

FINANCE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024/25

QUARTER 2

5.0 Overview and Scrutiny Comments

- 5.2 The Panel discussed the Finance Performance Report 2024/25 Quarter 2 Report at its meeting on 6th November 2024.
- 5.3 Councillor Blackwell queried which site was referred to under the Community Resilience line within Appendix One (page 133 of the agenda pack) in reference to the transition from Places for People and the agreement of management of that site, the Panel heard that clarification would be sought and communicated back.
- 5.4 Following an enquiry from Councillor Martin about a possible discrepancy between the forecasted underspend on the revenue outturn figures from quarter 2 versus quarter 1, the Panel were advised that the detail would be sought and brought back for clarification. Following the meeting it was advised that the Corporate Director of Resources queried during the meeting whether Councillor Martin was referring to the capital outturn (which did report an underspend of £1,218k at the end of Q1) and Councillor Martin did confirm that that he was in fact referring to the revenue outturn. We can confirm that the revenue forecast underspend at Q1 was £444k, which included the planned use of underspends of £1,660k. If this had been reported separately (as is the case for the Q2 report) the underspend at Q1 would have been £2,104k (£444k plus £1,660k. The figures reported at Q2 are therefore correct and consistent with those reported at Q1.
- 5.5 Councillor Chapman enquired about a separate amount of £1 million which had previously been allocated to the Market Towns for St Neots project and where that was now allocated within the budget. The Panel heard that the report was to show the accounts for the quarter, however this would be investigated and brought back to the Panel.
- 5.6 Following an enquiry from Councillor Jennings about the highlighted underspend of £100,000 to the increased MRF contract contradicting with a later noted underspend due to late completion of the MRF contract, the Panel heard that this had been split out and reported as previously requested by the Panel which was why it was now showing in a different fashion. Following a further question from Councillor Jennings, the Panel were assured that plans were being implemented to ensure long term debt recovery on commercial rents be addressed and that this would be reported back in a future report to the Panel.
- 5.7 In response to a query from Councillor Martin, the Panel heard that additional National Insurance and wages costs were showing in Table 3.2 due to a

previous computer error, in order to correct this, they had been put into the finance budget so that individual budgets would not be affected. Councillor Gleadow observed that it was concerning that an underspend was predicted under the Planning salaries line and that she would endeavour to take this up with the portfolio holder.

- 5.8 Councillor Jennings observed a marked increase relating to Civil Parking Enforcement and enquired why this had occurred, following which, the Panel heard that costs had been estimated within the CPE strategy, however upon implementation the signs and lines required far more work than anticipated and the increase in cost was as a result of that.
- 5.9 Following a question from Councillor Chapman, the Panel heard that due to staff turnover and staff sickness within the CCTV team there had been an increased use of agency staff to cover vacancies during the recruitment period. The Panel were further advised that contracted staff and agency staff were budgeted for separately and that the underspend in one area had balance the increased spend in the other with no detriment to the service.
- 5.10 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.