

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 SEPTEMBER 2007

CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT - FINANCIAL MONITORING

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This is one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year to highlight the financial performance of the Corporate Services Department. Members are asked to note the report.

2. FINANCIAL YEAR 2006/07 OUT-TURN

- 2.1 The financial out-turn for 2006/07 was reported to Cabinet on 20 June 2007 and Corporate Services Department is detailed as follows :

Service Area	Budget £	Expenditure £	Variation £
Central Services	77,700	90,471	12,771
Change Management	533,300	382,176	(151,124)
Corporate Policy	1,486,000	1,413,492	(72,508)
Human Resources	48,200	46,190	(2,010)
Legal & Democratic	1,059,100	1,063,078	3,978
Strategic Development	1,885,900	1,509,309	(376,591)
Tourism & Marketing	1,321,800	1,361,739	39,939
Total	6,412,000	5,866,455	(545,545)

- 2.2 The net underspend of £545,545 within Corporate Services was mainly attributable to the underspend of £437,300 on the Deferred Charges budget held within Strategic Development. However, there is a corresponding budget held elsewhere within the Council producing a neutral effect overall.
- 2.3 The underspend of £151,124 within Change Management was due to delays in appointing staff within the newly formed service.
- 2.4 The Coroner's Service overspend of £113,791 was contained within the overall Corporate Services budget due to corresponding savings made elsewhere within the budget.

3. FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/08

- 3.1 Further to the reporting of the Estimates 2007/08 to Council on 1 March 2007, the approved budget for the Corporate Services Department is £6,131,000 and this is analysed over the services areas as follows :

Service Area	£
Central Services	76,400
Change Management	600,100
Corporate Policy	1,487,300
Human Resources	25,000
Legal & Democratic	1,085,400
Strategic Development	1,887,600
Tourism & Marketing	1,332,500
Service Re-engineering Savings	(353,300)
Budget approved by Council 1 March 2007	6,131,000

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING 2007/08

4.1 Progress on implementing Policy Options

4.1.1 The agreed policy options affecting Corporate Services Department are :

4.1.2 The sum of £25,000 was allocated to Human Resources as a 1 year policy option towards the costs of implementing a scheme to improve e-recruitment. This initiative is subject to the out-come of a review of the current service.

4.1.3 The sum of £35,000 was allocated to Occupational Health in 2006/07, as a 1 year policy option, to trial an Employee Assistance Programme in several departments within the Council. The programme, which commenced 1 April 2007, will operate for a 12 month trial period, and the success of the pilot will be reviewed at the end of the year.

4.2 Progress on delivering savings

4.2.1 The agreed savings for the Corporate Services department are :

Reduction in Voluntary Sector budget	60,000
Reduction in Schedule of Rates (allocated across all departments)	60,000
Closure of tourist information centre	58,000
LA 21 initiatives fund	40,000
Car allowances	4,500
Total	222,500

These savings have been incorporate within the relevant departmental budgets for 2007/08.

4.3 Progress on delivering Service Re-engineering savings

4.3.1 The Corporate Services Department share of the overall savings target for the year 2007/08 is £353,000 to be achieved through re-engineering savings of £244,000 and procurement savings of £109,000.

4.3.2 To date, £140,000 has been identified through increased income, maximisation of grant due and reduced support budgets, with a further £104,000 to be achieved through vacancy control.

4.4 Impact of Cabinet / Executive Board decisions

4.4.1 There have been no Cabinet or Executive Board decisions affecting this budget.

4.5 Variations

4.5.1 The following sections highlight those areas of the budget which have been identified as key risks in delivering the objectives of the department within the available resources. These are subject to closer monitoring because of the volatile nature of either demand or cost or because in recent years have experienced pressures in keeping to the agreed budget.

4.5.2 Asset Management

The disposal of land element of the Asset Management budget is traditionally a volatile area as expenditure is determined by the level of the Council's acquisition and sale of land and buildings which will vary in accordance with the Council's policies and priorities. No adverse variances are apparent.

4.5.3 Coroner's Service

The Council's budget for the Coroner's Service is held within Corporate Services Department, although the budget is not controllable by the Council and therefore presents a difficult area of budget to contain within the approved budget. The Coroner's Service budget for 2007/08 is £271,500 and efforts will be made to contain this budget from within the Corporate Services overall budget. Progress on the Coroner's budget will be regularly reported to Members in 2007/08.

4.6 Issues affecting future financial years

4.6.1 The following is an issue which may affect future years.

4.6.2 Coroner's Service

The Council's budget for the Coroner's Service is held within Corporate Services Department and presents a difficult area of budget to contain within the approved budget.

5. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

5.1 For 2007/08 the agreed estimate for the Corporate Services Department is £6,131,000 and, at this stage of the year is projected to be the anticipated spend.

5.2 There are no additional staffing implications arising from this report.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

7. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

9. LOCAL MEMBERS SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific implications for any Member or Ward.

10. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

11. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 None used in the preparation of this report.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.

13.2 That a further report be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

J WILKIE

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE/DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

This report was prepared by Hilary Pollard who can be contacted on 666 3394.