

**Communities and Environment Policy and
Scrutiny Committee**

20th January 2016

**Report of the Interim Director of City & Environmental Services
and Director for Communities and Neighbourhoods.**

2015/16 Finance & Performance Monitor 2 Report

Summary

1. This report provides details of the 2015/16 forecast outturn position for both finance and performance across services within City & Environmental Services and Communities and Neighbourhoods.

Analysis

Finance – General Fund

2. The services that relate to the Communities and Environment Policy and Scrutiny Committee cross two directorates (City and Environmental Services and Communities and Neighbourhoods). Service Plan variations which relate to services within this scrutiny are shown below:

	Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
City & Environmental Services			
Waste	8,491	8,739	+248
Communities and Neighbourhoods			
Housing General Fund	2,081	2,127	+46
Public Protection	-1,014	-1,017	-3
Community Safety	894	894	0
Neighbourhood Working	2,506	2,455	-51
Community Centres	70	70	0
Communities and Equalities – Neighbourhood Management	936	936	0

Note: “+” indicates an increase in expenditure or shortfall in income
“-” indicates a reduction in expenditure or increase in income

3. Details of the main variations by service plan are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Waste (+£248k)

4. There is a forecast overspend of £153k due to the forecast shortfall in dividend from Yorwaste due to the company facing difficult trading conditions, £185k due to unachieved income targets from charges at the Household Waste Recycling Centre and a shortfall in income from green waste subscriptions (£59k). In addition there are forecast savings in waste disposal from lower tonnages (£116k) and additional income from landfill gas (£105k).

Communities and Neighbourhoods

5. The remainder of the Community and Neighbourhood Services are forecast a net underspend of £8k. There is a small overspend forecast across Housing Services £46k (2.2%) however this is offset by an underspend within Neighbourhood working following a management restructure.

Finance - Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

6. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is budgeted to make an in year surplus of £2.6m. A review of the budgets in the area shows that, overall, a small under spend of £2k is forecast. This is made up of an over spend of £250k on repairs and maintenance due to the continued use of subcontractors mainly in connection with damp works and is offset by a range of other under spends mainly due to lower than forecast levels of arrears. This will continue to be monitored as further elements of welfare reform are introduced. The working balance of £14m at 31/3/15 will therefore increase to £16.6m by 31/3/16 in line with the HRA business plan.
7. Work is still in progress to update the HRA business plan following the recent government announcements to require councils to sell their high value properties when they become vacant and to reduce social housing rents by 1% per year for the next four years. While the full extent of the impact of these changes is not yet known, the HRA will be required to make significant efficiencies in order to mitigate the reduction in income without reducing the HRA balance below prudent and sustainable levels.

8. To give some idea of the scale of these changes and their impact on the HRA, the requirement to reduce housing rents by 1% could potentially reduce income by up to £12m over a 4 year period. This is because the business plan assumed annual rent increases of approximately 3% pa. The requirement for a 1% reduction therefore results in a swing of some 4%.

Performance

9. 535 missed bins were reported between July and September with 62% put right by the end of the next working day. Although the number of missed bins has decreased by 33% compared to the same period in 2014/15, the percentage put right within timescale has also fallen. In Q2 2014/15 there were 794 missed bins with 71% put right by the end of the next working day.
10. The number of families being accepted as homeless has increased by 2 to 25. Families, single females and males with children accepted as homeless has increased but the number of couples with children has fallen. The number of children in temporary accommodation has decreased to 82 (from 84), but the number of families in temporary accommodation remains the same at 47.
11. In November the Tenant & Leaseholder Annual Report 2014-2015 will be sent to about 8,000 residents in the city. This report produced by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel of six council tenants, shows that York is one of the best-performing local authority landlords in the country in a number of areas.
12. The average void period for council houses has reduced from 3.5 weeks in Q1 to 3.3 weeks in Q2 (3.9 weeks in Q2 2014/15) with the number of void council house properties reducing from 188 in Q1 to 160 in Q2 (176 in Q2 2014/15). The number of mutual exchanges of council houses has increased from 30 in Q1 to 40 in Q2.
13. Total crime in York is forecast to increase 11% compared to the previous year and projected to revert back to the figures of 2012/13 and 2013/14. Significant increases are forecast in violent crime, shoplifting and burglary non-dwelling categories. Latest benchmarking information show rates of crime at a national level have also risen significantly in Q2, and levels of overall crime in comparable authorities are increasing at greater rates than in York. Reports of domestic violence are predicted to be 6% greater than those reported during the same timeframe in 2014/15.

14. Levels of anti-social behaviour recorded by the police are predicted to be at similar levels to the previous year with the city centre cumulative impact zone seeing a small reduction in incidents. Since the ASB Hub started collecting data in February 2015, there have been 1005 new cases recorded. By August, there were 460 cases recorded that have now been classified as closed of which 430 had been resolved (93%) and 30 unresolved (7%).

Implications

15. There are no financial, human resources, equalities, legal, crime & disorder, information technology, property or other implications associated with this report.

Risk Management

16. The report provides Members with updates on finance and service performance and therefore there are no significant risks in the content of the report.

Recommendations

17. As this report is for information only, there are no recommendations.

Reason: To update the scrutiny committee of the latest finance and performance position.

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**Report
Approved**



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