

MONITORING REPORT FROM DIRECTORS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

DATE: 27 Aug 2009

PURPOSE

To update members on activity within the Children's Services Directorate during the period to 31 July 2009.

BACKGROUND

The Children's Services Directorate budget is projected to be overspent by £986k, an increase on the £391k reported last month. The projected overspend is mainly related to increasing numbers of children in care and the high cost of agency social workers. The increase in children coming into care reflects the national trend. Figures released by The Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass) during July show that nationally there were 774 applications to bring children into care during June, compared to 627 the previous month. By comparison, In June last year 368 applications were made.

In RBWM the numbers of children coming into care through the legal route (i.e. as a result of public care proceedings) are as follows:

2007-2008: 8 cases were issued (involving 17 children.)

2008 –2009: 10 cases were issued (involving 23 children.)

From April 1st until 31st July 2009: 4 cases were issued (involving 10 children) with a further 3 cases (involving 6 children) awaiting a date for the initial court hearing.

In addition the Authority is holding 5 cases involving 8 children in the Pre-proceedings stage.

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Revenue Budget

LA funded Children's Services

Safeguarding Services are currently carrying several vacant social worker posts, most of which are covered by agency workers at higher cost than those on the Royal Borough payroll. Work is underway to reduce our dependency on agency workers. The need for agency workers varies from month to month depending on need so the current projected overspend of £110k is subject to change.

Part of the Children's Services budget includes a managed vacancy factor of £835k. Lower than predicted turnover in several areas of expenditure within the Directorate means it will be difficult to meet the managed vacancy factor target in the current financial year. The projected overspend due to managed vacancy factor is currently £228k.

DSG funded Children's Services

The DSG funds an insurance scheme to cover the additional costs to schools of teaching staff on paid maternity leave. The high number of claims in the first quarter of this year suggests that this budget will overspend by £90k.

MONITORING REPORT FROM DIRECTORS OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE: 27 August 2009

PURPOSE

To update members on activity within the Adult and Community Services Directorates during the period to 31st July 2009.

BACKGROUND

The Adult and Community Services Directorate budget is projected to be underspent by £205k which is the same as reported last month. The overall underspend relates mainly to the impact of demographic changes.

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Revenue Budget

The Adult and Community Services budget has been adjusted to take account of the impact of inflation on residential and nursing home fees which is anticipated to be £165k less than originally budgeted for. This amount has now been taken into savings and is no longer included in the reported variance.

The impact of a number of underspends in 2008/9 and current demographic trends would indicate that approximately £100k of the £570k demographic growth allocation for 2009/10 may not be required.

There are continued difficulties with the contract at Queen's Court and an income shortfall of £156k is forecast. There is a proposal to convert 18 private beds to residential care for dementia. It is thought that there is a shortage of these beds and therefore we should be able to fill them and this will improve the profit sharing arrangements. That said 14 of the 18beds have now been filled so there should be some income coming in soon

The external homecare budget included £255k for the implementation of new arrangements for the delivery of homecare. It was expected that these changes would occur in the last 6 months of 2009/10, however these changes will now not take place within the current financial year and this budget will not be used in 2009-10. There will however be an overspend of £200k on the internal home salaries budget as a result of this delay in the changes to the service.

MONITORING REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

DATE: 31st July 2009

PURPOSE

To update members on activity within the Environmental Services Directorate during the period to July 2009.

BACKGROUND

The key issues identified in this month's Budget Monitoring Report are:

- Economic climate continues to affect parking income levels

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Revenue

1. An allocation of £100k from the Economic Contingency Reserve has been made this month to cover the projected year end shortfall in car parking income of £100k, (1.5% on total income), mainly in the Maidenhead car parks. In view of the current economic climate income levels are being closely monitored to identify the potential trends for shortfalls.
2. Household waste to landfill is also being carefully monitored, and current indications are that the target of 44,000 tonnes will need a concerted effort to achieve, involving a continuous drive for higher levels of recycling, following the final allocation of free composters and the second phase of the green waste kerbside collection scheme and successful launch of the Recycle Bank pilot Scheme. The graph below shows how tonnages are reducing and are now in line with the monthly target.
3. The Directorate is diligently looking at all areas where savings could be made to offset any effects of the economy.

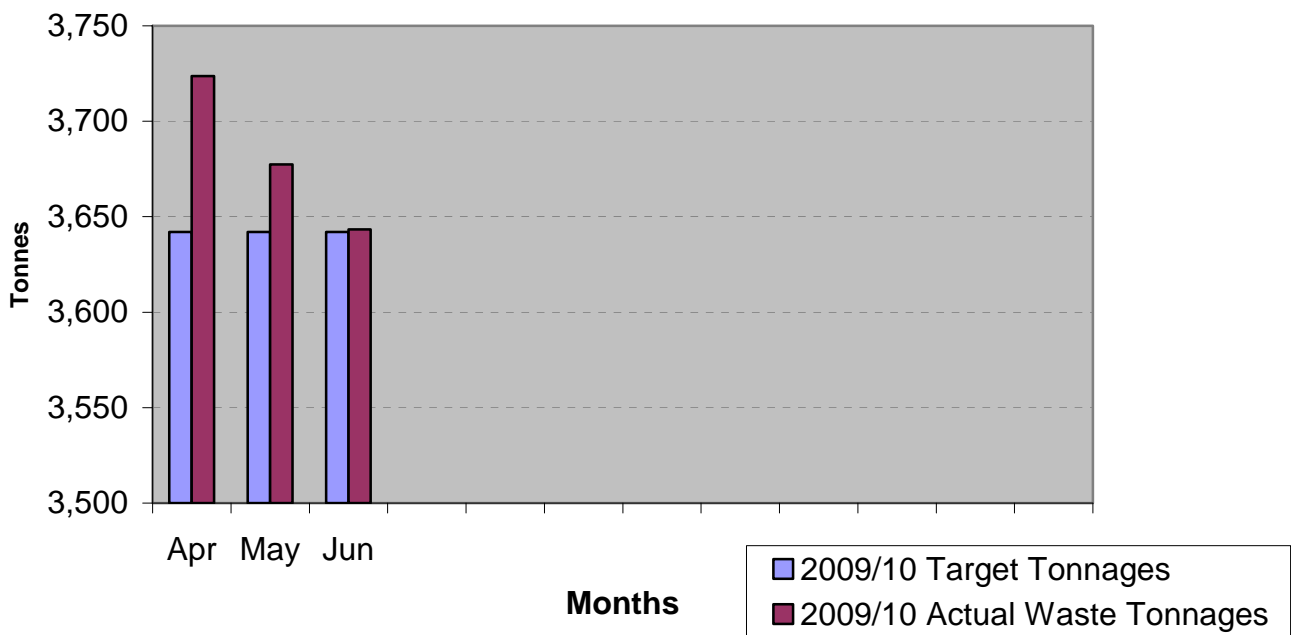
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

A new weekly inspection regime for the Multi Storey Car Parks (MSCP's) and Subways has been introduced. These inspections are in addition to the existing contractual arrangements and cover both cleanliness and maintenance.

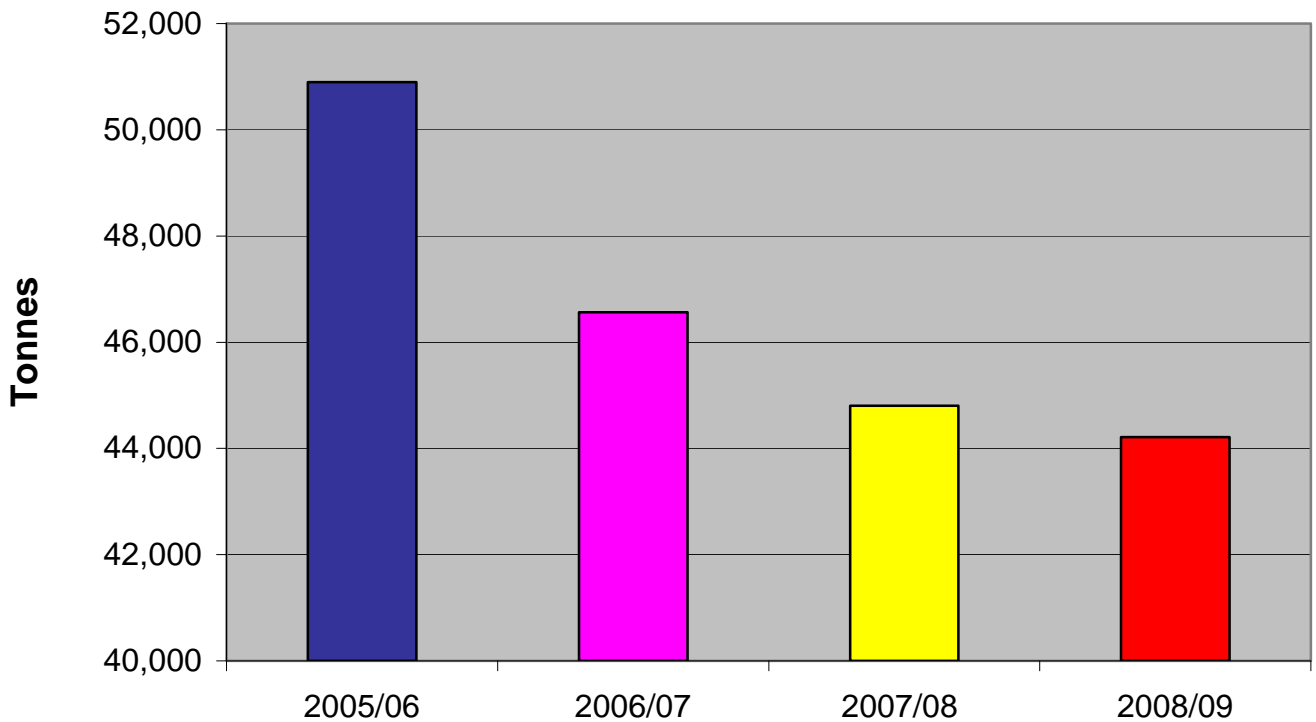
Specific issues are categorised as either 'Minor Issues' that can be resolved speedily and within budgetary provision and contractual arrangements or 'Major Issues' that require further investigation or cannot be remedied within existing budgetary or contractual arrangements

Any 'Minor Issues' identified are being addressed.

2009/10 Household Waste Tonnages - Actuals Vs Targets



**Comparison of Household Waste Tonnages (Landfilled)
(Year on Year)**



MONITORING REPORT FOR RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

DATE: 31st July 2009

PURPOSE

To update members on activity within the Resource's Directorate during the period to July 2009.

BACKGROUND

The Resources Directorate reports an overspend against approved estimate of £72k, an increase of £47k since last month (£25k caused by additional agency staff to manage increase in benefits claims during the recession). Mitigating actions have been agreed with service heads to bring expenditure back within budget.

The approved estimate has decreased slightly since June, from £11,622k to £11,612k, after the transfer of a support officer from Leisure Services to the Director of Resources, increased budget for accountancy software and an adjustment for savings allocations to Policy, Performance and Planning.

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Revenue

The increase in the variance by £47k to July 2009 relates to additional agency and overtime staff costs from the roll-out of the new HR Trent system (£25k), Purchase of Health & Safety software (£13k) and a one off unplanned severance costs in the CSC (£9k) due to the restructure to increase performance in April.

Amongst other plans, it is intended to reduce the HR spend on hardware, printing and agency staff by £25k. An amended Health & Safety Training programme should save a further £13k.

Customer Service Centre Survey

Members might like to note that an independent survey has been conducted which provides an assessment of Customer Service Advisor Performance. This is a survey which will be repeated quarterly.

The CSC was viewed in a positive light compared to other authorities in the survey with performance over a range of criteria of 88% against an average of 81%.

Detailed findings showed that there is still some work to do on call response time but it highlighted the courteous way that calls were handled and that advisers were able to deal with requests without having to transfer calls.

MONITORING REPORT FOR POLICY, PERFORMANCE & PLANNING

DATE: 31st July 2009

PURPOSE

To update members on activity within Policy, Performance and Planning during the period to July 2009.

BACKGROUND

There is a projected overspend of £64k (last month: £53k overspend) in Policy, Performance and Planning against the approved estimate of £6,738k (last month £6,480k).

The approved estimate of £6,739k is £259k higher than reported last month. The main increases are £32k from LPSA Reward Grants and £148k from Pump Priming Grants. £57k is relates to a reallocation of savings from the Resources directorate and £22k relates to a climate change grant.

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Revenue

The increase in projected overspend of £11k is due to:

- Staffing issues in the Developing Connections Team (£20k)
- A state visit due in October adding £15k to costs in the Mayoral & Civic service (additional barriers and sanding the route)
- Lower building control income (£15k)
- Offset by underspends from staff vacancies in Chief Executive's area (£21k) and Strategy & Information team (£18k)