

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 20 March 2025

**Title:** Revenue & Capital Financial Monitoring Report  
Quarter 3 2024/25

**Report of:** Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of the Council and  
Cabinet member for finance, assets and community wealth  
building

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of report:** The report provides an assessment of the Council's  
financial performance against its approved 2024/25 budget,  
incorporating key financial risks, issues and opportunities  
for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account

**Decision type:** Non-Key

**Officer recommendation(s):** It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- i) Note the forecast outturn position for 2024/25 and associated risks.
- ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Performance and the portfolio holder for finance to apply the required budget virements to support effective management of the overall budget.
- iii) Note Appendix 1 and 2

**Reasons for recommendations:** To update members on the financial position of the Council and ensure that the Authority complies with its financial regulations.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Lewes District Council provides a range of services to residents and businesses across the area including the collection and disposal of waste, housing, and support for the homeless, leisure and community wellbeing, planning and tourism and culture activities.
- 1.2. However, the Council, alongside many other local authorities and organisations across the nation, has seen a significant impact on its finances originating from external factors beyond its control. The main drivers of these cost pressures are highlighted below:
  - The high cost of borrowing affecting the Council's ability to fund Capital Expenditure.
  - Cost of living pressures impacting on pay awards, the net cost of borrowing, contract inflation and energy costs.
  - The lack of clarity over Government funding for local government particularly around business rates and a long-term settlement to enable planning over the medium term.
- 1.3. As a result of these externally driven financial challenges, the Corporate Management Team continues to be focused on reducing the cost-of-service delivery to support the Council to forecast spend closer in line with the budget, while ensuring that quality services are still delivered.

## **2. General Fund**

- 2.1. The forecast outturn position for 2024/25 as at Q3 2024/25 is an overspend of £0.200m (an improvement of £134k from the Q2 position) as shown in Table 1.
- 2.2. The position at Q3 follows our usual review of budgets and likely expenditure. The position will continue to be analysed and monitored over the coming months to achieve the plan of expenditure and funding aligning by the year end.

## Financial Overview by Directorate

Table 1: Forecast Outturn 2024/25 by Directorate

LEWES Directorate Forecast Outturn	23/24 Outturn	Current Budget	Previous forecast	Forecast (Actuals)	Variation to Q2 forecast	variance
£000						
Corporate Services	6,381	6,290	6,248	6,451	203	161
Service Delivery	11,336	12,516	12,973	13,507	534	991
Regeneration & Planning	1,377	1,373	1,486	1,997	512	625
Tourism & Culture	303	310	273	370	97	60
Recharges to the HRA	(4,203)	(4,843)	(4,797)	(4,797)	0	46
<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>15,194</b>	<b>15,645</b>	<b>16,184</b>	<b>17,529</b>	<b>1,345</b>	<b>1,884</b>
Capital Financing & Central	409	841	202	(1,277)	(1,479)	(2,118)
<b>Total Budgeted Expenditure</b>	<b>15,603</b>	<b>16,486</b>	<b>16,386</b>	<b>16,252</b>	<b>(134)</b>	<b>(235)</b>
Less Funding	(15,603)	(16,486)	(16,051)	(16,051)	0	435
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>(134)</b>	<b>200</b>

This section of the report provides an update on the forecast variations against the 2024/25 budget by Directorates.

### 3.0 Corporate Services

*The Corporate Services Directorate delivers services including human resources, financial services and performance, corporate management team, business transformation and legal and democracy support.*

Table 2: Corporate Services Forecast Outturn 2024/25

Corporate Services Forecast Outturn	23/24 Outturn	Current Budget	Previous forecast	Forecast	Variation to Q2 forecast	Variation
£000						
Business Strategy & Performance	508	894	942	807	(135)	(87)
Business Transformation	365	126	224	287	63	161
Information Technology	1,717	1,786	1,783	1,739	(44)	(48)
Finance	1,401	1,189	1,154	1,195	41	6
Human Resources	305	375	270	278	8	(96)
Internal Audit & Fraud	244	281	268	280	12	(1)
Legal	327	337	329	333	4	(4)
Democracy	1,074	755	859	906	47	151
Land Charges	39	(46)	(10)	(3)	7	43
Corporate Management Team	548	593	429	629	199	36
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>6,528</b>	<b>6,290</b>	<b>6,248</b>	<b>6,451</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>161</b>

3.1 The Directorate is forecasting a £161k increased resourcing. The main variations are.

#### 3.2 **Business Transformation £161k increased expenditure.**

Salary costs of £141k relate to General Fund projects plus £20k project costs not covered by capital receipts.

#### 3.3 **IT £48k underspend**

Various savings and efficiencies on data transmission, software, licencing and equipment.

### 3.4 **HR - (£96k) underspent.**

The service has offered £40k efficiencies in 25/26 budget as parts of the training offering are becoming more inhouse focussed using new technology, offering better value for money and the ability to easily engage with and train more members of staff.

### 3.5 **Democracy - £151k increased expenditure**

- Additional civic costs of £72k following the Independent Panel recommendations on member allowances and training costs (approved by full Council Feb 24).
- Realignment of staff time to reflect fair allocation of resources required to support members £79k.

## 4.0 **Service Delivery**

*The Service Delivery Directorate delivers services including housing and support to the homeless, waste, and environmental services and maximisation and welfare and regulatory service teams.*

Table 3: Service Delivery Forecast Outturn 2024/25

Service Delivery Forecast Outturn	23/24 Outturn	Current Budget	Previous forecast	Forecast	Variation to Q2 forecast	Variation
	<b>£000</b>					
Customer First	(2,830)	3,268	3,552	3,267	(285)	(2)
Customer First - EA/TA		184		691	691	507
Bereavements	45	(9)	26	46	20	54
Environment First	4,475	4,556	4,590	4,547	(42)	(9)
Homes First	2,509	2,855	2,828	2,847	19	(8)
Neighbourhood First	2,240	1,661	1,978	2,109	131	448
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>6,439</b>	<b>12,516</b>	<b>12,973</b>	<b>13,507</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>991</b>

4.1 The Directorate is reporting £0.99m increased resourcing

### 4.2 **Customer First £507k one-off investment**

- £458k unrealised Housing Benefit income partly due to delays in Debtors implementation with new system and a backlog in change of circumstances. This backlog is now up to date and resolved.

### 4.3 **Bereavement Services £54k pressure.**

This relates to a fall in fee income. Fees & Charges for 2025/26 have been reviewed to ensure appropriate recovery of costs which should help to alleviate the pressure in this area.

### 4.4 **Neighbourhood First Team £448k investment**

- **Car Parks £353k pressure**
  - o £217k management fee
  - o £30k insurance claim
  - o £90k income shortfall

- **Parks and Open Spaces £94k** additional investment on tree works, upkeep, play equipment and contract inflation
- **Pest Control £11k** increased expenditure
- Offset by some savings on Public Convenience contract costs.

## 5.0 Regeneration and Planning

*The Regeneration and Planning Directorate delivers services including estates and property estate management and regeneration and planning activity across the area.*

Table 4: Regeneration and Planning Forecast Outturn 2024/25

Regeneration & Planning Forecast Outturn	23/24 Outturn	Current Budget	Previous forecast	Forecast	Variation to Q2 forecast	Variation
	<b>£000</b>					
Building Control	160	(7)	27	183	156	190
Planning	1,380	744	739	903	164	159
Estates & Property	358	(42)	244	281	37	323
Solar Panel Trading	(427)	10	(74)	10	85	0
Wave Leisure	172	371	336	332	(3)	(39)
Regeneration Portfolio	140	131	140	138	(1)	7
Regeneration	432	164	74	149	75	(15)
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>1,373</b>	<b>1,486</b>	<b>1,997</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>625</b>

5.1 The Directorate is forecasting £625k increased resourcing.

### 5.2 **Building Control £190k shortfall**

- Expected income below budget by £108k despite a 10% increase in fees.
- Public Safety Emergency spend of £32k which may be reimbursed.

### 5.3 **Planning £159k increased investment**

- Additional staff costs of £49k with 3 new members of staff having started in October 2024.
- Additional consultancy costs- £82k
- CIL administration fee £30k higher than budgeted

### 5.4 **Estates and Property £323k resource invested.**

Additional transitional costs in relation to Lewes House and the Marine Workshops.

- **£60k - Lewes House** rental income is lower than budgeted, which will be reviewed in the context of existing and future lettings.
- **£300k - Marine Workshop** – This building is in Y2 of ownership, several lettings have been made including Mamoosh, Lanoguard and King & McGaw. A review of the overall business case will be conducted to ensure accurate projections for Y3, 4 and 5 can be provided for decision making. Increase in R&M/Plant R&M in Q2 due to emergency light and kitchen works in Mamoosh Bakery and air coolers in the lanoguard space.
- **£44k - Robinson Road Depot** – linked to the transformation and investment in waste and recycling facilities, including a requirement to increase the Electric

Vehicle fleet for food waste services. This investment includes the leasing of additional land to accommodate the space needed in line with government requirements. This will be factored into future budgets.

- **£144k – Industrial Estates** – rental income on long term leases forecast lower than budget. Rent levels are reviewed using market values when lease contracts allow.
- **(£165k) underspend** on Housing Delivery Team due to capitalisation of salaries.
- **(£53k) Leisure Trust Buildings** ongoing repairs less than expected.

## 6.0 Tourism and Culture

*The Tourism and Culture Directorate delivers a range of cultural activities across the area.*

Table 5: Tourism and Culture Forecast Outturn 2024/25

Tourism & Culture Forecast Outturn	23/24 Outturn	Current Budget	Previous forecast	Forecast	Variation to Q2 forecast	Variation
£000						
Arts Development	18	(12)	3	3	0	15
Tourism & Culture	388	321	270	317	47	(4)
Events	0	0	0	50	50	50
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>60</b>

6.1 The Directorate is reporting £60k increased resourcing.

**Events £50k investment** – A new budget has been introduced for the development of LDC Events.

## 7.0 Technical and Central Controlled Budgets

*Technical and centrally controlled budgets include the treasury budgets, capital financing and contingency budgets. This area will also include any Council wide funds.*

Table 6: Technical and centrally controlled Forecast Outturn 2024/25

Central Budgets Forecast Outturn	23/24 Outturn	Current Budget	Previous forecast	Forecast	Variation to Q2 forecast	Variation
£000						
Contingency - pressures	0	96	0	0	0	(96)
Contingency - Inflation	0	400	0	0	0	(400)
Contingency Pay Award	103	33	636	0	(636)	(33)
MRP & Interest Payments	0	2,312	2,226	1,421	(805)	(891)
Interest received	(1,250)	(1,489)	(2,185)	(2,185)	0	(696)
Earmarked reserve movements	0	(511)	(475)	(513)	(38)	(3)
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>(1,148)</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>(1,277)</b>	<b>(1,479)</b>	<b>(2,119)</b>

7.1 The Council is reporting a forecast outturn position of (£2.1m) underspent. This currently offsets some of the forecasted service pressures outlined in this report.

- 7.2 **Capital Financing** – additional interest income of £696k plus a reduction in the expected Minimum Revenue Provision of £896k.
- 7.3 **Contingencies Pressures and Inflation £0.5m unallocated.** This is held to offset the cost of additional investment in services.
- 7.4 **Contingencies Pay Award £33k unallocated.** Funding for the pay award has been transferred to services.

## 8.0 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 8.1 The Housing Revenue Account is a ring-fenced account used to manage the Council's housing stock. The costs of managing and maintaining the properties, collecting rents, and meeting the interest cost of monies borrowed to pay for investment in the housing stock are all charged to the housing revenue account.

Table 7: HRA Quarter 2 Forecast Outturn 2024/25

<b>LDC Housing Revenue Account 2024/25</b>					
	<b>Original Budget £000's</b>	<b>Virements £000's</b>	<b>Revised Budget £000's</b>	<b>Forecast Actuals £000's</b>	<b>Q3 Variance £000's</b>
<b>INCOME</b>					
Dwelling Rents	-18,914	84	-18,830	-18,721	109
Non-Dwelling Rents	-417	61	-357	-327	30
Charges for Services and Facilities	-1,479	-169	-1,648	-1,612	35
Contributions towards Expenditure	-224	-9	-233	-233	0
<b>GROSS INCOME</b>	<b>-21,034</b>	<b>-34</b>	<b>-21,067</b>	<b>-20,893</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Repairs and Maintenance	6,155	-22	6,133	6,060	-73
Supervision and Management	3,883	63	3,946	3,909	-36
Special Services	1,743	47	1,790	1,659	-131
Rents, Rates, Taxes and Other Charges	146	-10	136	216	80
Increase in Impairment of Debtors	58		58	58	0
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	6,018	-846	5,172	5,172	0
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	3		3	3	0
Debt Management Costs	10	-1	9	9	0
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>18,016</b>	<b>-769</b>	<b>17,246</b>	<b>17,086</b>	<b>-160</b>
<b>NET COST OF HRA SERVICES</b>	<b>-3,018</b>	<b>-803</b>	<b>-3,819</b>	<b>-3,806</b>	<b>15</b>
HRA share of Corporate and Democratic	134	10	144	144	0
Interest Payable	2,954	389	3,343	3,343	0
Interest Receivable	-549	-26	-575	-575	0
<b>NET OPERATING COST OF HRA</b>	<b>-479</b>	<b>-430</b>	<b>-907</b>	<b>-895</b>	<b>15</b>
Revenue Contributions to Capital Expend	1,108	585	1,693	1,693	0
Transfer to (from) Reserves		117	117	117	0
<b>HRA (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>15</b>

- 8.2 The Housing Revenue Account is reporting a forecast outturn position of £15.0k overspend against a revised budget of £903.0k. It is the third outturn projection reported for financial year 2024-25 and a favourable change of £99.0k reported at quarter 2.
- 8.3 The projected outturn for rental income has improved as a result of addressing void and new home rental assumptions in the revised budget. However, a delay in the programmed Local Authority Housing Fund 3 (LAHF) acquisitions, initially programme to generate new rental income from Q2, is estimated to be let during Q4 creating a shortfall of £13.0k
- 8.4 During the reported period, the budget assumes new properties, on average, will come on stream at quarter 2 with additional rental income realised from October. The first let of 17 dwellings at Chalk Cliff House in Peacehaven is not expected until early January 2025 resulting in reduced rental income projection of £57.0k. Dwellings at Stowe Place were let 2 months later than budgeted resulting in £30.0k less rental income.
- 8.5 There is a non-dwelling pressure of £30.0k for reduced garage income. There are 25 more garages in void that estimated. Many of the sites are now being considered for new housing development. Meanwhile, other short-term uses are being reviewed as part of the housing development strategy to mitigate this ongoing pressure.
- 8.6 Charges for Services includes a pressure of £30.0k which represents reduced service charge income resulting from the applied cap of 7.7% to elements of the Retirement Housing Service Charges and £25.0k reduced service charge income on void properties. This is offset by a one-off receipt of (£24.0k) for backdated Solar Panel Feed-in-Tariff income.
- 8.7 On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024, a Property Service Team restructure achieving savings on staffing costs charged to the HRA which have been captured in the revised budget. In addition, a (£85.0k) underspend is projected against the revised budget relating to staff vacancies for the year.
- 8.8 Supervision and Management includes pressures of £22.0k consultancy costs for advice around the new Consumer Standards offset by a reduced forecast of (£25.0k) in housing development feasibility expenses and savings on the budget for Tenant Incentive Scheme (TIS). A lower-than-expected uptake is a result of delays in the marking campaign.
- 8.9 There is a forecast underspend on Special Services costs (£131.0k) which reflects a Grounds Maintenance efficiencies of (£51.0k), underspends on Retirement Housing Team salary costs of (£26.0k) and a reduction in Gas and heating works of (£35.0k).
- 8.10 During the reporting period, the Council's HRA is projected to overspend on buildings insurance by £62.0k due to a higher than forecast increase in insurance premiums.
- 8.11 A further (£8.0k) of smaller underspends are included in the reporting period.



## 9.0 General Fund Capital Expenditure

GF CAPITAL PROGRAMME	Original Budget 2024-25	2023/24 Carry Forward	Other Variations	Revised Budget 2024-25	Q3 Spend	Forecast Outturn	Variance Q3 to Revised Budget
	£'000						
General Fund Housing	1,635	-	2,775	4,410	839	1,183	3,571
Regeneration	26,788	2,343	(5,490)	23,642	6,815	13,472	16,827
Asset Management	2,460	309	30	2,799	744	1,200	2,055
Indoor Leisure Facilities	1,909	1,535	(1,955)	1,489	104	303	1,384
Energy Schemes	3,895	-	-	3,895	-	-	3,895
Community Infrastructure Levy	900	-	-	900	617	823	283
Service Delivery	7,367	1,398	170	8,935	763	970	8,172
Specialist Projects	236	224	(50)	410	12	239	398
Parks & Pavilions	200	1,033	(190)	1,043	25	25	1,018
Open Spaces - Biodiversity	-	761	867	1,628	595	729	1,033
Information Technology	150	184	-	334	153	327	180
Stabilisation and Growth	255	-	13	268	-	-	268
Finance Transformation	150	-	(150)	-	-	-	-
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>45,945</b>	<b>7,788</b>	<b>(3,980)</b>	<b>49,753</b>	<b>10,667</b>	<b>19,271</b>	<b>39,086</b>

- 9.1 The total original budget for the 2024/25 Capital budget is £45.945m. The revised 2024/25 budget assumes the carry forward of prior year allocations due to slippage against the GF Capital Programme 2023/24 of £7.788m and additional variations of (£3.980m). The total revised capital budget for 24/25 now being £49.753m.
- 9.2 Total spend to date at the end of Quarter 3 is £10.667m, compared to £5.387m in Quarter 2. The forecast spend by the end of the financial year is estimated to be £19.271m.
- 9.3 **General Fund Housing** - Includes loan allocations for council housing companies that have not yet been drawn and the allocation of funding for home adaptations via the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) that will be undertaken throughout the financial year.
- 9.4 **Regeneration** - Most of the capital funds allocated to Regeneration are supported by government grants including Levelling Up Funding and UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The changes to the spend profile reflects the overall complexity of those programmes and whilst a significant amount of work has been undertaken over recent months it is likely that elements of the programme continue to be reprofiled throughout the lifetime of the projects.
- 9.5 **Asset Management** - Includes a variety of schemes associated with the ongoing programme of improvement and modernisation of council owned assets including items required to ensure the councils meets its Health and Safety obligations.
- 9.6 **Indoor Leisure Facilities** - This reflects ongoing Capital works at the four LDC Leisure sites operated by Wave Leisure, including major works at Seahaven Swim and Newhaven Health Hub.
- 9.7 **Energy Scheme** - Includes an allocation to support retrofit lending schemes currently being explored with Lendology.
- 9.8 **Community Infrastructure Levy** - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge that the Council imposes on new development to help raise funds to deliver

infrastructure that is required to support development and growth in their area. CIL block supports a variety of projects throughout the district.

- 9.9 **Service Delivery** - Projects related to this area include the Waste Vehicle Replacement and Equipment Programme and an allocation for the delivery of new crematorium and green burial facilities.
- 9.10 **Specialist Projects** - Relates to flood alleviation projects and coastal defence works.
- 9.11 **Parks & Pavilions** – Support upgrades and remedial works to all council run parks and pavilions in the district.
- 9.12 **Open Spaces (Biodiversity)** – Support local biodiversity projects, the purchase of land for biodiversity and the creation of wildflower and green spaces within the community.
- 9.13 **Information Technology** – Relates to a block allocation to refresh the council's stock of laptops and maintain the councils IT infrastructure.
- 9.14 **Digital Transformation** - Reflects the council's contribution to joint LEC projects designed to maximise service efficiency across both councils.
- 9.15 **Finance Transformation** - Is an allocation to support upgrade of LEC financial systems, which has been removed from the programme for 2024/25 as no cost are anticipated in the current financial year

## 10.0 Capital Expenditure – Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME	Original Budget 2024-25	2023/24 Carry Forward	Other Variations	Revised Budget 2024-25	Q3 Spend	Forecast Outturn	Variance Q3 to Revised Budget
New Acquisitions & New Build	8,200	9,247	-	17,447	7,645	12,320	9,803
Major Works & Improvements	8,770	1,971	21	10,762	2,330	6,346	8,432
Housing Estates Recreation and Play Areas	53	29	-	82	11	11	71
<b>Total HRA</b>	<b>17,023</b>	<b>11,247</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28,292</b>	<b>9,986</b>	<b>18,677</b>	<b>18,306</b>

- 10.1 The total original budget for the 2024/25 HRA Capital Programme is £17.023m. The revised 2024/25 budget assumes the carry forward of prior year allocations due to slippage against the HRA Capital Programme 2023/24 of £11.247m. There are additional variations of £21k. The total revised HRA capital budget for 24/25 now being £28.292m.
- 10.2 Total spend to date at the end of Quarter 3 £9.98m compared to £6.622m in Quarter 2. The forecast spend by the end of the financial year is estimated to be £18.667m.
- 10.3 **New Acquisitions & New Build** - General needs acquisitions to replace units being disposed will take place, funded from disposal receipts and the third round Local Authority Housing Funds. Several large acquisitions are also expected to take place in the final quarter of the financial year.

10.4 **Major Works & Improvement** - Spend this year is currently lower as it is match-funding Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.2. Work is currently waiting on completion of Retrofit Assessments before it can go ahead. This area also includes capital works for disabled tenants.

10.5 **Housing Estates Recreation and Play Areas** – Only minor spend occurring to date.

## 11.0 Funding

*The Council's net service budget is funded from the following areas: Council Tax income, Business Rates income, Government grants and reserves. A breakdown of the funding budget is detailed below.*

Table 11: Financing Forecast Outturn 2024/25

Financing Budgets Forecast Outturn	23/24 Outturn	Current Budget	Previous forecast	Forecast	Variation
<b>£000</b>					
Council Tax Income	(8,919)	(8,885)	(8,884)	(8,884)	<b>1</b>
NNDR	(4,977)	(4,584)	(4,393)	(4,393)	<b>191</b>
Grants and Contributions	(1,180)	(2,229)	(1,986)	(1,986)	<b>243</b>
Reserves Transfers	(527)	(788)	(788)	(788)	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>(15,603)</b>	<b>(16,486)</b>	<b>(16,051)</b>	<b>(16,051)</b>	<b>435</b>

Financing budgets are expected to underachieve by £435k.

## 12.0 Financial appraisal

12.1 The report reflects the forecast year end position as at 31st December 2024.

12.2 The capital programme will continue to be reviewed with regard to the prior year slippage that is routinely added to the Original Budget to ensure that only those amounts required are allocated within the revised Capital Programme going forward.

## 13.0 Legal implications

13.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

## 14.0 Risk management implications

14.1 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

## 15.0 Equality analysis

15.1 There are no environmental sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

## 16.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – LDC Capital Programme Monitoring

Appendix 2 – Glossary of Items

## **17.0 Background Papers**

LDC General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25 and Capital Programme