

Item 09 – Financial monitoring 2023/24 – to the end of September 2023

The attached report was considered by the Finance & Investment Advisory Committee on 2 November 2023. The relevant Minute extract is below.

Finance & Investment Advisory Committee (2 November 2023 Minute 31)

The Head of Finance presented the report which updated Members on the current financial position of the authority as at the end of September 2023 and the forecast to March 2024. The previous report to the end of July had forecast a full-year unfavourable variance of £1.489 million. Since then, Officers had implemented a number of actions which had brought the unfavourable variance down to £971,000, which was moving in the right direction but was still a significant gap.

He further advised that since the publication of the report the pay award offer had now been accepted. There would be additional staff costs of £750,000 against the budget assumption of 2%, which was reflected in the forecast position. He also drew attention to other significant unfavourable variances, which were detailed within paragraphs 12 – 16 of the report, which included overspends within Direct Services, who were still functioning at post pandemic levels, and the unplanned costs regarding Oakhill Road. There were also some favourable variances, which were detailed in paragraphs 8 – 11 of the report, which included a number of staff vacancies, and a reduction in external spend, among others.

Members discussed the report. In response to questions Members were advised that some of the unfavourable variances were due to market changes and were being addressed as part of the budget process. Members also discussed staff costs and the number of vacant positions. Further information was requested on the underspend on staff costs and the split between posts that were being held vacant against the posts that couldn't be filled.

Action: That Officers provide the split between posts being held vacant and those that could not be filled.

Resolved: That the report be noted.