

REGENERATION AND HOUSING DIRECTORATE

1. Directorate Overview

- 1.1 There is a financial pressure of £0.450 million within the Directorate overall.
- 1.2 For the Directorate as a whole 10 (77%) performance measures are on target with 1 (8%) off target but within acceptable tolerances and 2 (15%) off target
- 1.3 There are 6 red risks and 10 amber risks within the Directorate.

2. Directorate Financial Performance

- 2.1 The Directorate is currently estimated to have a projected outturn position of £(2.504) million against a budget of £(2.954) million which is an adverse variance of £0.450 million.

Partnerships Team

- 2.2 The Partnerships Team is projecting no variance to budget at this stage.

Planning and Regulatory

- 2.3 There has been exceptional staff turnover this year which will mean additional costs in the short term estimated at £0.200 million. Officers are currently working to rectify the problems and ensure that the service is placed in a more sustainable position going forward. The additional costs will be funded from Corporate contingencies.

Housing and Property

- 2.4 City Executive Board, at its meeting of 10th September 2015, agreed to defer schemes in the current year's Capital Programme. This is having a knock-on impact on the capital project fee income earned by the Housing and Property service creating a budget pressure of £0.250 million. Where possible, reductions in staffing have been made to mitigate this by reducing temporary staffing. Capital work is anticipated to resume later in this financial year or in 2016/17 and an assessment of the level of resource required longer term will be made at that time. In the meantime, work is continuing on getting schemes ready for start on site pending scheme reinstatement. This cannot be charged to capital at this time but if the schemes are re-instated this financial year, fees can be charged to those schemes. If schemes are not reinstated or are not reinstated until next financial year, the fees cannot be charged to capital, however there will be direct revenue financing resources freed up that can mitigate the impact on the General Fund.

Housing Revenue Account

- 2.5 The summarised HRA position as at 30th September 2015 is shown in Appendix F3. The HRA is forecasting a nil variance at this stage. There are, however, some matters of note considered below.

Income

- 2.6 Dwelling rents income is over budget to date due to some affordable housing properties coming on line mitigating the effect of right to buys. Whether this additional income results in a year end favourable position depends very much on future right to buy sales therefore no forecast year end variance is currently being reported.

Expenditure

- 2.7 Responsive & Cyclical Repairs is showing an overspend to date but this is primarily relating to works at Normandy Crescent flooding, the majority of which is anticipated to be reclaimed from Thames Water.

HRA Rent Arrears

- 2.8 HRA arrears, adjusted to exclude debt that is subject to direct payments and excluding rechargeable repairs, totalled £0.842 million at the end of September 2015, an increase of £0.038 million on the arrears brought forward at the end of March 2015.

3. Directorate Performance – Exceptions

Planning and Regulatory

- 3.1 Processing of minor planning applications – year to date performance was 61% compared to a target of 70%, which has been due to a backlog of applications earlier in the year. A ‘blitz’ initiative has been undertaken to address this and performance has started increasing towards target levels. Performance for the month of September was 79%.
- 3.2 Processing of other planning applications – year to date performance was 76% compared to a target of 82%, which has been due to a backlog of applications earlier in the year. A ‘blitz’ initiative has been undertaken to address this and performance has started increasing towards target levels. Performance for the month of September was 86%.

Housing Property

- 3.3 Capital receipts – receipts to date are £0.074 million against a year to date target of £0.855 million, but most of the target is due to be met just before the year end with the sale of Temple Cowley Pool.

4. Risk Performance- Exceptions

- 4.1 There are three red risks identified in Housing & Property and three in Planning and Regulatory. There are also nine amber risks listed below. All of the amber risks are currently being managed as part of day to day business activity and are not currently expected to rise to a level of red risk

Red:

Planning and Regulatory

- 4.2 Major service failure due to a significant loss of ICT resulting in a reduced service to customers and a backlog of work to be cleared.
- 4.3 Opposition to emerging statutory plans and to planning applications and decisions resulting in delays, additional costs, reputational risk and possibly amendments to policies.
- 4.4 Partnership risk, predominantly around City Deal, resulting in a failure to achieve progress against plans and potentially less favourable outcomes.

Housing and Property

- 4.5 An inability to recruit and retain suitable staff in Property and Major Works teams resulting in additional cost and lack of delivery against work programmes.
- 4.6 Implications on the HRA business plan and the delivery of planned investments in social housing arising from the announcements contained in the Chancellor’s Summer Budget in July. Changes that are required to be made to the HRA Business Plan to mitigate the pressures will be determined through the budget setting cycle which is underway.
- 4.7 Increased costs of homelessness resulting, less effective homelessness prevention work and higher homelessness acceptance.

Amber:

Planning and Regulatory

- 4.8 Six amber risks have been identified in this area relating to various service issues: not embedding HMO licensing, managing workloads, meeting income targets, public health protection, external delays to council projects and changes to government legislation.

Housing and Property

- 4.9 Four amber risks have been identified in this area relating to various service issues: delivery failure of adult homelessness pathway, property related health & safety failure, delivery failure of affordable housing and ICT project delivery failure.

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