

Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25th October 2012

Q1 Finance and Corporate Performance

Questions submitted by Cllr Schneiderman

Question One:

Is the libraries saving of £100,000 from creating a new landmark library in arts depot still 'at risk' or is it now unachievable in 2012/13? (Report para. 9.2.7)

Response:

The £100,000 saving has been delivered as a result of the closure of Friern Barnet Library.

Question Two:

Is the £200,000 street lighting saving achievable in 2012/13? (para 9.2.7)

Response:

There was a challenge to the change in PFI contract to the European Commission. Our ability to deliver the saving is dependant on how quickly that issue is resolved. Clearly as the year progresses without this being resolved the likelihood that the whole sum will be saved in this financial year is at risk.

Question Three:

Is the £6,000 saving from charging for parking in car parks that are currently free back on the agenda or will this income not be achieved?

Response:

There is now no plan to charge in the currently free car parks. This income will not be achieved in this manner it will be contained within the EPR budget

Question Four:

What is the explanation for the overspend on business rates that has contributed to the forecast overspend in Commercial Services? (para 9.2.4)

Response:

The quarter 1 budget position for corporate buildings reflects costs of business rates for North London Business Park. This was previously funded from contingency, but will now be funded from commercial services budget in future. Draw down from contingency will be reflected in the quarter 2 monitoring position to ensure that this overspend is reduced appropriately.

Question Five:

Can the Committee have a copy of the parking recovery plan(s)? (para 9.2.5 and EPR, Appendix B)

Response:

Yes, matters that are commercially sensitive will be subject to exempt information procedures.

Question Six:

Can you explain the “Adverse variance due to a shortfall projected on professional fee income and early pressure on responsive highways repairs” which has led to a £311,000 overspend in the highways inspection/maintenance budget? (EPR, Appendix B)

Response:

It is as described a concern that income projections for the highways service will not be achieved.

Question Seven:

What action is being taken to improve the performance in dealing with FOI requests? (para 9.3.2)

Response:

- iCasework system for managing requests rolled out across all business areas
- Weekly and monthly performance and forward look reports produced for all directorates/service areas
- Profile and awareness of importance of FOI increased – monthly meetings with link officers, regular updates to senior officers
- Transparency - most FOI responses published online, information is easily available on the website
- FOI performance against statutory deadlines was 94% for Q2 outstripping the 90% target
- 100% of all cases answered within statutory deadlines since 13 August 2012

Question Eight:

What is the latest figure for the total cost to date of implementing the One Barnet programme compared with the savings delivered to date?

Response:

A financial break down of the costs and savings delivered by the One Barnet programme to date is given below.

Expenditure:

- Outturn figure for 2010/11: £2,241,753
- Outturn figure for 2011/12: £4,119,515
- Figure for 2012/13 (to end of Q1): £913,611

Savings:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13*
Savings to Council baseline budget	1,436,900	5,698,900	7,888,900*
Cumulative savings	1,436,900	7,135,800	15,024,700*
Year on Year Savings (baseline)	nil	4,262,000	2,190,000*

*projected

Note: as requested at the September meeting of the Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a full breakdown of costs and savings by project has been submitted to this committee.