

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

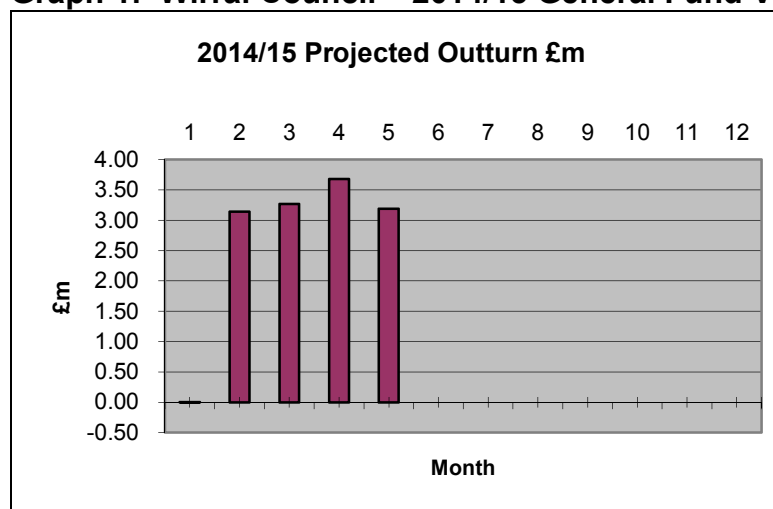
9 OCTOBER 2014

SUBJECT	REVENUE MONITORING 2014/15 MONTH 5 (AUGUST 2014)
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES
KEY DECISION	YES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the revenue position for 2014/15, which at Month 5 (August 2014) shows a projected General Fund overspend of £3.19 million (1.3% of the net revenue budget). This shows an improvement compared with a projected overspend reported at month 4 of £3.68 million as shown in graph 1. The report also provides further detail regarding the measures being undertaken to address the General Fund overspend as requested by Cabinet when considering the Month 4 report at the 11 September meeting.
- 1.2 The projected overspend originates in the main from the Families and Wellbeing Directorate. Adult Social Services are currently projecting a £2.7 million overspend. This is mainly due to slippage or non-delivery of in year savings and demand pressures. The Children's area of the Directorate is also forecasting an overspend of £543,000. This is mainly due to non-achievement of in year transport savings as well as costs of external residential placements. A series of management actions are taking place within the Families and Wellbeing directorate to help compensate and/or limit any variances.

Graph 1: Wirral Council – 2014/15 General Fund Variance, by month



2 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

- 2.1 The 2014/15 Budget was agreed by Council on February 25, 2014 and is detailed in Annex 2; any increase in the Budget has to be agreed by full Council. Any changes to the budget occurring since it was set will be summarised in the table below.

Table 1: 2014/15 Original & Revised Net Budget by Directorate £000's

	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget Changes Prior Mths	Approved Budget Changes Month 5	Revised Net Budget
Chief Executive	10,035	-	-	10,035
FWB - Adult Social Services	74,667	-	-	74,667
FWB – Children & YP, Schools & Safeguarding	82,877	-	-	82,877
FWB - Sport & Recreation	8,502	-	-	8,502
Regeneration & Environment	95,190	-93	-	95,097
Transformation & Resources	20,199	71	-120	20,150
Corporate Growth & Savings	-15,813	22	120	-15,671
Net Cost of Services	275,657	0	0	275,657

3 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The outturn position projected as at the end of period 5, key issues emerging and directorate updates are detailed below.

Projections

Table 2: 2014/15 Projected Budget variations by Directorate £000's

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overspend Month 5	RAGBY Classification	Change from prev mnth
Chief Executive	10,035	9,926	-109	G	-74
FWB - Adult Social Services	74,667	77,384	2,717	R	-582
FWB – Children & YP, Schools & Safeguarding	82,877	83,420	543	R	82
FWB - Sport & Recreation	8,502	8,583	81	G	32
Regeneration & Environment	95,097	94,997	-100	G	-57
Transformation & Resources	20,150	20,207	57	G	108
Corporate Growth & Savings	-15,671	-15,671	-	G	-
TOTAL	275,657	278,846	3,189		-491

The main report only comments on large variations (Red and Yellow items). The 'variations' analysis over 28 budget areas, distinguishes between overspends and underspends. The 'risk band' classification is:

- Extreme: Overspends - **Red** (over +£301k), Underspend **Yellow** (over -£301k)
- Acceptable: Amber (+£141k to +£300k), Green (range from +£140k to -£140k); Blue (-£141k to -£300k)

3.2 Directorate Updates

Significant Directorate Variances and Actions to Address

Families and Wellbeing:

- 3.2.1 **Adults:** A potential overspend of £2.7 million is forecast as at Month 5. The potential overspend is mainly within community care which is being addressed through demand management and market transformation schemes. A number of the 2014/15 budget options contain risk of non-delivery of full saving in 2014/15. There are a total of £3.6 million management of actions identified across the department which are limiting the overspend position. Profiles of actions and their impact are being established to monitor progress against agreed savings.

Update and Actions:

- 3.2.2 Day Services are likely to only achieve in year £370,000 of the £750,000 2014/15 saving, due to part year impact of implementation, with the balance slipping into 2015/16. This shortfall is reflected within the directorate forecast and will continue to be reviewed throughout the year. Whilst progressing, and further actions to accelerate progress are being made, at this stage there is potential slippage of £0.4 million to 2015/16.
- 3.2.3 Targeting support through NHS contracts and targeting Council resources are large 2014/15 savings options. The funding for new cases is now more clearly defined but the review of current cases remains challenging. An additional external post was recruited to enable the resolution of issues with Health, although the post-holder subsequently left. The latest assessment is that £2 million can be achieved through the planned actions with around £1 million being outstanding.
- 3.2.4 Demand for Adult Social Care continues to increase and the mix of services provided to individuals continues to vary as a consequence. With changes to assessed requirements as well as the impact of the case reviews the forecasted spend in specific care areas is subject to change. At this stage there is a £0.3 million projected overspend attributable to demand pressures.
- 3.2.5 The review of Continuing Health Care Appeals requires liaison with health colleagues and it is a lengthy process comprising 10 stages of engagement, each presenting their own challenges. Whilst a number of hurdles have now been cleared this is taking longer than initially envisaged delaying the achievement of the £0.5 million saving.
- 3.2.6 A number of the savings are linked to increased income the main item being the income from the domiciliary care block contracts. The £0.25 million is anticipated to be achieved although with the changes to be implemented at this time slippage of £0.25 million is being forecast.

3.2.7 Management actions include:-

- The assessment and review of cases is key and a Business Case is being prepared about the potential recruitment of additional temporary support in order to progress the reviews.
- For the high cost placements an additional review is being undertaken by the Head of Service and Director.
- A Transformation Group supported by colleagues from other Directorates is monitoring progress has given greater focus to ensure that scarce resources are targeted towards achieving the savings.
- Review of other departmental budgets to ascertain if any efficiencies can be identified to mitigate against the projected overspend being forecast. This includes the use of the monies set-aside as a result of the early delivery of savings achieved in 2013/14.

3.2.8 **Childrens:** A potential overspend of £543,000 is currently forecast. This is due in the main to non-achievement of savings regarding transport contracts and the transport depot where projected savings have reduced following the Cabinet report dated 7 July 2014 due to various contractors not accepting all contracted routes. Figures are still being finalised but currently there is a £54,000 part year saving against the £556,000 target. There is also £104,000 of resources carried forward from last year helping to offset the target this year which leaves a potential shortfall of £400,000. The Depot saving of £100,000 is also currently showing as not being achieved. In addition, are also issues within specialist services in respect of higher residential placement numbers and costs of agency staff.

3.2.9 A number of management actions are being taken with regards to controlling the overspend these are -

- Restructures across the department are being implemented and are closely managed to minimise the impact on services and staff, whilst keeping slippage on savings targets as low as possible.
- There is a rolling programme of recruitment to Social Work positions. Agency costs and placements are reviewed on a monthly basis.
- Residential Care placements are agreed by a multi agency panel, progress and packages of care are closely monitored by the Head of Service in monthly traffic light meetings to ensure that decisions are implemented and overall costs for children entering and leaving care are clearly understood.
- Budget progress is reported and reviewed monthly at DMT with opportunities to maximise grant and external funding are constantly reviewed.

3.2.10 **Sport & Recreation:** An adverse variance of £81,000 is currently forecast. It is envisaged that this can be managed in year to bring in line within current available resources.

3.3 Other Directorate Variances

- 3.3.1 **Chief Executive's:** A potential underspend of £109,000 is currently forecast as a result of staffing vacancies and non-utilisation of improvement fund for 2014/2015.
- 3.3.2 **Regeneration and Environment:** This area has a forecast underspend of £100,000. This underspend is due to vacancies within the Waste and Environment Area and an underspend within the replacement wheelie bin budget.
- 3.3.3 **Transformation & Resources:** An overspend of £57,000 is currently forecast for the directorate. This is mostly due to a predicted underachievement of projected summons costs income.
- 3.3.4 For libraries and One Stop Shops a saving of £0.5 million was based upon revised opening hours and whilst achieved in the current year through the temporary management of vacancies the original decision to reduce hours has not been implemented and forms part of a current consultation exercise.
- 3.3.5 In respect of the £0.3 million Business Rates Discretionary Relief saving a paper on the options is being presented to a future meeting of Cabinet and will detail the options and how this particular saving can be achieved.
- 3.3.6 **Corporate Wide Budgets:** A number of high value corporate-wide savings options, because of their size and complexity, are currently classed as red or amber. These include savings from Corporate Commissioning where substantial mitigation has already been identified as outlined in previous monitoring reports. Given their strategic importance these projects are being very closely monitored and will be further reported upon during the year. The Future Council saving for 2014/15 is currently rated amber. Work is progressing in realising the £9.4m approved in February 2014 for 2014/15 and 2015/16. The £4.9m relating to 2014/15 is part of the current work in progress including immediate voluntary redundancies and the restructure work being consulted upon during September.

Graph 2: 2014/15 Directorate Variance, by month

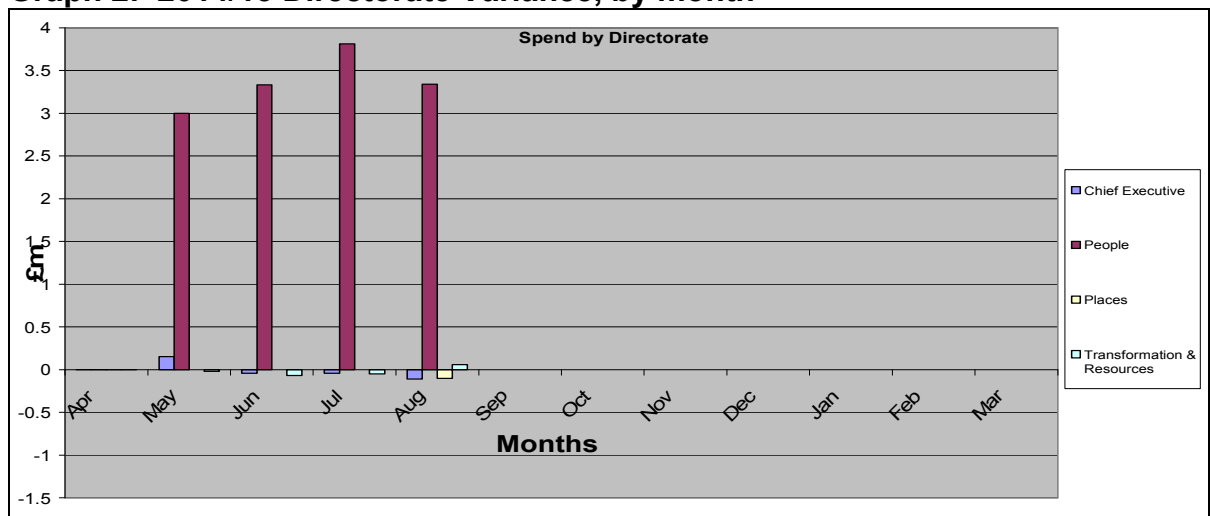


Table 3: Directorate Business Area Projected Budget variations

	Chief Exec	FWB	Rege & Environ	Trans & Res	Total
Red Overspend	0	3	0	1	4
Yellow Underspend	0	2	0	1	3

The full Table is set out at [Annex 3](#)

- 3.4 Directorate budgets are further sub-divided into a number of business areas. Four business areas are currently flagged as red rated.
- 3.4.1 Delivery within Families and Wellbeing (Adult Social Services) – This relates mainly to the delivery of some 2014/15 savings for which further management actions are being identified as outlined earlier in the report.
- 3.4.2 Integrated Transport Unit within Families and Wellbeing (Childrens) - Projected savings within this area have reduced following the Cabinet report dated 7th July 2014 as detailed earlier in this report. The over spend is also attributable to the Depot saving of £100,000 which is currently showing as not being achieved.
- 3.4.3 Specialist Services within Families and Wellbeing (Children’s) - The main reasons for the projected overspend continue to be in relation to the cost of agency staff exceeding the established employee budget and the forecast for Residential placements exceeding the current budget. There are currently 49 residential placements and 31 semi-independent placements compared to 45 and 34 at the year end. Within Fostering there are 34 in agency and 471 local authority placements compared to 34 and 477 at year end.

3.4.4 Business Processes within Transformation & Resources – This overspend is due to increased costs as a result of delayed savings. Based on the 2013-14 outturn position there is a potential shortfall on Summons Costs income. A better indication of this will be after the half year stage in September when further summons costs in respect of 2014/15 bills will have been raised.

Three business areas are currently flagged as yellow rated.

3.4.5 Targeted Services within Families and Wellbeing (Childrens) – There are a number of vacant posts which are being held. In addition there is a contribution from reserves in relation to Children's Centres. This area also reflects budget pressures within Youth and Play which is included as part of the Service Review.

3.4.6 Universal Services within Families and Wellbeing (Childrens) - Vacant posts contribute towards the underspend together with a projected £150,000 underspend in the school premature retirement budget.

3.4.7 Resources within Transformation & Resources - Underspend on Employees mainly due to Financial Services although there are other smaller employee underspends within other areas. An additional £60,000 within Treasury has been generated following a review to ensure full cost recovery of services provided to Merseyside Pension Fund.

4 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAVINGS

4.1 The delivery of the agreed savings is key to the Council's financial health and is tracked at both Council and Directorate level. The assumption is that, where there is slippage, the Strategic Director will implement replacement savings.

Table 4: Budget Implementation Plan 2014/15 whole Council (£000's)

BRAG	Number of Options	Jul 2014	Change from prev mnth	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at August	To be Delivered
B - delivered	44	43	1	9,448	9,448	0
G – on track	27	29	-2	6,103	1,701	4,402
A - concerns	25	23	2	13,054	1,810	11,244
R - high risk/ not achieved	8	9	-1	7,654	1,359	6,295
P – replacements for Red	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total at M5 August 14	104			36,259	14,318	21,941
<i>Total at M4 July 14</i>	<i>104</i>			<i>36,259</i>	<i>12,001</i>	<i>24,258</i>

Note: For 2014/15 the red rating definition has been amended from that used in 2013/14. Red is now classed as high risk or not achieved (in 2013/14 it was defined as failed)

4.2 A number of savings options are currently red rated. The 2014/15 red rating definition has been broadened from that used in 2013/14 to now include high risk rather than only failed options.

- 4.3 The savings tracker contains an assessment of the 2014/15 savings programme. This shows £7.7m of savings assessed as red (defined as high risk or not achieved) with a further £13.1m of options rated at amber (concerns). It should be emphasised that a red rating does not mean that no savings will be delivered, but that there is a risk to full delivery in the year. Savings of £3.2 million have been delivered so far in year relating to options currently rated red or amber. There are also mitigating actions identified against a number of options as outlined below.
- 4.4 The ratings are a result of robust assessment of progress to date against the original proposed budget options and identification of in year slippage against targets. Red rated options include a number relating to Adult Social Services options, transport options, savings on the library budget not yet implemented; corporate commissioning and procurement savings still to be identified; however mitigation is in place and being developed as set out below
- 4.5 A number of identified mitigating actions are in place to assist the Corporate savings delivery and reduce the risks to the budget. These include continuation of the spending freeze, vacancy management, the voluntary redundancy offer, reviewing growth allocations and identification and control of other underspending directorate budgets.
- 4.6 The impact of the above measures combined with the projections for the overall budget position reduces the forecast yearly overspend to £3.19 million. Projections will be updated monthly and further mitigating measures are being identified to cover any potential overspend.
- 4.7 The spending freeze for non-essential spending has been extended until further notice. The purpose being to reduce any projected overspend, which by Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003, is the duty of the Council.
- 4.8 The 2014/15 Budget includes a number of budget saving options profiled to produce benefits towards the end of the financial year. Details will continue to be provided throughout the year within the report regarding any slippage in savings achievement and actions taken to bring savings back on schedule, or to provide temporary compensatory funding where appropriate.

5 GROWTH

- 5.1 An allowance for the impact of demographic changes, inflation and other risks - that is outcomes that could be worse than assumed - was built into the budget 2014/15 as detailed at [Annex 4](#). The assumptions which totalled £9.2 million have been subject to review resulting in a reduction of £0.877 million as reported in period 2.

6 INCOME AND DEBT

6.1 Revenue and Income falls into the four broad areas for reporting purposes:

Table 5: Amount to be collected in 2014/15

	2014-15	2014-15	
	<i>Collectable</i>	<i>Collected</i>	%
	£000	£000	
Council Tax	137,233	63,002	45.9%
Business Rates	72,363	32,883	45.4%
Fees and charges – Adults	21,518	19,902	92.5%
Fees and charges – all other services	22,531	18,964	84.2%

*A proportion of Fees income collected in 2014/15 will apply to debts raised pre April 2014, ie to debts in addition to those newly collectable in 2014/15.

COUNCIL TAX

6.2 The Council Tax collection after five months of the year is comparable with the equivalent 2013/14 collection rate. No significant changes to Council Tax apart from the amendment to the Pensioner Discount scheme were implemented for 2014/15. This is now the second year of Local Council Tax Support scheme.

6.3 Recovery from non-Council Tax Support recipient debtors is continuing as normal. Action taken to recover from those of Working Age that previously received Council Tax Benefit is on-going. Repayment plans offering weekly/fortnightly instalments were offered to those contacting the Council. Where possible attempts to collect by Attachment of Earnings and Benefits will be prioritised however inevitably in some cases this will not be possible and alternative methods including Bailiffs will need to be utilised.

BUSINESS RATES

6.4 Following changes implemented recently by central government, businesses can now have the option to pay Business Rates over 12 monthly instalments. Previously payment options had been over 10 instalments. Income collection to the end of August was 45.4%. This was lower than the 50.5%% collected at the equivalent period in 2013/14. The most significant factors affecting collection are £2 million pounds from schools previously paid by August last year but still outstanding. As the Discretionary Rate Relief policy is still to be agreed, this has inflated the opening debit balance by £600,000 due to the non-awarding of this discount. As mentioned in earlier monitors the increased take up of 12 monthly payment instalment option (rather than over 10 months) means that the collection rate will not catch up until March 2015.

DEBTORS

6.5 On-going work has continued to improve collection and resolve outstanding debts and currently leaves a balance outstanding of £22,517,069 compared to last year which at the end of August 2013 was £25,540,280.

7 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is being mitigated by:

- Tracking system of savings options to ensure delivery;
- Budget Tracker Officer Group meets regularly to review savings progress;
- Future Council Project Governance arrangements including the regular review of in year and future savings by Chief Officers;
- Monthly review by Chief Officers and Cabinet, together with an improved Scrutiny regime and greater transparency;
- Individual monthly review by Cabinet Portfolio holder at portfolio meeting.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 Any option to improve the monitoring and budget accuracy will be considered.

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 No consultation has been carried out in relation to this report.

10 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

10.1 There is an on going requirement to identify during the financial year necessary actions to mitigate any forecast overspend.

11 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

11.1 As yet there are no implications for voluntary, community or faith groups.

12 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL, IT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

12.1 Cabinet 12 February 2014 agreed a 2014/15 General Fund balance risk calculation of a minimum of £17.3 million. The level of risk is forecast to reduce in future years with the General Fund balance requirement for 2015/16 calculated at £15.4 million. This will be reviewed during the year to reflect changing circumstances and any in year developments.

Table 6: Summary of the projected General Fund balances

Details	£m	£m
Balance 31 March 2015 when setting the Budget 2014/15		+17.3
Less: Potential overspend, at M5		-3.2
Add: Additional New Homes Bonus		+0.2
Projected balance 31 March 2015		+14.3

12.2 Earmarked Reserves excluding school balances total £66.1 million. These include reserves relating to the cost of Council remodelling, mitigation and specific project support and ongoing financial risks. Earmarked reserves will be reviewed during the year.

13 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The entire report concerns the duty of the Council to avoid a budget shortfall. The Chief Finance Officer has a personal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 section 114A to make a report to the executive if it appears to them that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.

14 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 This report is essentially a monitoring report which reports on financial performance. Any budgetary decisions, of which there are none in this report, would need to be assessed for any equality implications.

15 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

16 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

17 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 17.1 Cabinet is asked to note that at Month 5 (August 2014), the full year forecast projects a gross General Fund overspend of £3,189,000.
- 17.2 Cabinet is asked to note the risks relating to non delivery of savings as detailed within the report and the continued requirement for mitigation and actions to be identified.

18 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 18.1 The Council, having set a Budget at the start of the financial year, needs to ensure that the delivery of this Budget is achieved. This has to be within the allocated and available resources to ensure the ongoing financial stability of the Council. Consequently there is a requirement to regularly monitor progress so that corrective action can be taken when required which is enhanced with the monthly reporting of the financial position.

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ANNEXES

- Annex 1 Revenue Monitoring and Reporting Timetable 2014/15.
- Annex 2 General Fund Revenue Budget for 2014/15 agreed by Council.
- Annex 3 RAGBY Full Details
- Annex 4 Growth and Risk
- Annex 5 Income and Debt

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

There are no background papers/reference materials relating to this report.

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

Briefing Note	Date
N/A	N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Since September 2012, a monthly Revenue monitoring report has been submitted to Cabinet. Budget Council	25 February 2014

**Annex 1 REVENUE MONITORING AND REPORTING TIMETABLE
2014/15**

Period Number	Month	General Ledger Updated and Reports Available To Be Produced	Reports Available For The Executive Strategy Group	Reports Available For Cabinet
			Monthly	Monthly
1	April	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	May	Jun 6	Jun 17	Jul 7
3	June	July 7	Aug 26	Sep 11
4	July	Aug 7	Aug 26	Sep 11
5	August	Sep 5	Sep 22	Oct 9
6	September	Oct 7	Oct 20	Nov 6
7	October	Nov 7	Dec 15	Jan 15
8	November	Dec 5	Jan 19	Feb 10
9	December	Jan 8	Jan 19	Feb 10
10	January	Feb 6	Feb 23	Mar 12
11	February	Mar 6	TBC	TBC
12	Outturn (Provisional)	TBC	TBC	TBC

Annex 2

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15

AGREED BY COUNCIL ON 25 FEBRUARY 2014

Directorate/Service Area	Original Budget	Variances	Revised Budget
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure			
Chief Executives	10,035	-	10,035
Families and Wellbeing		-	
Children and Young People, Schools and Safeguarding	82,877	-	82,877
- Adult Social Services	74,667	-	74,667
- Sports and Recreation	8,502	-	8,502
Regeneration and Environment	95,190	-	95,190
Transformation and Resources	20,199	-	20,199
Net Cost of Services	291,470	-	291,470
Corporate Growth	1,016	-	1,016
Corporate Savings	-16,829	-	-16,829
Budget Requirement	275,657	-	275,657
Income			
Local Services Support Grant			
New Homes Bonus	1,768	-	1,768
Revenue Support Grant	87,492	-	87,492
Business Rates Baseline	32,036	-	32,036
Top Up	40,513	-	40,513
Council Tax Requirement	112,214	-	112,214
Council Tax Freeze Grant	1,334	-	1,334
Contribution from G Fund Balances	300	-	300
Total Income	275,657	-	275,657
Statement of Balances			
As at 1 April 2014	17,300	-	17,300
Contributions from Balances	(300)	-	(300)
Forecast Balances 31 March 2015	17,000	-	17,000

Note: This table will be updated for agreed variances during the year

Annex 3 - MONITORING FULL DETAILS

RAGBY REPORTING AND OTHER ISSUES

The Red and Yellow RAGBY issues that are the subject of corporate focus are detailed in the following sections by Business Areas within Directorates.

Department	Number of Budget Areas	Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Yellow
Chief Executive's	5	0	0	4	1	0
Adult Social Services	2	1	0	1	0	0
Children & Young People, & Schools	5	2	0	1	0	2
Safeguarding	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sports & Rec	1	0	0	1	0	0
Regeneration & Environment	5	0	0	5	0	0
Transformation & Resources	7	1	0	5	0	1
Corporate Growth & Savings	2	0	0	2	0	0
Total	28	4	0	20	1	3

Business Area Reds

	Chief Exec	People	Places	Trans & Res	Total
Red Overspend	0	3	0	1	4
Value £000s		4,293		438	4,731

Business Area Yellows

	Chief Exec	People	Places	Trans & Res	Total
Yellow underspend	0	2	0	1	0
Value £000s		989		310	1,299

Annex 4 GROWTH AND RISK

DIRECTORATE	OPTION TITLE	2014/15 £000
FAMILIES		4,626
Demographic Growth	Childrens - Special Guardianship and Adoption numbers	240
	Adults - Demand (Young Adults with Learning Disabilities)	926
	Adults - Increased demand Older People	1,139
	Adults - Ordinary Residence	500
Other Growth	Assets - Leasowe Millennium Centre	76
	Childrens - Youth and Play Services - refocus provision	50
Inflation	Childrens - Increasing Fostering & Adoption Allowances	200
	Childrens - PFI Affordability Gap	190
	Childrens - Teacher Retirement Costs	80
	Childrens - Transport Contracts	80
	Childrens - Energy and CRC Allowances price increases	310
	Adults - Contract inflation	835
REGENERATION		1,784
Demographic Growth	Temporary Accommodation Budget	50
Other Growth	Housing /Homeless Prevention (presently from Community Fund)	0
	Car Parking Operations Income	350
	Increase to green waste processing gate fee	65
	Economic Strategy Unit	200
	New System for administering Resident Parking Schemes	40
	Parking Income shortfall due to end of income agreement	68
	Biffa Property Uplift	13
	Selective Licensing of Landlords	356
	Homelessness Prevention Grant	221
Inflation	Highway Services Contract	48
	Contract for Parking Enforcement Services	10
	Urban Traffic Control Systems	20
	Biffa Contract Inflation	343

DIRECTORATE	OPTION TITLE	2014/15
		£000
TRANSFORMATION		2,773
Other Growth	Graduate Trainee Programme	88
	Savings Profiling including Business Rates	900
	Council Tax Summonses	1,300
	Council Tax Support Scheme: Uprating in line with Housing Benefit	265
	IT Support	120
	Benefit Advice Services	100

By Directorate	2014/15	By Type Of Growth	2014/15
	£000		£000
Families & Wellbeing	4,626	Demographic	2,855
Regeneration	1,784	Other Growth	4,212
Transformation	2,773	Inflation	2,116
Total	9,183	Total Growth	9,183

Since the budget was set a review of growth and assumptions has been undertaken which was reported in the month 2 monitor.

Annex 5

INCOME AND DEBT

The following shows the collection progress for Council Tax, Business Rates, Accounts Receivable and Benefits

COUNCIL TAX

The following statement compares the amount collected for **Council Tax** in the period 1 April 2014 to 31 August 2014 with the amount collected in the same period in 2012/13:

	Actual 2014/15 £000s	Actual 2013/14 £000s
Cash to Collect	137,233	135,495
Cash Collected	63,002	62,534
% Collected	45.9%	45.9%

Council Tax benefits have been abolished and replaced by Council Tax support £27.81 million is in payment and the numbers and awards as at 31 August 2014 are as follows:

Number of Council Tax Support recipients	37,362
Number of pensioners	15,783
Number of vulnerable (working age)	8,209
Number of working age	13,370
Council Tax Discretionary Policy as at 31 August	

29 awards granted totalling £5,040,

227 refused reason, requesting payment of 22% after maximum Council Tax Support.

8 cases reason, moved to 100% CTS from 78%,

7 cases reason, others/misc.

20 cases outstanding.

BUSINESS RATES

The following statement compares the amount collected for **National Non-Domestic Rates** in the period 1 April 2014 to 31 August 2014 with the amount collected in the same period in 2013/14:

	Actual 2014/15 £000	Actual 2013/14 £000
Cash to Collect	72,363	70,314
Cash Collected	32,883	35,505
% Collected	45.4%*	50.5%

* 12 instalments introduced, adopted by at least 25% of accounts showing comparison.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

The table below shows the directorates and amount of debt at each recovery stage:

Directorate Description	Less than 10 days	1st reminder	2nd reminder	3rd reminder	Total at 31.08.14
Chief Executive	£66,222	£6,273	£5,072	£632,328	£709,895
Neighbourhood	£4,871	£0	£940	£14,283	£20,094
Transformation & Resources	£1,028,300	£7,515,702	£22,432	£763,952	£9,330,386
Families & Wellbeing	£4,785,001	£1,163,713	£464,420	£9,465,079	£15,878,213
Regeneration & Environment	£416,576	£423,988	£94,955	£612,358	£1,547,877
Policy & Performance	£192,090	£0	£161,004	£0	£353,094
Totals	£6,493,060	£9,109,676	£748,823	£11,488,000	£27,839,559

The above figures are for invoices in respect of the period up to the end of August 2014. Payments as well as amendments such as write-offs and debt cancellations continue to be made after this date on all these accounts. There is a further deduction of £322,490 to be made for unallocated payments leaving a balance of **£27,517,069**

BENEFITS

The following statement details the number of claimants in respect of benefit and the expenditure for Private Tenants and those in receipt of Council Tax Support up to 31 August 2014:

	2014/15	2013/14
Number of Private Tenant recipients	32,390	31,690
Total rent allowance expenditure	£64,455,454	
Number under the Local Housing Allowance Scheme (<i>included in the above</i>)	12,464	12,119
	£26,390,838	
Number of Council Tax Support recipients	37,362	38,300
Total Council Tax Support expenditure	£27,749,174	
Total expenditure on benefit to date	£92,204,628	

The following statement provides information concerning the breakdown according to client type as at 31 August 2014 and gives the early year numbers to show the shift in sector by benefit claimants during the year.

	31.8.14	30.4.14
Claimants in the Private Rented Sector	14,733	14,531
Claimants in the Social Rented Sector	17,657	16,906
Owner Occupiers	9,934	10,118
Total claimants by age group		
- under 25 years old	2,473	2,504
- 25 – 60 years old	22,516	21,548
- over 60 years old	17,335	17,361

There are 42,324 benefit recipients in Wirral as at 31 August 2014.

Under Occupancy regulations

From 1 April 2013 property size criteria was introduced to working age tenants of social landlords (Registered Providers). Where a claimant is deemed to be occupying accommodation larger than they reasonably require Housing Benefit is restricted:-

- By 14% in 2,756 cases
- By 25% in 664 cases

The number of claims affected does fluctuate. The numbers above are a snapshot at 31 August 2014.

Housing Benefit Fraud and Enquiries – 1 April 2014 to 31 August 2014

New Cases referred to Fraud team in period	534
Successful Prosecution/Administration penalty/caution	31
Tenancy Fraud	1

Discretionary Housing Payments

The table below profiles the position of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) administration and associated spend. DHP is not a payment of Housing Benefit and is funded separately from the main scheme. Since the introduction of Welfare Reform and associated impacts, additional funding has been made available.

The Government contribution for 2014/15 is £995,795 with an overall limit of £2,489,487 which the Authority must not exceed. The committed spend at 81%, compares to 24% at the end August 2013. 66% of awards made are in respect of social sector tenant/claimants whose housing benefit has been reduced on the basis of accommodation size. Whilst the variant is considerable at this point in 2013/2014, spend did increase to 95% at year end. However, the present rate of spend projects considerable overspend. As such, applications are now subject to increased scrutiny together with necessary limits being

imposed around awards. Managers monitor fund administration /applications closely whilst continuing to ensure that applications are considered in line with Policy.

Month	Claims Considered			DHP Awards in Payment	Current Awards	% spent (committed) of total fund	Annual Total Cont. remaining
	Total considered	Awarded	Refused				
April	259	203	56	248	£93,371	10%	£902,424
May	464	361	103	816	£181,503	35%	£814,292
June	501	358	143	1370	£307,503	57%	£426,171
July	401	235	166	1777	£503,465	74%	£256,841
August	248	124	124	1953	£600,280	81%	£192,869
Totals	1873	1281	592				

Local Welfare Assistance

The Local Welfare Assistance Support Scheme (LWA), supported by a £1,345,925 Government Grant, gives assistance to those in immediate crisis or need through the provision of pre payment cards for food and fuel and direct provision of white goods. The number of applications continue to rise on a week by week basis. The present rate of spend projects 100% grant spend at year end.

LWA details for period from 07 April 2014 to 31 August 2014:

Number of awards granted for food	1,118	value	£52,512
Number of awards granted for fuel	1,478	value	£24,298
Number of awards granted for goods	3,389	value	£365,228

Total number of awards made 5,985 value £884,077

This direct grant will be ended on 31 March 2015 and during 2014/15 the Authority is reviewing options for what, if any, provisions are made for 2015/16 in this area.