

Financial Monitoring 2017/18 – General Fund Revenue – Material Variances**Education, Communities and Economy****Children's Services**

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Non-Residential services commissioned and provided for children with and without disabilities	Higher than anticipated levels of demand for Respite, Direct Payments and Taxi Services commissioned for children with disabilities. There is also a projected overspend on respite services commissioned for children without disabilities.	189	190	The causes and trends underlying this variance will be analysed and addressed in the 2018/19 budget setting process.
Residential and Day Education Placements	The forecast requirement for residential placements is higher than anticipated and provided for in the budget. Demand for new placements, particularly expensive secure accommodation, has been high for the first half of the financial year. Since the quarter 1 projection there has been one additional secure placement and one new residential placement.	49	110	This represents a 4% overspend on the Multi-Agency Resource Group budget of £3 million. The budget has been substantially reduced from £3.9 million in 2016/17 reflecting Council Transformation activity. The group continues to challenge new demand to keep costs under control and has recently been successful in its work to progress children in secure placements to allow them to move to other forms of care.
Gross Overspend		238	300	
<i>Offset by:</i>				
Other non-material variances	Miscellaneous over and underspends covering the remaining areas of the Children's Services budget.	(1)	(5)	No impact on frontline service.
Net Overspend		237	295	

Communities and Economy

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Midlothian Local Development Plan	The estimate of the costs of the required public examination of the LDP by Scottish Government reporter was lower than the expected final outturn. The variable being the number and complexity of unresolved objections to the LDP.	38	43	One-off financial pressure associated with completing the 2014 Plan.
Charging for Section 75 Agreements	Charging for Section 75 Agreements was approved by Council when setting the 2017/18 budget. Processes to allow this to happen are still under development so the 2017/18 savings target will not be achieved in full.	20	30	Appointment of section 75 compliance officer in July 2017. Charging can only be implemented in new S75 agreements where the appropriate clause is included. It cannot apply retrospectively to existing agreements. Therefore income in 2017/18 will be minimal, possibly zero.
Landlord Registration Income	Landlord registrations are renewable on a 3 year cycle. Fewer registrations are due to be renewed in 2017/18 than budgeted.	19	19	
Other non-material variances	Miscellaneous over and underspends covering the remaining areas of the Service budget.	15	18	
Gross Overspend		92	110	
<i>Offset by:</i>				
Vacancies and Performance Factor	The number of vacancies across the service exceeds the performance factor.	(64)	(105)	Vacancies taking longer to fill than projected at Q1.
Net Overspend		28	5	

Education

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Schools	Schools are currently projected to underspend by £0.679 million. However, in accordance with the current Devolved School Management rules and based on current projections schools would be able to carry forward budget of £1.007 million into 2018/19.	0	328	<p>The impact of this on the General Fund Reserve will be 2-fold. Firstly, there will be a utilisation of the non-earmarked element of the reserve of £0.328m. Secondly there will be an increase in the earmarked element of the reserve of £1.007 million.</p> <p>A detailed review will take place between Q2 and Q3 of spend in this area with a view to reducing the impact on the non-earmarked element of the General Fund Reserve.</p>
Early Years	Significant demographic growth and the popularity of the Good time to be 2 initiative has resulted in a rise in pupil uptake within Early Years.	0	328	Early Years budgets, particularly in light of the increase in pre-school entitled hours to 1140, are being reviewed. In addition contracts with external providers are being reviewed to ensure they match current needs.
Mini Service Reviews	In setting the 2017/18 budget Council approved savings of £150,000 which would flow from some service reviews within the Education Service. Due to other pressures implementation has slipped.	0	150	Other areas are being explored to deliver this saving in 2017/18 pending delivery of service reviews as planned and the quarter 3 position will reflect progress with this.
Lifelong Learning and Employability Income	There is a projected under recovery of income as a result of lower contract values awarded and a withdrawal of funding from the Big Lottery in 2017/18.	63	42	There will be a focus on reducing expenditure throughout the service in order to minimise the impact of reduced income values.
Other non-material variances	Miscellaneous over and underspends covering the remaining areas of the Education Service budget.	(80)	90	No impact on frontline service.
Gross (Underspend) / Overspend		(17)	938	
<i>Offset by:</i>				
PPP Contracts	Insurance costs are lower than provided for in the contract which leads to a refund from the contractor.	(182)	(182)	Windfall Income. This is the consequence an annual review for PPP2 (£83,000) and a 5-yearly review for PPP1 (£99,000).
	Contractual refund of funding paid to cover reparation of malicious damage that was not utilised.	(65)	(65)	Assumptions regarding performance reductions will be checked and updated during the development of the 2018/19 budget.

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
	The rate of inflation applied to contracts was lower than provided for in the budget.	(55)	(55)	Inflation assumptions will be reviewed during development of the 2018/19 budget.
Net (Underspend) / Overspend		(319)	636	

Health and Social Care

A provision for an additional allocation for services Delegated to Midlothian Integration Joint Board - Adult Social Care

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Community Care Resource Panel	Assessed needs are currently more than budgeted. The budget amounts to around £32m, is demand led and subject to demographic pressures. Individual packages of care are sometimes in excess of £100k per annum and as a consequence projections in this area can be volatile.	792	266	<p>An overspend position at the end of the previous financial year alongside additional savings targets remain a challenge to meet. However the Realistic Care, Realistic Expectations work stream continues to monitor savings delivery. The work of the review team is beginning to have an impact on expenditure levels, with further savings scheduled to commence in the second half of the financial year. The aim is to reduce the existing level of commitments whilst still meeting critical and substantial need. This remains challenging against a background of increasing demands, particularly going forward in relation to young people with complex needs moving into Adult services.</p> <p>The implementation of two new policies, Fair Access to Care and Transport should ensure transparency and equity in this process of allocating resources.</p>
Home Care / Midlothian Enhanced Rapid Response and Intervention Team (MERRIT)	Additional employee costs due to the volume of care packages being provided.	391	535	<p>Due to the ongoing pressures within external services delivering care at home, the in-house Homecare and MERRIT services have been creating additional capacity which is resulting in an over spend on existing budgets. These costs are being offset by underspends within the external provider contract budgets.</p> <p>A key action has been to establish a new framework agreement resulting in additional providers being available within Midlothian and work has begun to transfer services to these providers. This is being supported by a wider review of care at home to create a new delivery model to support more efficient and effective service delivery.</p>

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Care Homes for Older People	Overspend on staffing costs to cover gaps in the rota at Newbyres (£169k).	266	159	The levels of sickness absence within Newbyres is driving the overspend and there are management actions now in place to address the situation. This is being implemented and monitored through a robust action plan, with HR support being provided to support staff return to work at the earliest opportunity. The Highbank service review is nearing completion and interviews for posts will commence at the end of October.
Non-achievement of management review saving	Delays in implementing a new management structure across Health and Social Care.	55	55	The new management structure has now been signed off and the consultation process with staff will commence in late October with a view to being implemented from January 2018.
Other non-material variances	Miscellaneous over and underspends covering the remaining areas of the Adult and Social Care budget.	40	75	No impact on frontline service.
Gross Overspend		1,544	1,090	
<i>Offset by:</i>				
Public Protection	Scottish Government funding provided specifically for Adult Support and Protection requirements. Some spend relevant to this funding is in the form of care packages and is met from the resource panel budget.	(159)	(136)	No impact on frontline service but the underspend offsets care and support costs related to protection issues.
Criminal Justice	An element of the Scottish Government funding is used to fund the management and administration of this service.	(65)	(55)	No impact on frontline service.
Cherry Road, Community Access Team, Shared Lives	Underspends on running costs offset by non-achievement of planned budget savings.	(60)	(24)	No impact on frontline service.
Net Overspend		1,260	875	

Customer and Housing Services

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Homelessness accommodation	Specialist treatment required in the conversion works to reuse Pentland House have led to delays in the project with completion in September 2017. The full saving on the Bed and Breakfast budget will therefore not be made.	208	208	The budget provided for an average 36 B and B places per week. Average occupancy is currently 69 places.
Gross Overspend		208	208	
<i>Offset by:</i>				
Revenues Service Vacancies	There have been a number of vacancies and also maternity savings resulting in a projected underspend within the revenues processing team.	(74)	(37)	No impact on frontline service.
Customer Services Vacancies	Vacant posts as a consequence of the Customer Services Review.	(54)	(19)	Posts have been filled quicker than anticipated at Q1.
Community Safety Staffing	Projected saving as a result of not backfilling maternity absence.	(27)	(33)	No impact on frontline service.
Other non-material variances	Miscellaneous over and underspends covering the remaining areas of the Customer and Housing Services budget.	(9)	12	No impact on frontline service.
Net Overspend		44	131	

Resources

Commercial Services

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Review of travel arrangements associated with the grey fleet.	A budget reduction of £150,000 in 2017/18 was approved. At this stage it is anticipated that savings will commence in 2018/19.	150	150	Work is underway to develop options and plans. The financial impact of these will be picked up in due course.
Commercial Operations Service Review	A budget reduction of £250,000 in 2017/18 was approved. The review is underway but will only part deliver planned savings in 2017/18.	60	48	It is anticipated that the full saving will be achieved in 2018/19.
Trade Waste Charges	A 10% price increase was approved for 2017/18 and was expected to generate an additional £30,000 of income. Subsequently the customer base reduced and this will result in less income being generated than expected.	18	18	The service continues to look to attract new customers.
Review the number of Football Pitches	A budget reduction of £10,000 in 2017/18 was approved. At this stage it is projected that the review will not yield any savings in 2017/18.	10	10	Review work is underway and the financial impact of this will be picked up in due course.
Review of financial contribution to Pentland Hills Regional Park	A budget reduction of £20,000 in 2017/18 was approved. The full impact of this saving will not be achieved in 2017/18.	5	5	It is anticipated that the full saving will be achieved in 2018/19.
Gross Overspend		243	231	
<i>Offset by:</i>				
Waste Disposal Charges	Tonnages to date are lower than expected.	(78)	(113)	Volume of tonnage can be volatile.
Roads Services Income	Income generated from new developments and Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders is anticipated to exceed budget.	(30)	(30)	Budget will continue to be monitored and will be reviewed if sustainable in the longer term.
Net Overspend		135	88	

Finance and Integrated Service Support

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Employee Performance Factor	The performance factor for the service is £466,000. At this time predicted vacancies and other staffing variations will not fully offset this giving rise to an overspend.	135	137	Only essential vacancies are filled and work continues to explore opportunities to reduce this overspend.
Central Postages and printing costs	The volume of postages and printing exceeds budget.	60	22	A review of activity is underway with the aim of minimising volumes and reducing reliance on paper in accordance with EWIM principles.
External Legal Fees	Continuing costs associated with residual equal pay and other staffing related cases, the continued high incidence of children's permanence cases, a rise in the costs of curators fees associated with permanence cases and occasional complex one-off cases.	30	35	<p>The residual legal issues relating to Equal Pay claims are intended to be brought in-house during 2017/18.</p> <p>Children's permanence cases have now been brought in-house although there will be a number of legacy cases to be completed by external solicitors.</p> <p>A registration scheme has been implemented to employ curators on a lower fee basis than previously charged.</p>
Bank Charges	The shift towards electronic payments has led to increased transaction costs.	25	22	A review of bank charges is underway with the aim of negotiating lower rates with service providers.
Mi-Future	The costs for staff in SWITCH during the year are projected to exceed budget	0	19	<p>6 months budget is moved to Switch with displaced employees. The Mi-Future team continues to work towards a satisfactory resolution for each employee in SWITCH and when compared to severance costs SWITCH remains a cost effective solution</p> <p>As at 30th September, there were 36 people in SWITCH on placements, some of whom are funded by services.</p>
Gross Overspend		250	235	
<i>Offset by:</i>				
Digital Costs	The anticipated cost of equipment and support costs is lower than budgeted.	(109)	(105)	Future year budgets will be reviewed.

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
Disclosure Scotland Fees	Anticipated costs in 2017/18 are lower than budgeted.	(28)	(3)	Future year budgets will be reviewed.
Archiving	Anticipated costs in 2017/18 are lower than budgeted.	(25)	(28)	Costs are expected to increase in future years as the facility is used more.
Other non-material variances	Miscellaneous over and underspends covering the remaining areas of the Finance and Integrated Service Support budget.	(34)	(17)	
Net Overspend		54	82	

Properties and Facilities Management

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional information / Action taken
EWiM planned building closures	Evolving plans for buildings that were planned to be sold or demolished through approved EWiM projects have resulted in anticipated revenue savings not materialising.	95	95	Ongoing costs associated with evolving plans will presented to Council in due course.
Properties and Facilities Management Service Review	A budget reduction of £60,000 in 2017/18 was approved. The review is underway but at this stage it is not anticipated that the full saving will accrue in 2017/18.	60	60	It is anticipated that the full saving will be achieved in 2018/19.
Public Toilet Provision	A budget reduction of £40,000 in 2017/18 was approved. At Q1 it was not anticipated that the full saving would be achieved in 2017/18.	40	0	Council on 26 th September 2017 agreed to keep Public Toilets open but with reduced staffing levels and approved additional funding for this.
Closure of Penicuik Town Hall	A budget reduction of £30,000 in 2017/18 was approved. This has been delayed due to grant funding approvals for external refurbishment works.	30	30	
Review of Facilities Management Officers	A budget reduction of £40,000 in 2017/18 was approved by Council. This will be achieved in part in 2017/18.	20	20	It is anticipated that the full saving will be achieved in 2018/19.
Gross Overspend		245	205	

Other

Description of Variance	Reason for Variance	Quarter 1 £000	Quarter 2 £000	Additional Information / Action taken
Loan Charges	Slippage in the plan has resulted in a lower value of borrowing than planned for. In addition borrowing both on a short term and long term basis has been sourced at lower rates than expected at the time of setting the 2017/18 budget.	(146)	(42)	Movement between Q1 and Q2 is a consequence of the re-representation of the Borders Rail liability agreed with the External Auditor as part of the 2017/18 accounts finalisation process.
Transformation Savings – Integrated Service Support	A Target of £1.122 million of savings was set for 2017/18 which consisted of slippage from previous years and also an additional target for 2017/18. A large part of this target is on course to be delivered in 2017/18 but not all of it.	345	272	The shortfall in delivery will be achieved in 2018/19.
Transformation Savings - Procurement	A target of £0.350 million for procurement savings was set for 2017/18 which reflected slippage in targeted savings for previous years. It is projected that £0.100 million of this will be achieved.	250	152	Continuing inflationary pressures are such that it is challenging to secure budget reductions as contracts are being re-tendered. Contract savings have been made or are planned for 2017/18 which impact on the Capital Account and the Housing Revenue Account.
Transformation Savings – Customer Services	A target of £0.295 million of savings was set for 2017/18 which reflected slippage in targeted savings from previous years and also an additional target for 2017/18. It is projected that £0.115 million will be achieved in 2017/18.	114	180	The shortfall in delivery will be delayed until 2018/19.
Transformation Savings – Tactical Reductions in contracted hours	The target of £0.150 million will not been achieved in 2017/18	150	150	Progress in taking forward a voluntary reduction in hours initiative and promoting flexible retirement options have been delayed.
Scottish Government Grant	The distribution of amounts withheld by the Scottish Government when the budget was set is in excess of Midlothian's expected share.	0	(500)	No additional costs are associated with the higher than anticipated distribution.
Council Tax Income	A continued growth in Band D equivalents results in a higher than budgeted Council Tax yield.	(250)	(400)	The continued growth in Band D equivalents will be factored into Council Tax income budgets for future years.