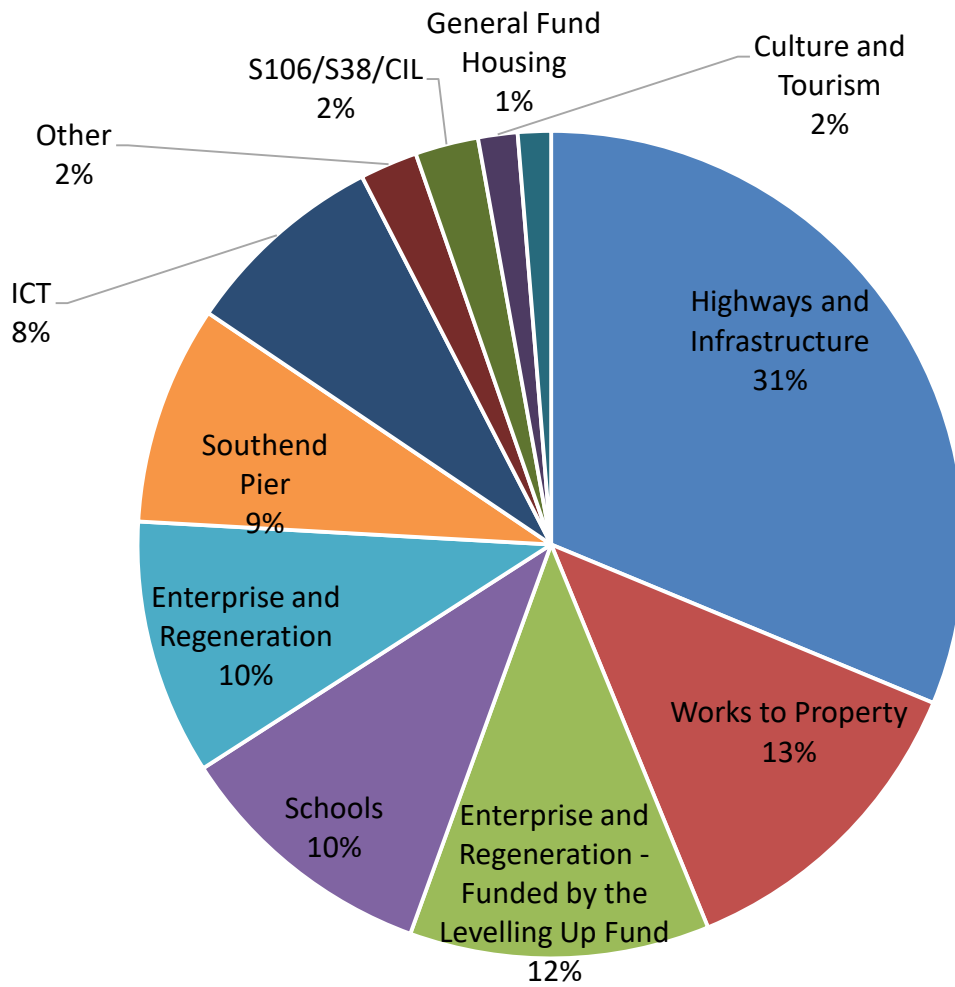
### Total Schemes Delivered by Subsidiary Companies and Joint Ventures

Investment Area	Revised Budget 2023/24	Outturn to 30 June 2023	Current Variance to 30 June 2023	Expected outturn 2023/24	Latest Expected Variance to Revised Budget 2023/24	Amended Budget 2024/25 to 2027/28
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Housing Refurbishment	8,578	1,367	(7,211)	8,578	0	19,094
Enterprise and Regeneration	21,699	608	(21,091)	21,755	56	9,675
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,277</b>	<b>1,975</b>	<b>(28,302)</b>	<b>30,333</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>28,769</b>

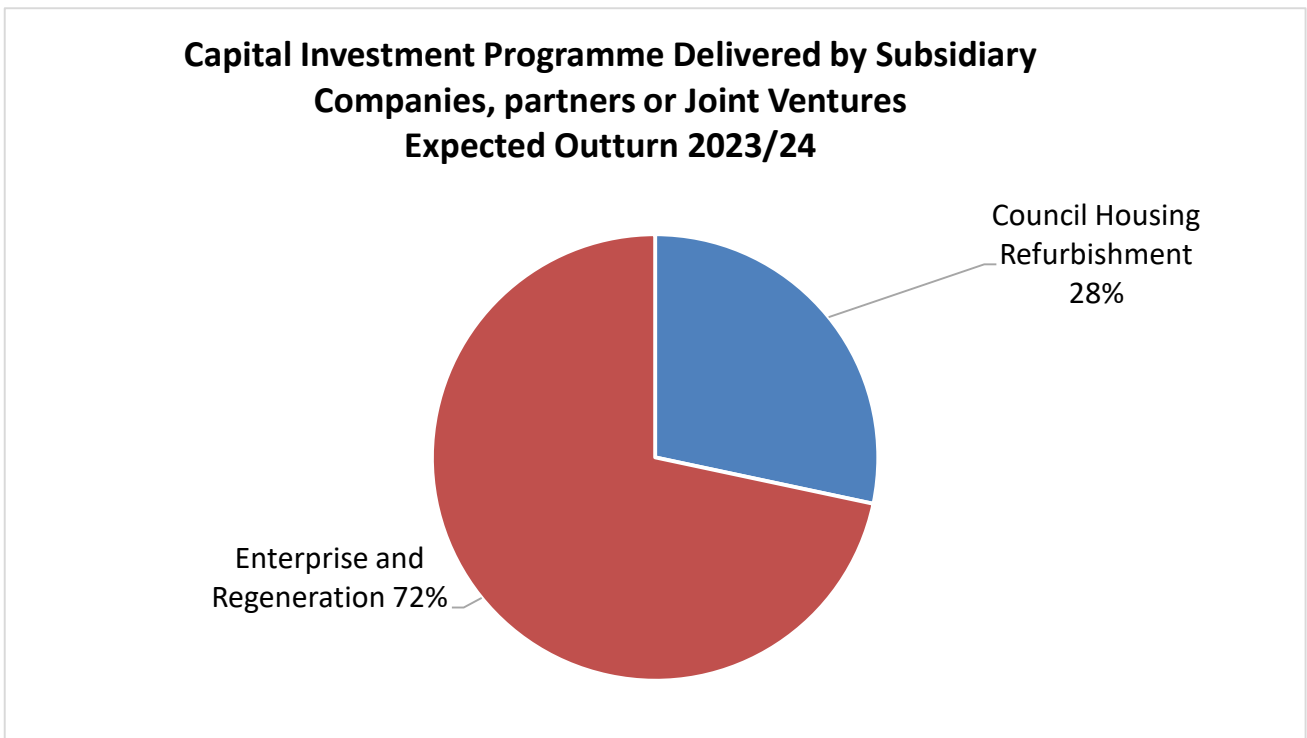
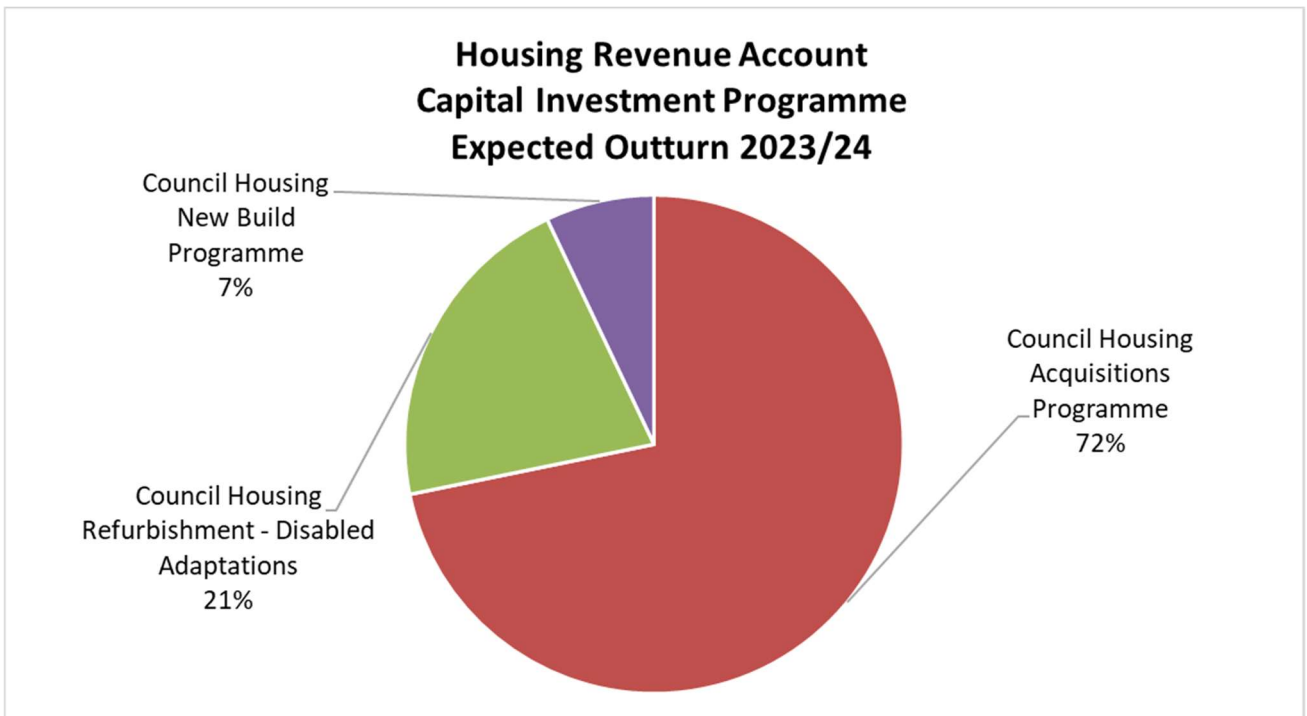
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>101,718</b>	<b>10,278</b>	<b>(91,440)</b>	<b>97,009</b>	<b>(4,709)</b>	<b>106,426</b>
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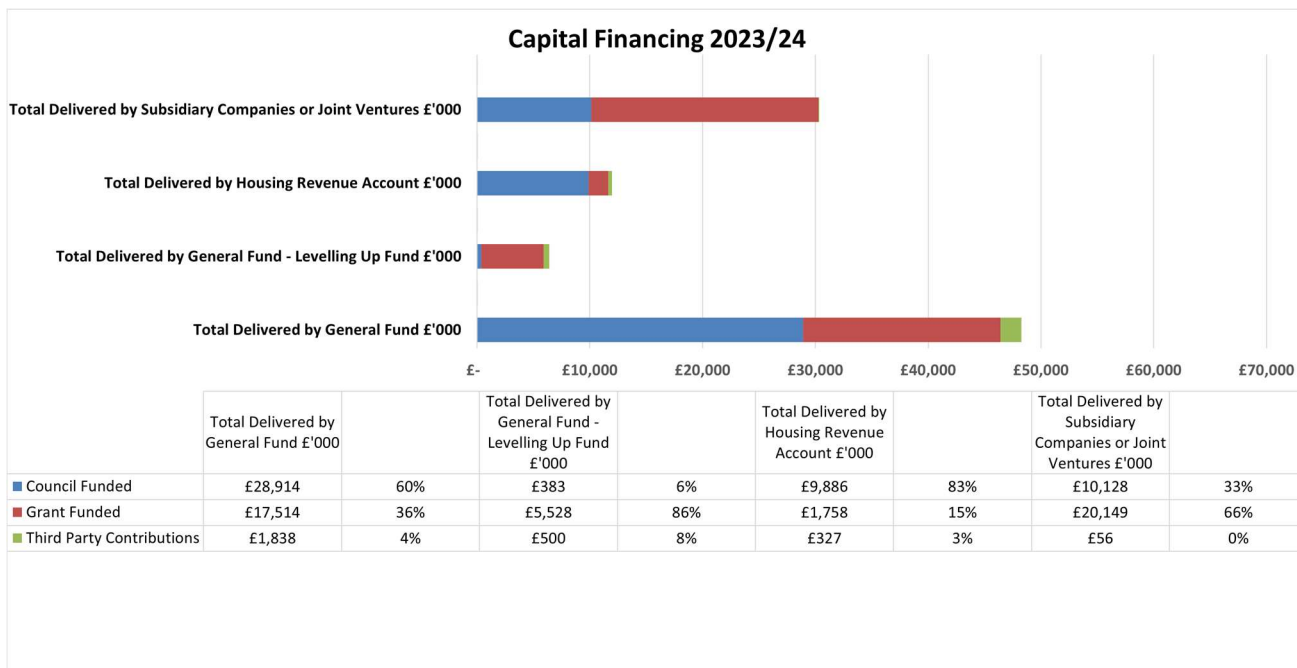
### General Fund Capital Investment Programme Expected Outturn 2023/24



Other	Expected Outturn 2023/24	
Energy Saving	£	627,000
Community Safety	£	314,000
Social Care	£	291,000
	<b>£</b>	<b>1,232,000</b>



The capital investment for 2023/24 is proposed to be funded as follows:



Third party contributions are non-grant funding from external sources such as S106 contributions.

Of the £47.670 million of external funding expected, £23.769 million had been received by 31 July 2023.

## 2. Progress of strategic schemes

Successful and timely delivery of the capital investment programme is a key part of achieving the Southend 2050 ambition and Corporate Plan and delivering its outcomes.

£74.867 million of this relates to strategic schemes and approximately 10% spend has been achieved to date for these strategic schemes.

Investment Area	Scheme	Revised Budget	Outturn	Expected	Latest Expected	Amended
		2023/24	to 31 July	outturn	Variance to	Budget
		2023/24	2023	2023/24	Revised Budget	2024/25 to
		£000	£000	£000	2023/24	2027/28
					£000	£000
<b>Strategic Schemes</b>						
Enterprise and Regeneration	Airport Business Park (including Local Growth Fund)	2,765	414	2,609	(156)	-
Enterprise and Regeneration	Better Queensway - Programme Management	754	153	754	-	-
Enterprise and Regeneration	Seaway Leisure	-	-	-	-	10,000
Enterprise and Regeneration	Victoria Centre	1,852	86	1,852	-	250
Social Care	Brook Meadows House	-	28	28	28	-
Schools	High Needs Provision	3,661	-	3,661	-	3,212
Southend Pier	Southend Pier schemes	4,690	323	4,690	-	3,550
ICT	ICT schemes	4,368	1,223	4,368	-	4,241
Highways and Infrastructure	Footways and Carriageways Schemes	5,548	1,563	5,373	(175)	12,773
Highways and Infrastructure	Parking Schemes	329	126	504	175	-
Highways and Infrastructure	Highways and Infrastructure - Local Growth Fund and Local Transport Plan Schemes	4,141	574	4,297	156	2,378
<b>Total General Fund Strategic Schemes</b>		<b>28,108</b>	<b>4,490</b>	<b>28,136</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>36,404</b>
Enterprise and Regeneration	Leigh Port Detailed Design	4,673	89	4,673	-	9,533
Enterprise and Regeneration	Cliffs Pavillion	500	109	500	-	6,956
Enterprise and Regeneration	Marine Parade	1,238	3	1,238	-	800
<b>Total General Fund - Funded by Levelling Up Fund Strategic Schemes</b>		<b>6,411</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>6,411</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17,289</b>
Council Housing New Build Programme	Council Housing New Build Programme	7,932	16	2,534	(5,398)	8,883
Council Housing Acquisitions	HRA Affordable Housing Acquisitions Programme	2,878	1,047	2,878	-	-
Council Housing Acquisitions	Acquisition of Tower Block Leaseholds - Queensway	1,085	-	1,085	-	900
<b>Total HRA Strategic Schemes</b>		<b>11,895</b>	<b>1,063</b>	<b>6,497</b>	<b>(5,398)</b>	<b>9,783</b>
Council Housing Refurbishment	HRA Decent Homes Programme	8,578	1,367	8,578	-	19,094
Enterprise and Regeneration	Better Queensway - Loan to Joint Venture	1,550	-	1,550	-	9,675
Enterprise and Regeneration	Housing Infrastructure Funding	14,500	-	14,500	-	-
Enterprise and Regeneration	Better Queensway - SELEP	3,825	-	3,825	-	-
<b>Total Delivered by Subsidiary Companies and Joint Ventures Strategic Schemes</b>		<b>28,453</b>	<b>1,367</b>	<b>28,453</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28,769</b>
<b>Total Strategic Schemes</b>		<b>74,867</b>	<b>7,121</b>	<b>69,497</b>	<b>(5,370)</b>	<b>92,245</b>

### Strategic schemes - General Fund

#### Enterprise and Regeneration

The Launchpad at the Airport Business Park has now opened. There is still some outstanding expenditure to be incurred, but the project is expected to complete within budget. The remaining budget is not expected to be utilised in full, and this report therefore includes a request to transfer £156k to the Local Growth Fund – Southend town centre interventions project.

The refurbishment works to the Victoria Centre are progressing, and a number of the projects within this are now complete. Some of the remaining significant works within the project are

still dependent on lease agreements being reached, and it is likely that work will continue throughout 2023/24 and into 2024/25.

Better Queensway Programme Management: the Council remains committed to the Better Queensway project. There have however been delays in this project whilst Sanctuary carried out their due diligence of the scheme. For more information see the Subsidiary Companies and Joint Ventures section below.

## **Social Care**

As reported in previous Cabinet reports, construction of the new care home Brook Meadows House was completed in 2021/22 with residents having moved into the building in early 2022 and the Priory Care Home has been demolished. Works incurred during 2022/23 and 2023/24 do not have a budget allocation with £28k of expenditure incurred in 2023/24 over and above the overspend of £4.9M already incurred in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The overspend has been incurred due to a number of issues including the performance of the design team. The Council is currently taking forward actions with a view to recovering significant costs incurred where these have been caused by the performance of third parties. The timing of any cost recovery is uncertain.

## **Schools**

The High Needs Provision budget is financed by grant monies from the Department for Education to enhance the facilities and number of places available for children with special educational needs and disabilities or requiring alternative provision. This project is expected to commence later in 2023/24 and conclude in 2024/25.

## **Southend Pier**

Whilst work on the pier schemes are in progress, different elements of the project are at different stages of completion. Planned work in the summer months is limited with the majority of the expenditure anticipated to be incurred over the winter. It is anticipated that the total spend across all schemes in 2023/24 will be in line with the budget.

As a result of an exercise to re-prioritise the works to be performed on Southend Pier, works on the Prince George extension are now planned to be prioritised over works on the timber outer pier head. This report therefore includes a request to transfer £700k of the 2023/24 budget and £2.3M of the 2024/25 budget from the timber outer pier head project to the Prince George extension project.

## **ICT**

Whilst work on these ICT schemes is in progress, different projects are at different stages of completion. It is anticipated that the total spend across all schemes in 2023/24 will be in line with the budget.

The ICT operational requirements project has overspent against the budget by £97k, due to an increase in costs incurred with Microsoft compared to the expected position. This project is complete for the 2023/24 year and no further expenditure is expected. The software licensing project was underspent in 2022/23 and is anticipated to be underspent again in

2023/24. This report therefore includes a request to transfer £97k of budget from the software licensing project to the ICT operational requirements project.

In order to continue the normal day-to-day ICT operations of the Council, a Microsoft Enterprise agreement license is required. The current license agreement expires at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. The Council is aiming to secure a three-year license covering the financial years 2024/25 to 2026/27, which will cost £3.48M. This report therefore includes a request to add budgets of £1.16M to each of the financial years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

## **Highways and Infrastructure**

The Footways and Carriageway schemes are progressing well with plans to deliver the majority of the allocated budget by the end of the financial year. Planned resurfacing work at Shoebury Common Road is unlikely to be performed until 2024/25. This report therefore includes a request to reallocate £175k of the carriageways schemes budget to fund a project to create new parking bays, which will help to balance the Council's parking income budget for 2023/24 following the removal of the 6pm to 9pm parking charges in Zone 1A.

The Junction Protection works are progressing with work being performed in three wards. The budget is expected to be delivered by the end of the financial year.

Over half the Zebra Crossing Surfacing Replacement budget for 2023/24 has already been delivered, and orders have been placed for the majority of the remaining budgets. Plans are in place to deliver this budget by the end of the financial year.

Car park improvement works are progressing and are expected to be delivered in line with the budget.

Works on the A127 growth corridor are essentially complete. The 2023/24 expenditure budget includes £229k in respect of this project. This budget is expected to be spent with commitments in place accounting for some of this amount.

Works on the Local Transport Plan Maintenance, Better Networks, Better Operation of Traffic Control Systems, Better Sustainable Transport and Street Lighting projects are ongoing. It is anticipated that the total spend across all schemes in 2023/24 will be in line with the budget.

## **Strategic schemes - General Fund - Funded by the Levelling Up Fund**

### **Enterprise & Regeneration**

A carry forward request into 2024/25 for £9,533k was approved at July Cabinet in respect of Leigh Port. The project remains on-programme to spend the remaining 2023/24 budget in the financial year.

As previously reported to Cabinet, progress against the Marine parade project has been limited in recent months. The project is expected to progress later in the 2023/24 financial year. New external funding of £800k has been successfully secured for this project. This report therefore includes a request to add a budget of £800k to the 2024/25 year.

As reported in previous Cabinet reports, the Cliffs Pavilion project was placed on hold to enable the commercial terms to be agreed between the Council and the current operator. The majority of this project is expected to be delivered in 2024/25, and a request was previously made at July Cabinet to carry forward most of the budget to that year.

## **Strategic schemes - Housing Revenue Account**

### **Construction of New Housing on HRA Land**

The procurement for the main contractor for Phase 3 has previously been unsuccessful. A tender exception has now been obtained, and the Council is hopeful of appointing a contractor imminently. There will be delays to the project as a result, and this report therefore includes a request to carry forward £1M from 2023/24 to 2024/25 and a further £1.5M from 2023/24 to 2025/26.

Planning permission for Phase 4 was obtained at Development Control Committee in October 2022. An issue with access to the site has subsequently arisen regarding a right of way, which is yet to be resolved. This is likely to result in delays to the project, and it is unlikely any significant work will be performed in 2023/24. This report therefore includes a request to carry forward £2.2M from 2023/24 into 2024/25.

Phase 5 is now complete. The final costs on the project were £2k higher than budgeted. This report therefore includes a request to transfer £2k from the Housing and Development Pipeline Feasibility HRA budget to cover this overspend.

There have been delays to the West Shoebury scheme as a result of the Council parting company with the main contractor. The Council is planning to use in-house architects to progress the scheme, but there is unlikely to be any significant work performed in 2023/24. This report therefore includes a request to carry forward £700k from 2023/24 into 2024/25.

### **Affordable Housing Acquisitions Programme**

There have been no purchases of properties in respect of this fund so far in 2023/24. The Council expects to acquire a number of properties before year-end and to spend the allocated budget in full in 2023/24.

## **Acquisition of Tower Block Leaseholds – Queensway**

The existing budget is considered to be sufficient to cover the expected expenditure for the remainder of the current financial year.

## **Strategic schemes - Subsidiary Companies and Joint Ventures**

### **HRA Decent Homes Programme**

The main programme works are contractually committed and progressing. The overall budget is expected to be spent over the course of 2023/24.

### **Better Queensway**

Following the merger between Swan Housing Association and Sanctuary Housing Association earlier this year, Sanctuary has now confirmed its intention to withdraw involvement from the Better Queensway Project. Sanctuary intend to prioritise investment and commitment to existing homes and communities and focus on the delivery of schemes where construction has already started. An appropriate settlement agreement is under development that will cover the terms of Sanctuary's withdrawal.

The Council remains fully committed to the Better Queensway regeneration scheme for the benefit of the residents of the estate and will now explore alternative options to progress the scheme. Whilst this is all being worked through, all budgets relating to Better Queensway remain unchanged in the capital investment programme. As more information becomes available, amendments to the programme will be put forward as part of future Cabinet reports.



### 3. Progress of other schemes

#### General Fund

##### Highways and Infrastructure

Funding for the resilience innovation programme of £672k for the 2023/24 year has been received in advance of spending from the Environment Agency. This report therefore includes a request to add a budget of £672k.

The coastal defences projects are overall expected to be delivered within budget. As a result of a combination of overspends incurred against 2022/23 projects and re-prioritisation of schemes, this reports includes requests to transfer £297k from the East Beach sea wall refurbishment project to the sea wall access refurbishment project, and also to transfer £23k to the coastal defence refurbishment programme, of which £11k is to be transferred from the East Beach sea wall refurbishment project and £12k is to be transferred from the sea wall access refurbishment project.

##### Works to Property

Following the completion of Brook Meadows House, the building at Avro/Viking House has been vacated by Southend Care Limited and is no longer in use. Due to health and safety concerns with the building, the Council wishes to demolish it at an estimated cost of £252k. This report therefore includes a request to add a budget of £52k to the 2023/24 year and £200k to the 2024/25 year for this demolition.

##### Energy Saving

Grant funding for £65k has been received in respect of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding. This report therefore includes a request to add a budget of £65k.

##### Culture and Tourism

Grant funding of £275k has been received in respect of works to various tennis courts across the borough. The Council is required to include match funding of £40k. This report therefore includes a request to add a budget of £315k for this project.

##### **S106/S38/CIL**

This report includes a request to add budgets for four projects which will be funded by the community infrastructure levy as follows:

- Blenheim Park – Mendip wildlife garden: £4k
- St Laurence – park benches: £2k
- Thorpe – Southchurch Park safety rail: £10k
- Main Fund – enhancing cycle infrastructure: £1M (£333k in 2023/24, £667k in 2024/25)

The Leas bus service contribution project has now commenced and is expected to take place over a two-year period. This report therefore includes a request to carry forward £21k into 2024/25.

**Housing Revenue Account**

There was an underspend of £25k on the Next Steps Accommodation Programme in 2022/23. The July Cabinet report included a request to carry forward this unspent budget to 2023/24. On review, the Council does not expect to spend this £25k in 2023/24, and this report therefore includes a request to carry forward £25k to 2024/25.

The Passive House Pilot project has experienced delays with obtaining planning permission. It is considered unlikely that any significant work will be performed on this project in 2023/24. This report therefore includes a request to carry forward £800k to 2024/25.

**Subsidiary Companies and Joint Ventures**

Grant funding of £56k has been received from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. All funds will be passed on to third parties following completion of a bidding process. This report includes a request to add a budget of £56k.

#### 4. Requested Changes to the Capital Investment Programme

	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budget £000	2027/28 and future years Budget £000	Total Budget (all years) £000
<b>Approved Capital Investment Programme - July 2023 Cabinet</b>	<b>71,441</b>	<b>54,377</b>	<b>5,927</b>	<b>5,400</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>137,705</b>
Carry Forwards	(6,246)	4,746	1,500	0	0	0
Accelerated Deliveries	0	0	0	0	0	0
Additions to the Programme	92	1,360	1,160	1,160	0	3,772
Schemes Removed from Programme	0	0	0	0	0	0
Virements	0	0	0	0	0	0
New External Funding	1,361	1,467	0	0	0	2,828
<b>Proposed Investment Programme - following amendm</b>	<b>66,648</b>	<b>61,950</b>	<b>8,587</b>	<b>6,560</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>144,305</b>

#### Summary - programme to be delivered by Subsidiary Companies, Partners and Joint Ventures:

	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budget £000	2027/28 and future years Budget £000	Total Budget (all years) £000
<b>Approved Capital Investment Programme - July 2023 Cabinet</b>	<b>30,277</b>	<b>9,524</b>	<b>9,579</b>	<b>9,666</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>59,046</b>
Carry Forwards	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accelerated Deliveries	0	0	0	0	0	0
New External Funding	56	0	0	0	0	56
<b>Proposed Investment Programme - following amendmen</b>	<b>30,333</b>	<b>9,524</b>	<b>9,579</b>	<b>9,666</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>59,102</b>

#### Carry Forwards to Future Years - programme to be delivered by the Council

Scheme	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budget £000	2027/28 and future years Budget £000	Total Budget (all years) £000
Housing Construction Scheme - Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)	(700)	700				0
Housing Construction Scheme - Phase 3	(2,500)	1,000	1,500			0
Housing Construction Scheme - Phase 4	(2,200)	2,200				0
Next Steps Accommodation Programme	(25)	25				0
Passive House Pilot	(800)	800				0
S106 22-23 The Leas 0700820FULM - bus service contribution	(21)	21				0
<b>Total Carry Forwards - programme to be delivered by the Council</b>	<b>(6,246)</b>	<b>4,746</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### Additions to the Programme - programme to be delivered by the Council

Scheme	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budget £000	2027/28 and future years Budget £000	Total Budget (all years) £000
Chalkwell Park and Priory Park Tennis Courts	40					40
Avro/Viking House Demolition	52	200				252
Software Licensing		1,160	1,160	1,160		3,480
<b>Total Additions to the Programme - programme to be delivered by the Council</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>1,360</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,772</b>

Scheme	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budget £000	2027/28 and future years Budget £000	Total Budget (all years) £000
Airport Business Park (including Local Growth Fund)	(156)					(156)
Local Growth Fund - Southend Town Centre Interventions	156					156
Carriageways Improvements	(175)					(175)
Parking Bays	175					175
Housing and Development Pipeline Feasibility - HRA	(2)					(2)
Housing Construction Scheme - Phase 5/6 feasibility (S106)	2					2
Software Licensing	(97)					(97)
ICT - Operational Requirements	97					97
East Beach Sea Wall Refurbishment	(297)					(297)
Sea Wall Access Refurbishment	297					297
East Beach Sea Wall Refurbishment	(11)					(11)
Sea Wall Access Refurbishment	(12)					(12)
Coastal Defence Refurbishment Programme	23					23
Southend Pier - Timber Outer Pier Head	(700)	(2,300)				(3,000)
Southend Pier - Prince George Extension (Phase Two)	700	2,300				3,000
<b>Total Virements between schemes - programme to be delivered by the Council</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### New External Funding - programme to be delivered by the Council

Scheme	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budget £000	2027/28 and future years Budget £000	Total Budget (all years) £000
Chalkwell Park and Priory Park Tennis Courts	275					275
CIL Ward NA – Blenheim Park – Mendip Wildlife Garden	4					4
CIL Ward NA – St Laurence – St Laurence Park benches	2					2
CIL Ward NA – Thorpe – Southchurch Park Safety Rail	10					10
CIL Main Fund Allocation - Enhancing Cycle Infrastructure	333	667				1,000
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding	65					65
Resilience Innovation Programme	672					672
Marine Parade		800				800
<b>Total New External Funding - programme to be delivered by the Council</b>	<b>1,361</b>	<b>1,467</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,828</b>

#### New External Funding - programme to be delivered by subsidiary companies and joint ventures

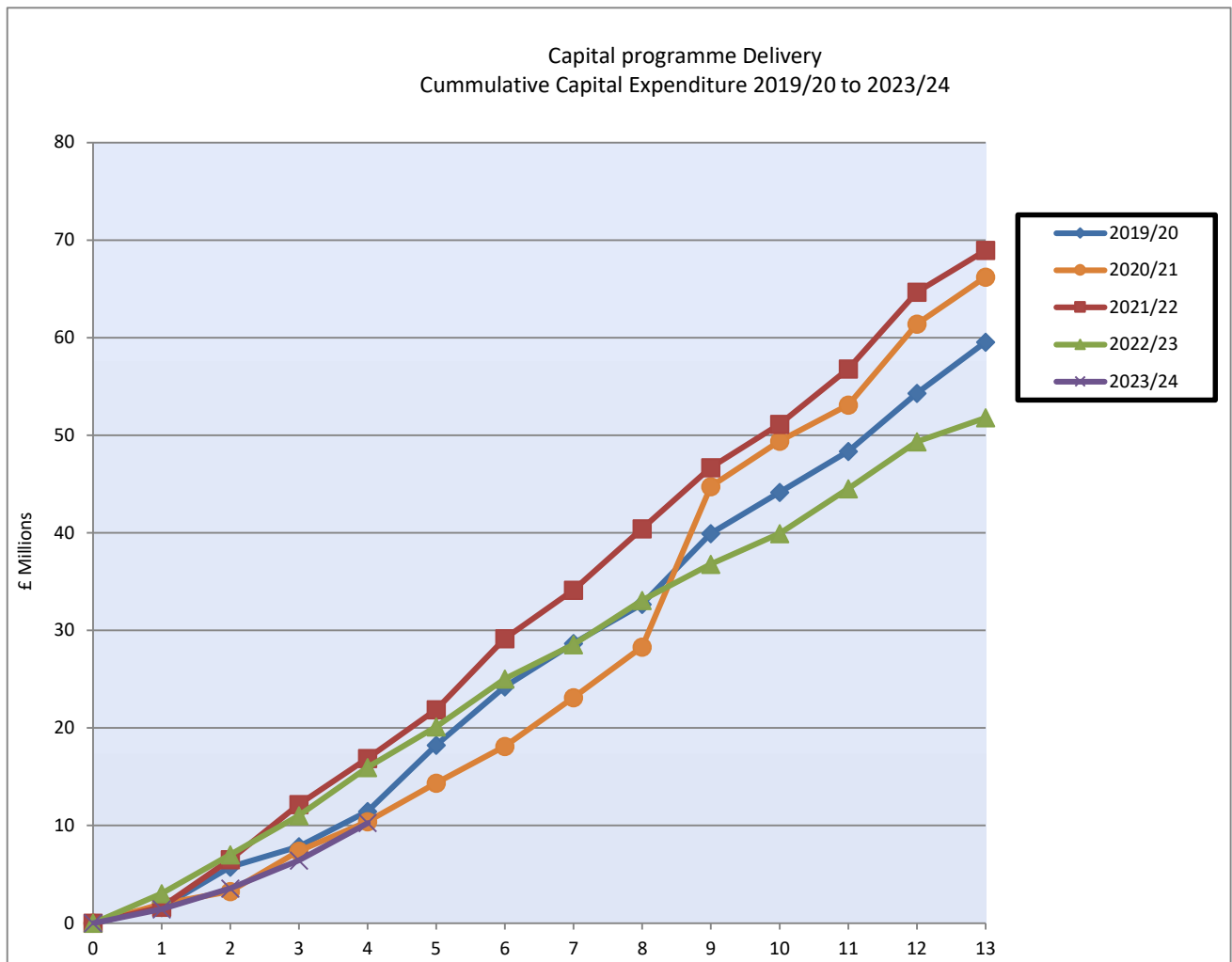
Scheme	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Budget £000	2026/27 Budget £000	2027/28 and future years Budget £000	Total Budget (all years) £000
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	56					56
<b>Total New External Funding - programme to be delivered by the Council</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56</b>

## 5. Summary of Capital Expenditure at 31 July

	Original Budget 2023/24	Revisions	Revised Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Forecast outturn 2023/24	Forecast Variance to Year End 2023/24	% Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
General Fund Housing	1,135	(430)	705	166	705	-	24%
Social Care	263	-	263	28	291	28	11%
Schools	4,053	1,628	5,681	178	5,681	-	3%
Enterprise and Regeneration	2,195	3,421	5,616	653	5,460	(156)	12%
Southend Pier	5,053	(363)	4,690	323	4,690	-	7%
Culture and Tourism	152	379	531	243	846	315	46%
Community Safety	29	285	314	150	314	-	48%
Highways and Infrastructure	13,878	2,393	16,271	2,922	17,099	828	18%
Works to Property	6,739	73	6,812	1,011	6,864	52	15%
Energy Saving	256	306	562	16	627	65	3%
ICT	3,109	1,259	4,368	1,223	4,368	-	28%
S106/S38/CIL	35	986	1,021	24	1,349	328	2%
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMME TO BE DELIVERED BY THE GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>36,897</b>	<b>9,937</b>	<b>46,834</b>	<b>6,937</b>	<b>48,294</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>15%</b>
Enterprise and Regeneration	22,405	(15,994)	6,411	201	6,411	-	3%
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMME TO BE DELIVERED BY THE GENERAL FUND - FUNDED BY THE LEVELLING UP FUND</b>	<b>22,405</b>	<b>(15,994)</b>	<b>6,411</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>6,411</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3%</b>
Council Housing New Build Programme	7,875	57	7,932	16	2,534	(5,398)	0%
Council Housing Acquisitions Programme	2,846	6,574	9,420	1,002	8,593	(827)	11%
Council Housing Refurbishment - Disabled Adaptations	770	74	844	147	844	-	17%
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMME TO BE DELIVERED BY THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</b>	<b>11,491</b>	<b>6,705</b>	<b>18,196</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>11,971</b>	<b>(6,225)</b>	<b>6%</b>
Council Housing Refurbishment	7,593	985	8,578	1,367	8,578	-	16%
Enterprise and Regeneration	17,050	4,649	21,699	608	21,755	56	3%
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMME TO BE DELIVERED BY SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES OR JOINT VENTURES</b>	<b>24,643</b>	<b>5,634</b>	<b>30,277</b>	<b>1,975</b>	<b>30,333</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>7%</b>
	<b>95,436</b>	<b>6,282</b>	<b>101,718</b>	<b>10,278</b>	<b>97,009</b>	<b>(4,709)</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Council Approved Original Budget - February 2023</b>	<b>95,436</b>						
<b>Programme to be delivered by the General Fund</b>							
General Fund Housing	(430)						
Social Care	-						
Schools	1,628						
Enterprise and Regeneration	3,421						
Southend Pier	(363)						
Culture and Tourism	379						
Community Safety	285						
Highways and Infrastructure	2,393						
Works to Property	73						
Energy Saving	306						
ICT	1,259						
S106/S38/CIL	986						
<b>Programme to be delivered by the General Fund - Funded by the Levelling Up Fund</b>							
Enterprise and Regeneration	(15,994)						
<b>Programme to be delivered by Housing Revenue Account</b>							
Council Housing New Build Programme	57						
Council Housing Acquisitions Programme	6,574						
Council Housing Refurbishment - Disabled Adaptations	74						
<b>Programme to be delivered by Subsidiary companies or Joint Ventures</b>							
Council Housing Refurbishment	985						
Enterprise and Regeneration	4,649						
<b>Council Approved Revised Budget - July 2023</b>	<b>101,718</b>						

Actual compared to Revised Budget spent is £10.278M or 10%

## 6. Capital Programme Delivery



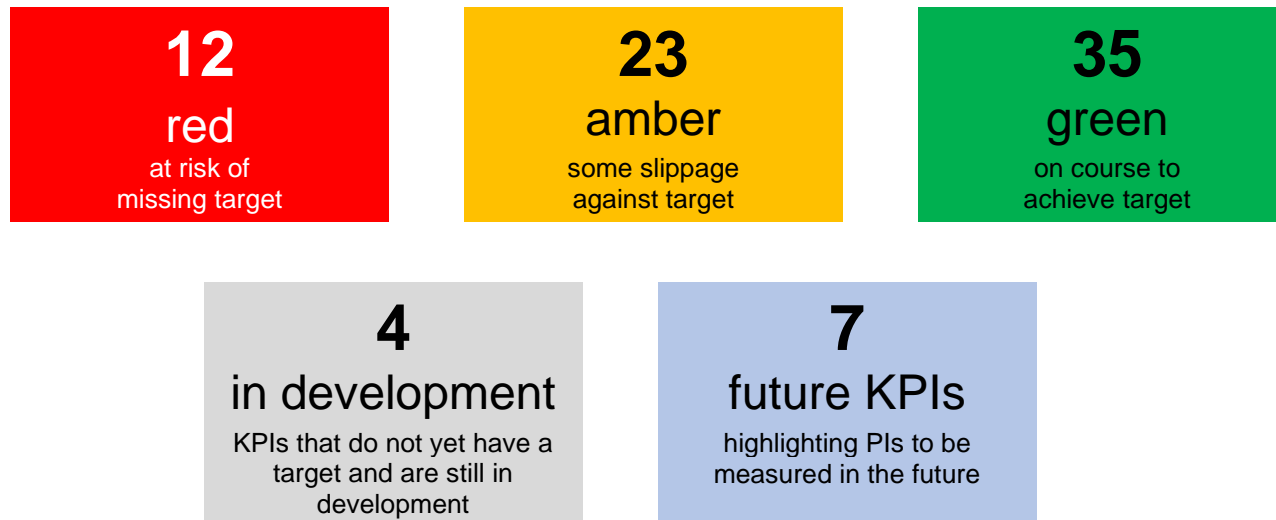
Year	Outturn £m	Outturn Against Budget %
2019/20	59.5	83.8
2020/21	66.2	81.0
2021/22	69.0	88.0
2022/23	52.0	83.0

# Corporate Plan performance report – Period 4 2023

The Corporate Plan Performance Report includes performance indicators relating to the council's Corporate Plan (2022 to 2026). This report shows our corporate performance for Period 4 (April - July) of 2023 (there are some exceptions where data is currently unavailable). Where applicable, data has been RAG rated against targets and our current position compared to the previous period (December – March) and the previous year. The report is split by the four Corporate Plan priorities, which are: a city that is strong and prosperous; a city with a good quality of life; a city rising to the climate change challenge; and a city delivering genuinely affordable housing.

Relevant corporate risks are noted underneath each applicable Key Performance Indicator (KPI) title. A risk register key can be found at page 34.

The total number of KPIs included is 81 This includes 19 output measures and 62 indicators. The summary of RAG status is as follows:



# A city that is strong and prosperous

## Highlight report:

22 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed and aligned to the following objectives:

Support economic regeneration and business development	Use our spending power	Bid for funding opportunities and attract inward investment
Sustain and grow digital investment and inclusion	Deliver our city centre strategy and investment plan	Enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer
Support community recovery	Improve community safety	

12 KPIs are on target within this priority area.

The following 4 KPIs are currently not meeting target:

- [Rate of suppliers paying their staff at least Living Wage \[Quarterly snapshot\]](#)

This KPI is aligned to [risk 3](#) (Inflation and cost of living pressures) and [risk 21](#) (Economic recovery and income inequalities) which may impact on the council's supply chain with potential labour shortages; a reduction in economic activity.

- [Take up of the NHS Health Check programme \[Cumulative YTD\]](#)
- [Immunisation- MMR two doses at 5 years old \[Cumulative YTD\]](#)

These KPIs are aligned to [risk 11](#) (Health inequalities) which may impact on widening health inequalities in the city.

- [High Street occupancy \[Quarterly snapshot\]](#)

This KPI is aligned to [risks 19](#) (Regeneration and major projects) and [21](#) (Economic recovery and income inequalities) which may impact on the City's ability to meet the needs of residents or provide a suitable destination for visitors; a reduction in economic activity.

The following 3 KPIs are amber RAG rated:

- Regeneration and major projects

This KPI is aligned to [risk 19](#) (Regeneration and major projects) which may impact on the City's ability to meet the needs of residents or provide a suitable destination for visitors.

- Delivery of Levelling Up Fund benefits and UK Shared Prosperity Fund interventions, outputs and outcomes



This KPI is aligned to risks 19 (Regeneration and major projects) and 20 (Economic recovery and income inequalities) which may impact on the City's ability to meet the needs of residents or provide a suitable destination for visitors; a reduction in economic activity.

- Immunisation- MMR one dose at 2 years old [Cumulative YTD]

This KPI is aligned to risk 11 (Health inequalities) which may impact on widening health inequalities in the city.

The following **3** KPIs are in development:

- Number of attendances at council run or affiliated arts and cultural events [Cumulative YTD]
- Participation and attendance at Council-owned/affiliated sports and leisure facilities and events [Cumulative YTD]
- Increase the number of residents who have access to superfast broadband [Annual snapshot]

# A city that is strong and prosperous

Action (output measure)	Progress	Status	Due Date
<p>Regeneration and major projects  <i>Corporate Plan objective: support economic regeneration and business development</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">19</a></i></p>	47%	Some slippage against target	31 Mar 2024
<p>Work ongoing with Victoria Centre to let retail area on the ground floor and diversify uses on secondary areas on basement and first floor levels. New lettings include Boom Battle Bar on first floor.</p> <p>Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm – discussions continue with the developer to identify ways in which development can be funded which secure the housing and regeneration outcomes alongside Southend United Football Club’s new stadium aspirations.</p> <p>Airport Business Park Southend: work is progressing well on CAMA and Ipeco 2 construction.</p> <p>Develop the Launchpad innovation hub at Airport Business Park Southend            100% - Complete</p> <p>Launch Pad occupancy 14% for the three-month period up to June 2023 (occupancy results shared at first operational meeting on 8 August). Occupancy results for July to September to be shared at next operational meeting on 15 November. Hoping to be at or approaching 50% occupancy for July to September, which would be ahead of target.</p> <p>First ‘working together’ meeting scheduled for August. The next meeting will be in October and then monthly to work on business workshops. The Council’s Economic Development team to be based at the Launchpad once a month to build working relationships.</p> <p>Better Queensway – work is underway to resolve all issues relating to the Sanctuary Housing decision to withdraw from the development.</p> <p>Slippage primarily resulting from wider economic factors and a very challenging development environment.</p>			

Action (output measure)	Progress	Status	Due Date
<p>The council will work closely with London Southend Airport under its new leadership to optimise inward investment and job creation opportunities and to explore viable environmental mitigations and opportunities</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: support economic regeneration and business development</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">19</a></i></p>	20%	On course to achieve target	31 Mar 2023
<p>Implement new approach to evaluating responses to social value</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: use our spending power</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">2</a> &amp; <a href="#">3</a></i></p>	100%	Completed	31 Mar 2023
<p>75</p> <p>Delivery of Levelling Up Fund benefits and UK Shared Prosperity Fund interventions, outputs and outcomes</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: bid for funding opportunities and attract inward investment</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">19</a> &amp; <a href="#">21</a></i></p>	58%	Some slippage against target	31 Mar 2025

Action (output measure)	Progress	Status	Due Date
Develop and implement a tackling poverty strategy <i>Corporate Plan objective: support community recovery</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">3</a> &amp; <a href="#">19</a></i>	100%	Completed	31 Mar 2023
Delivery of connectivity strategy <i>Corporate Plan objective: support community recovery</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">14</a></i>	50%	On course to achieve target	31 Mar 2024
Southend Fibre Broadband connections installed <i>Corporate Plan objective: sustain and grow digital investment and inclusion</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">7</a> &amp; <a href="#">19</a></i>	100%	Completed	31 Sep 2023
Retain our Purple Flag status <i>Corporate Plan objective: improve community safety</i>	100%	Completed	31 Mar 2023
Domestic Abuse Strategy <i>Corporate Plan objective: improve community safety</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a> &amp; <a href="#">14</a></i>	90%	On course to achieve target	30 September 2023

Action (output measure)	Progress	Status	Due Date
	The Domestic Abuse Strategy has been drafted and is due to go to Cabinet for approval on 18 September 2023. It has been to Executive Briefing and is now at pre-scrutiny stage.		

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
Rate of suppliers paying their staff at least Living Wage [Quarterly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: use our spending power</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">3</a> &amp; <a href="#">21</a></i>	26	179	Maximise	Q1 22/23	19	New KPI
	The contract register currently indicates that 179 of 410 corporate contracts are in-scope. A large proportion of suppliers have not provided their position on paying the real living wage. Of those in scope, 26 (14.5%) have confirmed paying real living wage.					
77  Number of visitors to Southend Pier [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">20</a></i>	181,771	173,500	Maximise	As at July 23	-	↓ 182,312
	<p>This indicator is above target, despite having limited good weather at the beginning of the period and the sixth wettest July on record. April was the first month below target since Mar 22, however there was extremely hot weather in June and the pier had the busiest June on record with 52,034 visitors. Figures show a 0.3% decrease on last year's figure.</p> <p>Notable events this period included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Easter egg hunt held from Good Friday to Easter Sunday, selling 610 trail maps within the event dates</li> <li>• The Great Pier Walk, attracting 555 participants for the nineteenth year of this event on Sunday 14th May</li> <li>• The Spanish tall ship 'El Galeon' visiting, attracting 50,890 visitors to the Pier during the ship's twelve-day visit</li> <li>• The Whitsun school holidays</li> <li>• Herd in the City</li> <li>• Boat trips provided by 'Jetstream Tours'</li> </ul>					

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
Visit Southend website visitors – total number of people that visited our website [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">20</a></i>	138,102	340,000	Maximise	As at July 23	-	↑ 101,905
	Cumulative visits have increased by 35.5% compared with this time last year with average in-month visits 34,525.50 compared to 25,476.25 in the previous year.					
Visit Southend social media reach – total number of people that saw our social media posts [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer</i>	2,415,013	1,304,500	Maximise	As at July 23	-	↑ 2,322,904
	Social media reach has increased by 4.0% compared with this time last year with average in-month reach was 603,753.25 compared to 580,726 in the previous year.					
78  Take up of the NHS Health Check programme [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: support community recovery</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">11</a></i>	1,170	1,452	Maximise	As at -Jul 23	-	↑ 542 (Jul 22)
	<p>The NHS Health Check is a health check-up for adults in England aged 40 to 74. It's designed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia.</p> <p>As of July 23, 18 practices were delivering Health Checks. To date, there have been 1,170 health checks and 46% of checks have been delivered to residents in IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation) 1-4.</p> <p>Benchmarking data shows that in Q4 22/23, the percentage of NHS Health Checks offered which were taken up in the quarter was 18% for Southend, compared to 64% in the East of England and 44% in England.</p> <p>Despite being below target, figures show an increase of 115.9% on the previous year, and an additional 3 practices delivering.</p> <p>Since re-starting the NHS Health check programme in 2021 there has been a gradual increase in numbers each quarter. An enhanced target of 48% of the eligible population has been set, which is higher than the England average. Higher incentives have been introduced for health checks completed by GP Practices for residents who live in more deprived communities as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 1-4), to reduce health inequality across the city. Cross-boundary work is underway to create a joint template on recording to encourage MSE ICS support and engagement from practices and leadership from Health Inequalities</p>					

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<p>Immunisation- MMR one dose at 2 years old [Cumulative YTD]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: support community recovery</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">11</a></i></p>	88.6%	95%	Maximise	Q4 22/23	↓ 89.5%	↓ 90.9% (Q4 21/22)
<p>Immunisation- MMR two doses at 5 years old [Cumulative YTD]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: support community recovery</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">11</a></i></p>	83.1%	95%	Maximise	Q4 22/23	↓ 84.9%	↓ 88.9% (Q4 21/22)
<p>Number of physically inactive adults completing a physical activity course and continuing to be physically active [Cumulative YTD]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: support community recovery</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">11</a></i></p>	155	136	Maximise	As at July 23	-	↑ 153

Clinical leads. Further negotiations with our commissioned Wellbeing service provider are ongoing to optimise outreach health checks delivery.

Red to Amber for this reporting period.

Quarter four demonstrated a 0.9% decrease in immunisation rates and compared to quarter four 21/22, there has been a decrease of 2.3%. Work is being undertaken with partners, communications and Childrens Services to address this trend. MMR clinics were arranged to take place in August to boost uptake.

Benchmarking data available (2021/22) shows vaccination coverage in the East of England at 91.3% and England at 89.2%.

Quarter four demonstrated a 1.8% decrease in immunisation rates and compared to quarter four 21/22, there has been a decrease of 5.8%.

Benchmarking data available (2021/22) shows vaccination coverage in the East of England at 89.2% and England at 85.7%.

MMR clinics are being used to boost uptake.

Active Southend has been working in partnership with Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) and the Community Investment Board. In doing so, the Active Southend Fund has been administered, for local community and sport groups to apply for small amounts of funding. The groups have used the funding to delivery sport and physical activity sessions to those that are not as physically active as they should be.

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<p>City centre footfall [Monthly average]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: deliver our city centre strategy and investment plan</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">20</a> &amp; <a href="#">21</a></i></p>	1,648,607.3	909,750	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 1,443,854.3	↑ 1,563,357.5
<p>Cumulative annual footfall as at July 23 is 6,594,429 compared to a cumulative target of 3,639,000. This period has seen an increase of 5.5% in average monthly footfall compared to the same period last year, and an increase of 14.2% on the previous four-month period.</p>						
<p>Number of attendances at council run or affiliated arts and cultural events [Cumulative YTD]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">20</a></i></p>	TBC	TBC	Maximise	TBC	New KPI	New KPI
<p>Participation and attendance at Council-owned/affiliated sports and leisure facilities and events [Cumulative YTD]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">20</a></i></p>	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	New KPI	New KPI
<p>Increase the number of residents who have access to superfast broadband [Annual snapshot]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: sustain and grow digital investment and inclusion</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">19</a></i></p>	76,800	TBC	Maximise	As at Mar 23	-	New KPI
<p>76,800 households currently have access to superfast broadband. As a percentage of the number of households according to the Census 21, this is 98.0%.</p> <p>City Fibre rollout is complete and marketing to increase take-up has begun. The next stage of this work will be to consider how we monitor take-up of the available broadband.</p>						
<p>High Street occupancy [Quarterly snapshot]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: deliver our city centre strategy and investment plan</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">20</a> &amp; <a href="#">21</a></i></p>	85.8%	86.2%	Maximise	Q1 23/24	- 85.8%	
<p>The British Retail Consortium's latest report from 2023 reported a national occupancy rate of 86.2%, placing Southend 0.4% under the national average for this quarter.</p>						



# A city with a good quality of life

## Highlight report:

25 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed and aligned to the following objectives:

Achieve our vision of a city where all children achieve success	Ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities	Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life
Enable people to age well, live well and care well	Ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all	Ensure services are diverse, sustainable and high quality, including those who pay for their own care

11 KPIs are on target within this priority area.

The following 4 KPIs are currently not meeting target:

- [Percentage of placements in residential and PVI settings \[Monthly snapshot\]](#)
- [Rate of children in care per 10,000 population under 18 years old \[Monthly snapshot\]](#)

These KPIs are aligned to risk 10 (Safeguarding responsibilities and child welfare) caused by an increase in demand and lack of resources. This could cause a failure to deliver the outcomes anticipated for vulnerable people that need support.

- [People in receipt of long-term support for more than 12 months that have received a review in the last 12 months \[Cumulative YTD\]](#)

This KPI is aligned to risk 13 (Adult social care) caused by an increase in demand and vacancies not filled. This could cause difficulty in meeting increasing demand for support, resulting in worsening outcomes for those in need of support.

- [Average length of pre-proceedings for the PLO process \(weeks\)](#)

The following 9 KPIs are amber RAG rated:

- Percentage of children open for at least 5 weeks, who have been discussed in Supervision in the last 3 months [Monthly snapshot] – Green to Amber for this reporting period
- Percentage of children who have been in care for 2.5 years and in the same placement for 2 years or are placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with their previous placement together last for at least 2 years for CLA under the age of 16 [Quarterly snapshot]
- Percentage that were asked and safeguarding outcomes were Fully or partially achieved [Cumulative YTD] – Green to Amber for this reporting period

These KPIs are aligned to risk 10 (Safeguarding responsibilities and child welfare) caused by an increase in demand and lack of resources. This could cause a failure to deliver the outcomes anticipated for vulnerable people that need support.

- Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services [Monthly snapshot]
- Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support [Annual Snapshot]

These KPIs are aligned to risk 13 (Adult social care). This could cause difficulty in meeting increasing demand for support, resulting in worsening outcomes for those in need of support.

- The proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life [Annual snapshot]

This KPI is aligned to risk 11 (Health inequalities) which may impact on widening health inequalities in the city and 13 (Adult social care).

- Proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted [Annual Snapshot]
- Percentage of eligible children benefiting from 2-year old funding [Monthly snapshot] – Green to Amber for this reporting period
- The proportion of people who use community services who receive direct payments

# A city with a good quality of life

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<p>Percentage of children open for at least 5 weeks, who have been discussed in Supervision in the last 2 months [Monthly snapshot]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: Achieve our vision of a city where all children achieve success</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></i></p> <p>∞</p>	87.2%	90%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	-	-
<p>Performance is now being measured at 8-weekly supervision (previously 12). The workforce is aware of this and although some challenges have been identified to ensure that the service is performing at and above this level, the workforce accepts and understands its importance. Reports to management in respect of this figure and trends are being reviewed weekly by senior management.</p> <p>This figure illustrates a slight slippage below the agreed target of 90%. This decrease has been facilitated by staff leave (managers and workers) over the summer holidays. Teams are attempting to balance this to ensure that this target is being maintained.</p> <p>Despite being below target for the period, following introduction of the new timeframe of 8-weekly supervision April, this measure has increased by 12.3% and the service are continually reviewing this percentage while ensuring that a QA is reflecting quality.</p>						
<p>Percentage of placements in residential and PVI settings [Monthly snapshot]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: Achieve our vision of a city where all children achieve success</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></i></p>	54.0%	45%	Minimise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 55.0%	↓ 51.0%
<p>The increased use of residential and independent fostering agency placements coincides with previous increasing numbers of children coming into local authority care, coupled with a lack of inhouse foster service. The rate of children in care per 10,000 population under 18 has increased by 6.55% over the last year (Jul 22 – Jul 23).</p> <p>The demand of private sector placements is unlikely to reduce this year due to the numbers of children who will require residential placement.</p> <p>Targets for this indicator were increased from 20% to 45% in April 23. The percentage of placements in residential and private, voluntary and independent sector settings has been above 20% since January 2020.</p> <p>The service area is focussing on returning children and young people home to their birth family where possible and so this is expected to prevent the usage of PVI/Residential placements.</p>						

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<p>Percentage of children who have been in care for 2.5 years and in the same placement for 2 years or are placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with their previous placement together last for at least 2 years for CLA under the age of 16 [Quarterly snapshot]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: Ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></i></p>	63.7%	70%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↓ 66.3%	↑ 61.3%
<p>There has been a reduction in long term stability, however, a contributory factor of this is some long term stable young people have reached the age of 18 or have moved into other accommodation.</p> <p>There is a definite requirement for the placement stability process to be implemented earlier within CIC and fostering and this is an area where development is needed. There has been a reduction in placement instability and the service is being more creative in support packages but for some young people who are going through crisis this has been more difficult to manage.</p> <p>The service area is embedding the placement stability process so that it is initiated earlier and at the point when a complex young person is placed undertaking a workshop on placement stability to strengthen staff awareness of the process. Work will also be undertaken with partners, such as fostering, as they are significant in placement stability. The service area are ensuring that children and young people are discussed at permanency planning meetings to ensure manager oversight on care planning and issues relating to this matter. The frequency of case management meetings has also been increased to increase awareness of placement stability issues in order to create wrap-around support.</p>						
<p>Average length of pre-proceedings for the PLO process (weeks)</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: Ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities</i></p>	18.7	14	Minimise	As at Jul 23	-	-
<p>This indicator is currently over target due to late expert assessments. Performance is subject to regular management oversight to ensure that there are no further delays.</p>						
<p>Percentage of referrals that were received where a previous referral had been received within 12 months [Cumulative YTD]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: Ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></i></p>	21.7%	22%	Minimise	Apr – Jul 23		
<p>The monthly figure for July shows an increase from June month putting it over the agreed target of 22%, however the cumulative figure from April to July remains below target, with April, May and June green RAG rated.</p> <p>These monthly decreases can be attributed to several factors including quality of assessments, appropriate step downs, cases being kept open for appropriate periods and more effective early support/interventions across the tiers.</p>						

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
	This continues to be an area of focus within certain services. It is expected that changes to the threshold document and internal changes within teams will further facilitate this target and ensure that children and their families are receiving support in a timely and effective manner and within the appropriate service area.					
Percentage of children with a Child Protection Plan that have had their CPP for more than 2 years on the last day of the month [Monthly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></i>	1.9%	3%	Minimise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 3.2%	↑ 5.9%
	This KPI has been on target since October 2022. All children subject to child protection plans over 12 months are subject to regular reviews to ensure that children are not being kept on plans longer than is absolutely necessary.					
Rate of children in care per 10,000 population under 18 years old [Monthly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Ensure children and young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></i>	80.9	65 - 75	Goldilocks	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 78.2	↑ 79.0
	The number of young people entering care has increased and is at a higher rate of the number of children and young people exiting care. The rate of children in care per 10,000 population under 18 has increased by 6.55% over the last year (Jul 22 – Jul 23).					
	The service area are focussing on exiting children and young people from care through various methods such as discharge of care, special guardianship and reunification. There are a number of children and young people who could exit from the Local Authority's care.					
Percentage of children in good or outstanding Schools [Monthly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life</i>	91.5%	88%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↓ 92.5%	↑ 91.1%
	Compared to benchmarking figures (Nov 22), the percentage of children in good or outstanding schools is higher than both the statistical neighbour average (70.5%) and the England average (86.6%).					
Percentage of eligible children benefiting from 2-year old funding [Monthly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life</i>	70.6%	72%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↓ 71.5%	↑ 65.0%
	This KPI has been on target from October – May 2023, with June and July figures showing slippage, and July below target. Compared with benchmarking figures (Jun 22), Southend has a lower percentage of eligible children benefiting compared with the statistical neighbour average					

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
	<p>(76.0%) and England average (74.0%), however compared to the same period last year, performance has increased.</p> <p>The service area are aware that take up of two-year-old funding is showing some slippage and are currently investigating and continue working to maximise take up. The service area have worked to develop reporting showing two-year-old children who have accessed Family Centres to enable targeting of any that may be eligible for free childcare.</p> <p>The Early Years Outreach and Development Teams are completing the two-year-old Take Up Support review which aims to support providers to overcome challenges preventing maximising take up of two-year-old children. The team are also working with the internal Communications Team to run social media and bus stop marketing campaigns. The team continue to work closely with Family Centres to promote the offer to parents and are working with Family centres to deliver virtual surgeries to support parents looking for childcare.</p>					
<p>Percentage of 2-, 3- and 4- year-old children benefitting from funded early education in good or outstanding settings [Monthly snapshot]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life</i></p>	95.4%	94.0%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↓ 95.8%	New KPI
<p>Percentage of young people who are not in employment, education or training or whose situation is not known [Monthly snapshot]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">14</a> &amp; <a href="#">21</a></i></p>	3.3%	3.8%	Minimise	Apr – Jul 23	-- 3.3%	↓ 2.9%
	<p>Amber to Green for this reporting period.</p> <p>The cumulative period average for this indicator is above target, however this indicator has fallen by 0.4% compared to the previous quarter and both the percentage of 2-year-olds benefitting (94.0% compared with a target of 97.0%) and the percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds benefitting (95.5 compared with a target of 96.0%) fell slightly below target for the period specified.</p> <p>Staff recruitment and retention is impacting on the quality of provision, and locally there are staffing and sustainability issues. This is an issue being experienced nationally. The service is monitoring this extremely carefully and will seek to provide relevant training and support.</p>					
	<p>The figures remain below the target as we come to the end of the academic year. NEET figures are stable, however, there has been a limited amount of educational options for young people, especially those in the SEND cohort, as smaller providers are sparse. This is a concern for the next academic year also. Currently September Guarantee offers are being recorded for all young people in Southend.</p>					

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<p>The percentage of Southend-on-Sea children aged under 4 living in the most deprived areas (0-30%) involved in pre-school activity or education [Cumulative YTD]</p> <p>Corporate Plan objective: Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life</p> <p>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></p>	96.6%	90%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 93.2%	↑ 93.1
	<p>This indicator has been consistently above target since beginning monitoring in April 22, and has shown an increase of 1.8% comparing July 22 and July 23.</p> <p>The Family Centres are coming under increasing budget constraints which adds additional pressures to existing staff and the services that are offered. The focus will shift to quality over quantity over the coming months. The waitlist for home-based family support has continued to grow which is routinely flagged with senior leaders. To mitigate risk and wait times for support a triage system was developed to ensure that those on the waitlist receive regular phone calls and signposted to appropriate services. Joint working with SEN colleagues continues to positively progress to enable shared staffing resources to meet the needs of children and families.</p> <p>Family Centres recently received the Healthy Early Years award which demonstrated high quality of services that are provided to children and families of Southend.</p> <p>Family Centres currently have a number of initiatives running to ensure support for children living in the most deprived areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Centres are working on the next stage of development, with partner organisations, to increase the capacity of the current antenatal offer running at both evenings and weekends. Additional funding has been agreed in principle to support with Bibs and Bobs, the Family Centres baby bank service, which will strengthen the offer to children and families of Southend.</li> <li>• Family Centres are continuing their support alongside Packed with Smiles, a local charity, to provide brand new school uniform. So far, 43 Secondary School children and 41 Primary School children have been supported.</li> <li>• Family Centres have been approached to provide a Parenting Programme for parents that have children removed from their care this is in its development stage and will be implemented during the summer term.</li> </ul>					
<p>ASCOF 1G Proportion of adults with learning disabilities who live in their own home or with their family</p>	87.8%	85.5%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↓ 88.2%	↓ 88.5%

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<p><i>Corporate Plan objective: enable people to age well, live well and care well</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">13</a></i></p>	<p>The team's focus is supporting people with a learning disability to reside within tenanted arrangements which increases choice and control. This measure remains consistently above target.</p> <p>Benchmarking data (2021/22) shows that Southend is above both the statistical neighbour (73.3%) and England (78.8%) proportions for this measure.</p>					
<p>ASCOF 2A(2)- Permanent admissions into residential/nursing care, per 100,000 population (65+)  [Monthly snapshot]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: enable people to age well, live well and care well</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">13</a></i></p>	138.46	164.42	Minimise	As at Jul 23	-	↓ 137.41
<p>There have been 48 permanent admissions into residential care against a target of 57 for July, evidencing continued performance beyond target. The service remains focussed on supporting people to remain resident within their own homes.</p>						
<p>ASCOF 1C (2A) – The proportion of people who use community services who receive direct payments  <i>Corporate Plan objective: ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all</i></p>	27.6%	30%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 27.3%	↓ 28.5%
<p>Direct payments remain a choice for people needing care and support. We aim to support people to make the right decisions as to how they wish to receive their services to ensure they retain maximum control.</p>						
<p>∞</p> <p>Percentage that were asked and safeguarding outcomes were Fully or partially achieved [Cumulative YTD]  <i>Corporate Plan objective: ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all</i>  <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">10</a></i></p>	95.5%	97%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↓ 97.1%	↓ 98.1%
<p>This period has demonstrated a slight drop in this indicator, with three of four months below target. However, figures indicate that the majority of people agree that the outcomes of the safeguarding enquiry were in line with their expectations.</p> <p>Benchmarking available (2021/22) shows that the statistical neighbour average was 95.5% and England average was 93.7%.</p> <p>This measure and associated trends remain a priority for the service and will be closely monitored over the next few months. This indicator is linked to the general health of the population in terms of hospital admissions and how unwell people are when discharged. There has been an increasing level of need on discharge due to people still being very unwell and a medical model followed with a health-led discharge, which impacts on short-term outcomes. The service is committed to the provision of reablement and promotion of independence. The team are focussed on ensuring that outcomes are clearly identified as assessments are commenced, and that adults and families are kept updated and informed.</p>						



Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<p>ASCOF 2B (1)- Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services [Monthly snapshot]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">13</a></i></p>	78.6%	80%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 77.5%	↑ 78.2%
<p>Benchmarking available (2021/22) shows that the statistical neighbour average was 82.9% and England average was 81.8%.</p> <p>It is important to note that the NHS continues to lead on discharge from hospital which means the local authority has reduced input and control over this measure.</p>						
<p>People in receipt of long-term support for more than 12 months that have received a review in the last 12 months [Cumulative YTD]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">13</a></i></p>	70.4%	75%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 63.7%	↑ 65.2%
<p>Meeting this target remains challenging due to the Review Team needing to prioritise other work streams, however, there has been an increase in completed reviews when compared with the previous period and same period last year.</p> <p>The team has been required to prioritise other work streams relating to the increase in demand from the Access point, service closures and safeguarding referrals. In addition, the Review Team has taken allocations from the Locality teams due to a surge in demand and a high level of unallocated cases.</p> <p>The service is currently prioritising the completion of overdue reviews for people with a learning disability as this has been noted as an area of poor performance. Recent improvement in the staffing levels within the team has enabled a renewed focus over the coming months to improve performance in this area and additional focus on reviews that are overdue.</p>						
<p>ASCOF 2D - Proportion of those that received short-term service during the year where sequel was either no on-going support or support of a lower level [Cumulative YTD]</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all</i></p>	59.3%	58%	Maximise	Apr – Jul 23	↑ 49.1%	↑ 46.8%
<p>This measure has seen an increase from 53.9% in June to 59.3% in July and is therefore above the target of 58% this month with a continued upward trend in performance compared to last month and the same period last year. The target will be closely monitored, and the service is committed to ensuring a robust reablement offer to avoid the need for long term care and support.</p>						

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
ASCOF 3C (1) - Proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted [Annual Snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all</i>	72.3%	73.9%	Maximise	21/22	-	↓ 73.9% (2018/19)
For 2021/22, Southend-on-Sea is ranked 9th nationally for this indicator. Region score: 67.3%      England score: 64.7%						
ASCOF 3A- Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support [Annual Snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of all</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: 13</i>	71.1%	71.2	Maximise	21/22	-	↑ 70.6%
For 2021/22, Southend-on-Sea is ranked 6th nationally for this indicator. Region score: 65.4%      England score: 63.9%						
Percentage of total attendance in all schools [Monthly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life</i>	93.1%	91.2%	Maximise	April 23	↑ 93.0% (Jan 23)	New KPI
Due to a current error within the attendance dashboard impacting school attendance and persistent absence data, accurate data and comparison for performance are unavailable for May - Jul. The service area are working to resolve this issue. As of April 23, local cumulative attendance for the year was at 93.1%. The national cumulative attendance was 92.4%, which placed Southend above average for school attendance.						
ASCOF 1H- Proportion of adults in contact with secondary mental health services who live independently with or without support [Monthly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: enable people to age well, live well and care well</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: 13</i>	40.4%	39%	Maximise	As at Jun 23	↓ 40.8% (Nov 22)	↑ 38.5% (Jun 22)
Benchmarking data available for 2021/22 showed a statistical neighbour average of 39.0%, and a national average of 26.0%.						
ASCOF 3D (1) - The proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information about support [Annual snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: enable people to age well, live well and care well</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: 11 &amp; 13</i>	71.6%	70.2%	Maximise	22/23	-	↑ 68%
For 2020/21, Southend-on-Sea is ranked 19th nationally for this indicator. Region score: 63.2% England score: 64.6%						
ASCOF 1B (1) - The proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life [Annual snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: enable people to age well, live well and care well</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: 11 &amp; 13</i>	81.2%	81.8%	Maximise	22/23	-	↓ 83.5%
For 2021/22, Southend-on-Sea is ranked 18th nationally for this indicator. Region score: 77.3% England score: 76.9%						

# A city rising to the climate change challenge

## Highlight report:

16 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed and aligned to the following objectives:

Local Transport Plan 4	Become a net Zero Carbon Southend by 2030	Prevent waste, re-use and increase recycling
Develop an active and sustainable travel network	Enhance, promote and protect our natural environment	Undertake flood and coastal erosion risk management

6 KPIs are on target within this priority area.

The following 6 KPIs are amber RAG rated:

- Develop and deliver the Local Transport strategic document – Green to Amber for this reporting period
- Pathway to Net Zero Carbon
- Revise and update the Green City Action Plan – Green to Amber for this reporting period
- Delivery of a 10-year vision for parks & open spaces regeneration strategy (2022-2032)
- Southend-on-Sea City Council Shoreline Strategy Implementation Plan update – Green to Amber for this reporting period
- Southend-on-Sea City Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy update – Green to Amber for this reporting period

These KPIs are aligned to risk 8 (Mitigating for and adapting to climate change) which may impact the council's ability to make an adequate contribution to the reduction in carbon emissions required.

The following 4 KPIs are currently developing their baseline and target data to be reported on within 2023/24:

- Improve the city's cycle network (increased metres of cycle lane)
- Improve number of school streets & low traffic neighbourhoods
- Tree Net Gain in the city [Annual snapshot]
- Increasing the areas devoted to Improve the survival of pollinating insects [Annual snapshot]

# A city rising to the climate change challenge

Action (output measure)	Progress	Status	Due Date
Develop and deliver the Local Transport strategic document <i>Corporate Plan objective: Local Transport Plan 4</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a></i>	60%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Jul 2024
	Green to amber for this reporting period. The Department of Transport (DfT) has moved the deadline for this document to 31 July 2024. More work to be done, including consultation, and the DfT hasn't issued guidance document. Slippage solely due to Government not issuing guidance document.		
Pathway to Net Zero Carbon <i>Corporate Plan objective: Become a net Zero Carbon Southend by 2030</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a></i>	25%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Mar 2024
	Slippage on Pathway to Net Zero Carbon due to resourcing issues.		
Revise and update the Green City Action Plan <i>Corporate Plan objective: Become a net Zero Carbon Southend by 2030</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a></i>	10%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	30 Sep 2024
	Green to amber for this reporting period. Slippage on revising and updating the Green City Action Plan due to resourcing issues.		
Delivery of a 10-year vision for parks & open spaces regeneration strategy (2022-2032) <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enhance, promote and protect our natural environment</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a></i>	70%	<b>On course to achieve target</b>	31 Mar 2024
	Green to amber for this reporting period. Slippage on Delivery of a 10-year vision for parks & open spaces regeneration strategy (2022-2032) due to resourcing issues.		
Southend-on-Sea City Council Shoreline Strategy Implementation Plan update <i>Corporate Plan objective: Undertake flood and coastal erosion risk management</i>	10%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Mar 2025
	Green to amber for this reporting period. Deadline for implementation plan extended to accommodate delivery of statutory Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) policy and design strategy is now priority due to Schedule 3 summer national consultation and implementation in November 2024, so we need our SuDs policy in place and adopted as a priority. Monthly annual inspections of coastal defences are still being carried out and remediation work undertaken as necessary.		
Southend-on-Sea City Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy update <i>Corporate Plan objective: Undertake flood and coastal erosion risk management</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a></i>	10%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Mar 2025
	Green to amber for this reporting period. Deadline for strategy update extended to accommodate delivery of statutory Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Sustainable drainage systems		

Action (output measure)	Progress	Status	Due Date
	(SuDs) policy and design strategy is now priority owing to Schedule 3 summer national consultation and implementation in November 2024, so we need our policy in place and adopted as a priority. Owing to the delivery of Catchment to Coast (part of the Environment Agency's national flood and coastal resilience innovation programme) many updates are being collated through this project and will feed into the updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in due course.		

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
Rate of publicly available electric vehicle charging devices at all speeds in Southend-on-Sea [Quarterly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Become a net Zero Carbon Southend by 2030</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a></i>	19.4	13.25	Maximise	As at Jul 23	↑ 15.0 (Jan 23)	↑ 10.4 (Jul 23)
	As of July 23, there were 35 publicly available electric vehicle charging devices in the city, a rate of 19.4 per 100,000 population.  Comparing across LAs with remits over cities, the average was 93.5. The rate across the United Kingdom was 95.7, and in the East of England 49.6.					
Percentage acceptable standard of cleanliness: litter [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Prevent waste, re-use and increase recycling</i>	99.4%	95%	Maximise	As at Jul 23	↑ 97.6% (Mar 23)	↑ 97.3% (Jul 22)
	This figure demonstrates a good level of cleansing, the indicator is on track with the 23/24 target of 95%.					
Percentage acceptable standard of cleanliness: detritus [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Prevent waste, re-use and increase recycling</i>	100.0%	95%	Maximise	As at Jul 23	↑ 93.2% (Mar 23)	↑ 89.7% (Jul 22)
	Amber to Green for this reporting period.  This figure demonstrates an excellent level of cleansing, the indicator is on track with the 23/24 target of 95%.					
Percentage of waste collections carried out on schedule [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Prevent waste, re-use and increase recycling</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">9</a></i>	100.0%	99%	Maximise	As at Jul 23	-- 100.0% (Mar 23)	↑ 99.9% (Jul 22)
	Year-to-date, 99.96% of collections have been carried out on time, this is above the annual target of 99.00%.					

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
	<p>Missed collections in this period vs 2022:</p> <p>Apr: 826 vs 1,034</p> <p>May: 1039 vs 939</p> <p>June: 1007 vs 1,313</p> <p>July: 882 vs 1,524</p>					
Reduction of AQMA for Air Quality Management and to decarbonise the transport network [Annual snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Develop an active and sustainable travel network</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: 8</i> 94	37 µg/m3	40 µg/m3	Minimise	22/23	-	↓ 35.5 µg/m3 (2021)
	<p>The Council has submitted an Air Quality Action Plan for the AQMA2, which details measures that aim to improve the air quality within the AQMA2. The Council has submitted an Annual Status Report to DEFRA, which has been accepted. DEFRA has suggested that the Council considers steps to undeclare the AQMA2 as the measured air quality is within the accepted range. This is because last year the level recorded was 37.0 and there have been no recorded exceedances of the NO2 Air quality objective in the years between 2020 and 2022, inclusive. AQMA2 has not recorded an exceedance in the past 4 years and DEFRA has encouraged the authority to begin work to revoke this AQMA in the next reporting year.</p> <p>With respect to the levels of NO2 in the AQMA1, the level recorded in 2022 was 36.2, but has not been consistently recording the levels are below the Air quality objective.</p>					
Increase & maintain the number of Green Flag Award parks in the city [Annual snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enhance, promote and protect our natural environment</i>	9	8	Maximise	22/23	↑ 7	New KPI
	Nine local parks have achieved a national Green Flag Award; Priory Park, Chalkwell Park, Southchurch Park, Southchurch Hall Gardens, Leigh Library Gardens, Shoebury Park, Belfairs Park, Sutton Road Cemetery and Southend Crematorium and Shoebury Common North.					
Improve the city's cycle network (increased metres of cycle lane) <i>Corporate Plan objective: Develop an active and sustainable travel network</i>	TBC	TBC	Maximise	TBC	New KPI	New KPI
	<b>Future indicator</b> - currently developing baseline & improvements to develop actual and target data.					
	TBC	TBC	Maximise	TBC	New KPI	New KPI

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
Improve number of school streets & low traffic neighbourhoods <i>Corporate Plan objective: Develop an active and sustainable travel network</i>	<b>Future indicator</b> - currently developing baseline surveys & improvements (based on review of current school streets that have been implemented).					
Tree Net Gain in the city [Annual snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enhance, promote and protect our natural environment</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a></i>	TBC	TBC	Maximise	Annual	New KPI	New KPI
Increasing the areas devoted to Improve the survival of pollinating insects [Annual snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Enhance, promote and protect our natural environment</i> <small>5</small>	TBC	TBC	Maximise	Annual	New KPI	New KPI
Naturalised grass/wildflower meadows (square metres) are required to support pollinator nest sites and increase the survival chances of pollinators in the city. This supports the <b>SCC Adopt &amp; Deliver the Grassland Management Strategy</b> and the <b><u>National pollinator strategy: for bees and other pollinators in England - GOV.UK (<a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>)</u></b> . A new baseline and target are being developed for this KPI. The proportion of Southend-on-Sea managed as naturalised in 2021 was 0.79%						

# A city delivering genuinely affordable housing

## Highlight report:

18 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed and aligned to the following objectives:

Address local housing need	Prioritise the supply and quality of safe, genuinely affordable homes	Make any instance of homelessness brief and non-recurrent, aiming for functional zero homelessness	Maximise environmental sustainability of homes
Ensure good quality housing design, management and maintenance	Reduce the number of empty homes	Deliver the Local Plan and manage Development Control	

5 KPIs are on target within this priority area.

The following 4 KPIs are not meeting target:

- [Families with children in B&B for over 6 weeks \[Quarterly snapshot\]](#)
- [% of Council Homes not meeting the Decent Homes standard](#)
- [Percentage of property void and relettable \[Quarterly snapshot\]](#)
- [Percentage of properties void & non-re-lettable](#)

These KPIs are aligned to [risk 16](#) (Housing) which may impact on the council's ability to address rising homelessness, particularly with the ongoing cost of living pressures. There is also a financial impact related to void and empty properties not being re-let. Properties not meeting the decent home standard can lead to further deprivation i.e. fuel poverty; this may therefore have a residual effect on [risk 3](#) (Inflation and cost of living pressures).

The following 5 KPIs are amber RAG rated:

- Better Queensway Porters Place delivery –initial works on site (removal of footbridge)

This KPI is aligned to [risks 16](#) (Housing) [17](#) (House building programme) and [19](#) (Regeneration and major projects).

- Increase options for key worker housing across the city, including targeted marketing of affordable home ownership schemes – Green to Amber for this reporting period
- Council tenants with more than seven weeks of rent arrears as a % of the total number of tenants

These KPIs are aligned to [risk 16](#) (Housing) which may impact on the council's ability to address rising homelessness, particularly with the ongoing cost of living pressures. There is also a financial impact related to tenants in rent arrears.

- Deliver research and viability report(s) regarding a Net Zero Housing Policy for Southend-on-Sea City Council – Green to Amber for this reporting period

This KPI is aligned to [risk 8](#) (Mitigating for and adapting to climate change) and [12](#) (Housing)

- Completion of the Preferred Approach Consultation of the Local Plan (stage 3 of 5)

This KPI is aligned to [risk 18](#) (Local Plan).



The following **2** KPIs are dependent on the development of, and will have targets set as a result of, the outcome of the Local Plan; with proposed go live dates of 2024/25 for both:

- Increase the supply of ready to develop housing sites
- Housing Stock (Number of dwellings, as at 1 April) - Dwellings [Annual snapshot]

The following **1** KPI is in development:

- Homeless prevention cases ending with settled housing being secured [Quarterly snapshot]

The following **1** KPI is currently developing baseline and target data to be reported on within 2023/24:

- Number of empty homes brought back in to use [Quarterly snapshot]

# A city delivering genuinely affordable housing

Action (output measure)	Progress	Status	Due Date
<p>Better Queensway Porters Place delivery – initial works on site (removal of footbridge)</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: Prioritise the supply and quality of safe, genuinely affordable homes</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a>, <a href="#">17</a> &amp; <a href="#">19</a></i></p>	0%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Mar 2024
	Awaiting result of the options work to progress the scheme following Sanctuary withdrawal.		
<p>Increase options for key worker housing across the city, including targeted marketing of affordable home ownership schemes</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: Prioritise the supply and quality of safe, genuinely affordable homes</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i></p>	60%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Mar 2024
	Green to amber for this reporting period. The Council is continuing to finalise our approach to key workers, including working with Registered Providers of Social housing, such as Guinness Housing, to ensure that the needs of key workers are being met in new housing developments.		
<p>∞</p> <p>Deliver research and viability report(s) regarding a Net Zero Housing Policy for Southend-on-Sea City Council</p> <p><i>Corporate Plan objective: Maximise environmental sustainability of homes</i></p> <p><i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">8</a> &amp; <a href="#">16</a></i></p>	60%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Mar 2024
	Green to amber for this reporting period.		
	Parity projects database and report has provided a good baseline to help map our next steps towards net zero for our existing stock. The work outlines the cost benefit analysis of different retrofit pathways and has informed the principles of the Retrofit Action Plan. The Retrofit Action Plan is now being worked through and is monitored via the Council and South Essex Homes' sustainability sub-group. The Council lacks capacity to deliver all actions within the plan, so the group is focusing on key actions, such as improving data and undertaking pilot projects.		
	We have won £1.15 million from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which will allow us to progress some of these plans into action. However, we need to set formal targets and KPIs for retrofit beyond just the high level targets of Energy Performance Certificate C rating and net zero. This is an action that will be progressed through the retrofit action plan.		
	We are onsite with our 'retrofit show home' project, which will allow us to learn more about retrofit and inform our future approach.		
	Our future phases of Housing Revenue Account newbuild developments are committed to achieving the Passivhaus standard and we have begun to progress Passivhaus pilot projects.		

	We are discussing possibility of a sustainable housing strategy via the housing pipeline group, which would set out principles for sustainable development across all future housing development projects.		
Completion of the Preferred Approach Consultation of the Local Plan (stage 3 of 5) <i>Corporate Plan objective: Deliver the Local Plan and manage Development Control</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">18</a></i>	50%	<b>Some slippage against target</b>	31 Mar 2024
	The Local Plan and supporting workstreams, including infrastructure assessment, continue to be progressed and includes a review of the potential implications of the Government's consultation on 'plan making reforms'.		

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
Number of Properties purchased by SCC via the Acquisitions Programme [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Address local housing need</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	6	16 (Annual)	Maximise	As at Jul 23	-	↓ 7
6 properties have been purchased year-to-date in 23/24. This indicator is on course to meet target and meet the quota of properties for the Local Authority Housing Fund.						
Number of affordable housing units delivered in the city (by SCC and RP's) [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Prioritise the supply and quality of safe, genuinely affordable homes</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a> &amp; <a href="#">17</a></i>	6	70 (Annual)	Maximise	Q1 23/24		↓ 23
The Council has purchased 6 homes via the Acquisitions Programme since April 2023 and there are a further 12 acquisitions for this year. The RP led scheme at Meadow Grange has stalled due to issues with the contractor (Iike Homes) and the Council is closely monitoring the situation with the RP (Guinness Housing).						
Families with children in B&B for over 6 weeks [Quarterly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Make any instance of homelessness brief and non-recurrent, aiming for functional zero homelessness</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	8	0	Minimise	Q1 23/24	↓ 2	New KPI
At quarter end there were 8 households with children who had been in B&B for over 6 weeks. These were large families and all larger temporary accommodation space owned by the council is full.  A hostel improvement plan task and finish group is currently exploring options to improve the council's temporary accommodation offer.						
Council tenants with more than seven weeks of rent arrears as a % of the total number of tenants (tenancy sustainment)	6.2%	5.3%	Minimise	Q1 23/24	↓ 5.4% (Q4 22/23)	↓ 4.7%

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
[Quarterly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Ensure good quality housing design, management and maintenance</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	Due to the cost-of-living crisis and an increase in the time taken to obtain court dates there has been an increase in arrears this year. The service area continue to monitor the situation and put in place measures to mitigate the effect of increased arrears as much as possible.					
Percentage of council homes not meeting Decent Home Standard [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Ensure good quality housing design, management and maintenance</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	5.3%	0%	Minimise	As at June 23	↓ 5.0% (Feb 23)	↑ 13.8% (Jun 23)
It is expected that this figure will move towards zero as the year progresses as more works are undertaken on properties to ensure that they meet the decent homes standard.						
Major planning applications determined in 13 weeks [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Deliver the Local Plan and manage Development Control</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">17</a></i>	100%	79%	Maximise	As at July 23	-- 100%	-- 100%
The service continues to focus on delivering major developments, for the wider benefits and contributions to our corporate plan priorities that such schemes can often achieve. This is relevant to all applications to some degree, but major schemes are often key to supporting economic growth and recovery in the City. This indicator remains consistently above target.						
100 Minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Deliver the Local Plan and manage Development Control</i>	100%	84%	Maximise	As at July 23	↑ 98.9%	-- 100%
The strong performance of the service against this target reflects a persistent drive to deal efficiently with the particularly large volumes of, often complex, smaller-scale applications received in Southend-on-Sea due to the relatively constrained built-up nature of much of the city. This indicator remains consistently above target.						
Other planning applications determined in 8 weeks [Cumulative YTD] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Deliver the Local Plan and manage Development Control</i>	99.2%	84%	Maximise	As at July 23	↓ 99.1%	↓ 99.7%
The strong performance of the service against this target reflects a persistent drive to deal efficiently with the particularly large volumes of, often complex, smaller-scale applications received in Southend due to the relatively constrained built-up nature of much of the city. This indicator remains consistently above target.						
Percentage of property voids and non-relettable [Quarterly snapshot]	1.4%	1.1%	Minimise	Q1 23/24	-- 1.4%	-- 1.4%

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
<i>Corporate Plan objective: Reduce the number of empty homes Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	This figure is being impacted by the holding of properties in the Queensway Site. When excluding these properties, the figure reduces to 0.67%.					
Percentage of property void and relettable [Quarterly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Reduce the number of empty homes Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	1.8%	1.0%	Minimise	Q1 23/24	↓ 1.7%	↓ 1.5%
	This is being partly impacted by the Queensway development, when this is excluded, the figure reduces to 1.2%.					
Homeless prevention cases ending with settled housing being secured [Quarterly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Make any instance of homelessness brief and non-recurrent, aiming for functional zero homelessness Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">3</a>, <a href="#">16</a> &amp; <a href="#">21</a></i>	56%	TBC	Maximise	Q1 23/24	↑ 53%	↑ 52%
	In the first quarter of 23/24, Homeless Prevention Duty was ended to 130 households. Of these, 73 (56%) ended with settled accommodation being secured for at least 6 months, a 3% increase on the previous quarter and a 4% increase on the same quarter of the previous year (52%).					
	Of the 73 preventions in the first quarter of 2023/24, 19 (26.0%) were supported to remain in their existing accommodation, whilst 54 (74.0%) were moved into alternative settled accommodation without having to experience homelessness.					
	Benchmarking available shows that in Q4 22/23, 50.9% of households in Southend where prevention duty ended secured accommodation for 6+ months, compared with 50.4% in the East of England and 51.9% in England.					
Number of empty homes brought back in to use [Quarterly snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Reduce the number of empty homes Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	TBC	TBC	Maximise	TBC	New KPI	New KPI
	This is a new measure corporately. The service is currently developing baseline and target data to be reported on within 2023/24. The service works with owner occupiers that have properties empty than 6 months or more, to bring them back into use via support, guidance and signposting.					
Housing Stock (Number of dwellings, as at 1 April) - Dwellings [Annual snapshot] <i>Corporate Plan objective: Deliver the Local Plan and manage Development Control Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a></i>	TBC	TBC	Maximise	Annual	New KPI	New KPI
	<b>Future indicator</b> – this KPI Reported to Central Govt. Govt returns are end of Sept each year for year prior (1st April - 31st March).					
	Housing target will be developed for the Local Plan once stage 3 of 5 is complete - will be available once the Local Plan is adopted (approximately adopted 2024/25).					

Indicator	Value	Target	Aim of indicator	Date range	Compared to the last period	Compared to the previous year
Increase the supply of ready to develop housing sites <i>Corporate Plan objective: Address local housing need</i> <i>Corporate Risk Register Ref: <a href="#">16</a>, <a href="#">17</a> &amp; <a href="#">18</a></i>	TBC	TBC	Maximise	Quarterly	New KPI	New KPI
<b>Future indicator</b> - this KPI will be based on a 5-year housing supply, based on a target extrapolated over 5 years from the Local Plan. There is potential for this KPI to be live from 2024/25 subject to any Central Government changes between 2022-2024.						

# Risk Register Heat Map: Risk Numbers

Risk	
1 - Covid-19 pandemic	12 - LGA peer review of SEND & CWD
<b>2 – Financial sustainability</b>	<b>13 – Adult social care</b>
<b>3 – Inflation and cost of living pressures</b>	<b>14 – Social cohesion</b>
4 – public services landscape	15 – Southend Travel Partnership
5 – Workforce	<b>16 – Housing</b>
6 <sup>103</sup> – a) Cyber Security b) Data protection	<b>17 – House building programme</b>
<b>7 – Capital investment programme delivery</b>	<b>18 – Local Plan</b>
<b>8 – Mitigating for and adapting to climate change</b>	<b>19 – Regeneration and major projects</b>
<b>9 – Waste Management</b>	<b>20 – Visitor destination and major projects</b>
<b>10 – Safeguarding responsibilities and child welfare</b>	<b>21 – Economic recovery and income inequalities</b>
<b>11 – Health inequalities</b>	

Relevant Corporate Risks are noted underneath each applicable Key Performance Indicator title. The latest Corporate Risk Register report can be found [here](#).

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**Title:** Corporate Debt Management - Position to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023

**Meeting:** Cabinet

**Date:** 18 September 2023

**Classification:** Part 1

**Policy Context:**

**Key Decision:** No

**Report Author:** Richard Campbell, Council Tax Manager

**Executive Councillor:** Councillor Cox Leader and Cabinet Member for SEND

## 1. Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to apprise Cabinet of the following:

- The end of year position, 31 July 2023 of outstanding debt to the Council.
- Debts that have been written off, or are recommended for write off, for the financial year to 31 July 2023;
- Obtain approval for the write off of irrecoverable debts that are over £25,000.

## 2. Recommendations

**It is recommended that Cabinet:**

- 2.1 Notes the finalised outstanding debt position on 31 July 2023 and the position of debts written off to 31 July 2023 as set out in **Appendices A & B**.
- 2.2 Notes that no write offs exceeding £25,000 need to be considered for approval as part of this report, as shown in **Appendix B**.

## 3. Background Information

- 3.1 It was agreed by Cabinet on 19 March 2013 that the S151 Officer would submit regular reports to Cabinet on all aspects of the Council's outstanding debt, along with the required write off position. This is the first report for the financial year 2023/24.

3.2 Southend-on-Sea City Council is made up of several service areas, all of which are responsible for the collection and administration of outstanding debt. The main areas are Accounts Receivable and Revenues which are linked to the billing and collection of most debts that fall due to be paid to the Council for chargeable services, such as service/rental charges and statutory levies such as Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates).

There are also other areas of debt that are included in this report, namely recovery of Housing Benefit Overpayments, Parking and Enforcement penalties, Adult Social Care and Library fines. In addition, the position regarding outstanding debt levels for the Housing Revenue Account for rent arrears and service charges.

3.3 The process and legislative framework for the collection and write off of debt was detailed in the report to Cabinet on 17 September 2013. It is worth highlighting that the Council has a good success rate in collection of debt. The collection targets are agreed annually as part of the Council’s service and financial planning process.

3.4 Debts are only considered for write off where all other courses of recovery available have been undertaken or explored and the debt is considered irrecoverable.

**3.5 Council Tax**

£119.9m of Council Tax is due to be collected in 2023/24, with a year-end collection target of 97.5%. The Council to date has collected a total of £42.9m, with a percentage collection of 35.8% achieved. This is currently £135k less than the target profile for this period of the year but does not present a risk to the overall end of year collection, with the expectation that this will either be achieved or exceeded.

Collection is continuing for outstanding arrears for previous financial years. The chart below shows the actual in year collection rate over the past 4 years, and the collection rate of each year’s charge to date, including debts that have been written off.

<b>Council Tax Performance</b>		
	<b>As of 31 March of relevant year</b>	<b>As of 31 July 2023</b>
1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020	97.5%	99.1%
1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021	96.7%	99.0%
1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022	97.4%	98.5%
1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023	97.5%	98.1%

The team continue to collect debts outside of this financial year and have to date had a positive collection of £1.1m within the first reporting period, meaning 10.1% of all debt held has been collected.

The previous report referred to the Council's plans to commence a review later this year in connection to the large sum of older debts held to ensure all debts that remain on account are recoverable. This remains a priority of the team, and work will hopefully commence in this area in the upcoming months, after the large court sessions have been reviewed.

### 3.6 Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates)

£39.5m of Non-Domestic Rate is due to be collected in 2023/24, with a collection target of 98.5%. The Council to date has collected a total of £15.8m, with a percentage collection of 40.1% achieved. This is currently £325k higher than the target profile for this period of the year therefore presents an extremely positive start to the year, with no current risk to the end-of-year collection.

Collection is continuing for outstanding arrears for previous financial years. The chart below shows the actual in year collection rate over the past 4 years, and the collection rate of each year's charge to date, including debts that have been already written off.

<b>Non-Domestic Rates Performance</b>		
	<b>As of 31 March of relevant year</b>	<b>As of 31 July 2023</b>
1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020	98.3%	99.9%
1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021	90.6%	99.9%
1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022	96.3%	99.6%
1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023	98.7%	99.8%

The team continue to collect debts outside of this financial year and have to date had a positive collection of £380k within the first reporting period, meaning 22.4% of all debt held has been collected.

### 3.7 Housing Benefit Overpayment

This is any entitlement to a rent allowance or rent rebate that a person has received but is not entitled to. Most commonly this accumulates when there is a change to a person's circumstance, and they fail to notify us in good time. The overpayment will be invoiced unless they are in receipt of Housing Benefit in which case their benefit entitlement is reduced to enable recovery of the overpayment. The vast majority of Housing Benefit overpayment is due to claimant error.

<b>Housing Benefit Overpayment Created by Year</b>				
	<b>Claimant Error</b>	<b>LA/DWP Error</b>	<b>Admin Delay</b>	<b>Liability Reduction</b>
1 April 22 - 31 March 23	£650,599.82	£54,602.90	£36,351.28	£44,512.66
1 April 23 - 31 July 23	£279,290.83	£20,598.94	£11,864.82	£18,780.14

Collection during the reporting period is comparable to the prior year, and as a result there has been a decrease of debt in this area, from £4.5m to £4.2m as of 31 July 2023.

### 3.8 Libraries

Library debt is made up of overdue fines and replacing lost or non-returned books.

### 3.9 Adult Services

Adult Services make charges for the following services:

- Contributions to residential accommodation
- Charges for non-residential services i.e. Home Care, Community Support, Day Services and transport to services
- Charges to other local authorities
- Charges to National Health Service

As of 31 July 2023, the level of debt was £7.438m, which is an increase of £1.937m compared to this time last year. The main driver of the increased debt level is the increased rates paid to providers, which are - subject to means testing - passed onto the service user.

Of this debt, £2.543m (34%) is debt deferred against property and £1.692m (23%) is under 30 days old, which includes sums owed by the National Health Service or other local authorities.

Of the remaining £3.203m (43%), the majority has been overdue for greater than one year and in some cases, the customer ID reflects that the debt is now charged to the service users' estate. This poses significant risk to recovery as it is unsecured. This has been reflected by an appropriate increase in the Bad Debt provision specifically earmarked for this Service area.

Whilst social care debt needs to be managed in a sensitive manner, considering the potential vulnerability of the service user, this has been highlighted as an area for improvement. A review of working practices for this debt area is

currently underway with the intended outcome of a centralised debt management team for the Council with a view to maximising collection in this area for both current and future years.

### 3.10 **Parking**

The recovery of unpaid Penalty Charge Notices is undertaken by a semi-judicial process under the current Traffic Management Act 2004.

From 1 April 2023 to 31 July 2023, a total of 24,467 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have been issued identifying a projected income of £722,395. It should be noted that PCNs are issued at a higher rate and lower rate (£70.00 and £50.00 respectively) depending on the seriousness of the parking contravention. PCNs may be paid at a discounted rate of 50% of the charge if paid within 14 days of the date of issue.

This value is continuously being amended as payments are received and it should be recognised that payments made at the 50% discount amount will reduce the projected income level. Historically, 75% of paid PCN's are paid at the discounted payment.

The value of cancelled notices for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 July 2023 is £85,094 and cases written off where no vehicle owner has been identified totals £8,846.

**Note:** "In parking enforcement process, only PCNs that have been registered as an unpaid debt at the Traffic Enforcement Centre are classed as being at debt stage."

### 3.11 **Miscellaneous Income**

This will include a range of services that the Council will charge for including such areas as rental income on commercial properties, recharges to other bodies for services we have provided, and recovering overpaid salaries from staff that have left.

It is important to note that collection can vary month by month depending on the value of invoices raised as a reasonable period needs to be allowed for payment to be made.

There has been a significant increase in the write off position due to high value debt agreed for write off in the previous quarters report.

Total debt outstanding of £4.831m compared to £8.127m at the same time last year, a reduction of £3.296m. Of which, £700K is owed by various government bodies and represents little risk of not being received.

### 3.12 Housing

Under the management of South Essex Homes there are arrears of outstanding debt of Rent and Service Charges for housing tenants. Extensive recovery procedures are followed but if the debt is deemed to be irrecoverable then the cost of any write-offs for this category of debt is specifically charged to the Housing Revenue Account and not to Council Tax payers.

### 3.13 Debt Collection and Recovery Policy and Write-Off Levels

The current Debt Collection and Recovery Policy was approved in November 2017, at this time delegation was given to the Executive Director (Finance & Resources) to update the values and level of write-off that can be written off by various designated officers with the Council. Although the Council's existing policy remains robust it was approved at the last Debt Management report to Cabinet that a refresh is undertaken as part of the transformation review for the service and any proposed changes are brought back for consideration and approval by Cabinet. It is intended that this will now be for the January cabinet cycle to enable the refreshed policy to align with the outcomes of the transformation review including automation of processes and procedures.

Write off approval levels currently in place are shown in the tables below, which are in accordance with the latest Financial Procedure rules set out in the Constitution and the latest corporate debt recovery policy.

<b>Debt Type: Accounts Receivable/Adult Services/ Housing and Council Tax Benefit</b>	
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Assistant Manager	under £5,000
Manager	Up to £10,000
Executive Director (Finance & Resources)	Between £10,000 and £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

<b>Debt Type: NNDR (National Non Domestic Rates)</b>	
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Senior Officer	Up to £2,000
Team Leader	Up to £5,000
Manager	Up to £10,000
Executive Director (Finance & Resources)	Between £10,000 and £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

<b>Debt Type: Parking</b>	
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Team Leader	Up to £5,000
Head of Parking	Up to £10,000
Jointly - Head of Parking and Executive Director (Finance & Resources)	Between £10,000 and £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

South Essex Homes, as managing agent, submit proposed write-offs to the Council, following which the following approval levels are exercised.

<b>Debt Type: Housing Rents and Service Charges</b>	
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Jointly - Head of Housing Service and Executive Director (Finance & Resources)	Under £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

#### **4. Reasons for Decisions**

- 4.1. Debt collection is conducted independently by the Accounts Receivable, Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Benefit Overpayment, Parking and Enforcement penalties, Adult Social Care and Library fines. All action instigated remains in accordance with the Council's Corporate Debt Management Policy to ensure a fair and consistent approach is applied to each case, and to maximise collection for the Council. The Council have agreed to consolidate the debt collection of the services included in this report to form a Corporate Debt collection team to maximise revenue and the experience of residents.
- 4.2 Each write-off is considered on an individual basis to assess the viability of collection and via the Council's Corporate Debt Management Policy to ensure a standard consistent approach.

#### **5. Other Options**

- 5.1. This is a report notifying members of the current position of the Council's debt and related write offs, and therefore there are no other options.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Debts that are written off will have been provided for within the Council's bad debt provision and as such there should be no specific additional financial implications for the Council. However, it is possible that unforeseen and unplanned additional write offs occur, which could lead to the value of debts written off in any year exceeding the bad debt provision.

Where there is a potential for this to happen, this report will act as an early warning system and will enable additional control measures to be agreed and undertaken to either bring the situation back under control, or to make appropriate adjustments to the bad debt provision.

Relevant service areas are aware that they will have to bear the full cost of the value of debts that are written off from within their service's budget.

The Council's bad debt provision is calculated according to the type of debt using and agreed formulae. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by Finance Officers applying their professional judgement considering specific service knowledge. The proposed arrangements for each debt type are reviewed annually, and the approach is agreed with the Council's external auditors.

For General Fund debt the following percentages are used to calculate the value of provisions for various types of debt

Type of debt	Age of debt in months						
	<1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-6	6-12	>12
Sundry Debt	0%	10%	10%	50%	50%	90%	90%
Adult Social Care	0%	10%	10%	50%	50%	90%	100%
Commercial Rents	0%	10%	15%	25%	50%	70%	90%

Where there is an active payment plan in place no bad debt provision is made.

Provisions for bad debt associated with Council Tax or NNDR are calculated as part of the Collection Fund accounting arrangements and apportioned between Southend-on-Sea City Council as the billing authority and preceptors. These calculations follow a similar formulaic approach for bad debt provision over the last 23 years. The approach and calculations are also shared with the Council's external auditors each year.

Provisions for bad debt associated with the Housing Revenue Account follow specific recommended guidelines. The Council follows this approach, and the overall bad debt provision is calculated on this basis.

## 7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 If there are debts to be written off that exceed the level at which officers have delegated powers to deal with the matter, authorisation is required from Cabinet.

## 8. Carbon Impact

- 8.1. No carbon impact implications.



## **9. Equalities**

- 9.1 Debt Collection is managed through a Corporate Debt Management Policy and is based on an approach of “Can’t Pay Won’t Pay”. Each write-off is considered on an individual basis through a standard consistent best practice approach.

## **10. Consultation**

- 10.1. No consultation required for the write off of debt.

## **11. Appendices**

- 11.1. Appendix A: Debt Management Position 31.07.2023  
Appendix B: Write Offs 31.07.2023

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Summary of Outstanding Debt**A. Outstanding Debt in respect of arrears before 2023/24**

<b>Debt pre 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Council Tax (a)</b>	<b>Business Rates (a)</b>	<b>Housing Benefit Overpayments (b)</b>	<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>	<b>HRA (Care Line/Service Charges)</b>	<b>Parking (c)</b>	<b>Libraries (d)</b>	<b>HRA Current Tenants (e)</b>	<b>HRA Former Tenants (e)</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Net Collectable Debt	11,186	1,694	4,259	8,238	11,361	410	1,188	n/a	n/a	477
Amount Paid @ 31.07.2023	1,135	380	497	2,492	8,872	124	72	0	n/a	69
Number of Accounts	20,117	558	2,097	3,606	1,765	147	n/a	n/a	n/a	513
<b>Total Outstanding</b>	<b>10,051</b>	<b>1,314</b>	<b>3,868</b>	<b>5,746</b>	<b>2,489</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>408</b>

**B. Current Year Debt (Debt raised in respect of 2023/24)**

<b>Debt post 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Council Tax (a)</b>	<b>Business Rates (a)</b>	<b>Housing Benefit Overpayments (b)</b>	<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>	<b>HRA (Care Line/Service Charges)</b>	<b>Parking (c)</b>	<b>Libraries (d)</b>	<b>HRA Current Tenants (e)</b>	<b>HRA Former Tenants (e)</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Net Collectable Debt at 31.07.2023	119,915	39,531	450	4,766	13,943	996	2	n/a	13,730	96
Amount Paid @31.07.2023	42,914	15,861	497	3,074	11,601	446	0	4	13,819	9
Number of Accounts	8,499	2,386	343	998	638	545	n/a	n/a	1,793	100
<b>Total Outstanding</b>	<b>77,001</b>	<b>23,670</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>1,692</b>	<b>2,342</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1,022</b>	<b>87</b>

<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>Council Tax (a)</b>	<b>Business Rates (a)</b>	<b>Housing Benefit Overpayments (b)</b>	<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>	<b>HRA (Care Line/Service Charges)</b>	<b>Parking (c)</b>	<b>Libraries (d)</b>	<b>HRA Current Tenants (e)</b>	<b>HRA Former Tenants (e)</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Total Net Collectable Debt at 31.07.2023	131,101	41,225	4,709	13,004	25,304	1,406	1,190	n/a	13,730	573
Total Amount Paid @31.07.2023	44,049	16,241	994	5,566	20,473	570	72	4	13,819	78
Total Number of Accounts	28,616	2,944	2,440	4,604	2,403	692	n/a	n/a	1,793	613
<b>Total Debt Outstanding</b>	<b>87,052</b>	<b>24,984</b>	<b>4,218</b>	<b>7,438</b>	<b>4,831</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>1,118</b>	n/a	<b>1,022</b>	<b>495</b>

**NOTES**

- (a) Council Tax and Business Rates includes adjustments for write offs, credits and outstanding court costs.
- (b) HB Overpayment is not attributable to a financial year in the same way that Council Tax or NDR are i.e. a yearly debit is not raised. It is also not feasible to state when a payment is made which age of debt it has been paid against. For these reasons the outstanding amounts in the report reflect the actual outstanding debt at the date requested, it does not reflect the outstanding debt against current year and previous year debts.
- (c) Parking total outstanding is net of PCNs cancelled and written off.
- (d) The figure of £18k relates to total payments received since 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2023
- (e) HRA tenancy debts (residential rent accounts) are rolling amounts, with no breaks in years or rollovers. Any cash received is applied to the oldest rent week outstanding. The figures shown are total arrears outstanding, and therefore include arrears still outstanding from prior years.

**Summary of Write Off's**

Debts written off in 2023/24

Period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 relating to any year

Write Offs	Council Tax £	Business Rates £	Housing Benefit Overpayment £	Adult Services £	Miscellaneous Income £	HRA (Service Charges) £	Parking(a) £	Libraries £	HRA Tenants £
Under £5k	116,079.22	13,334.90	7,529	12,270	33,108	10	357,643.81	733.60	31,545.64
£5k-£25k	0	58,708.43	0	5,961	16,742	0	0.00	0	19,315.76
Over £25k	25,686.20	52,259.54	0	0	264,717	0	0.00	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>141,765.42</b>	<b>124,302.87</b>	<b>7,529</b>	<b>18,231</b>	<b>314,567</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>357,643.81</b>	<b>733.60</b>	<b>50,861.40</b>

(a) Parking debts written off this period relate to (i) expired warrants (ii) PCNs where DVLA has no keeper details (iii) PCNs where unable to register the debt and (iv) PCNs with invalid VRM

**There are no Write off's greater than £25,000 to be submitted for approval for this period.**

Amount to write off	Service Area

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