



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

**to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
29 JANUARY 2026**

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – PERIOD 8 (END NOVEMBER 2025)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Committee with an updated financial position for the Council for the period ended 30 November 2025 (Period 8).
- 1.2 This matter is brought forward for consideration with the agreement of the Chairman so that the Council has clarity on the available funding for 2025/26 to be able to carry out its operations in a timely manner.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- (i) notes the forecast revenue outturn as at 30 November 2025 is £104k under budget (0.7%) against the net service budget of £13,874k. Further information can be found at **APPENDIX 1** along with reasons for significant variances;
- (ii) considers the forecast capital outturn as at 30 November 2025 which is for a total capital programme delivery of £5.656m against revised budget of £6.980m. Notes the schemes completed in the year so far (para 3.6). Further information can be found at **APPENDIX 2** along with reasons for significant variances;
- (iii) approves the movements in Earmarked Reserves set out in **APPENDIX 3**;
- (iv) notes the revenue budget reconciliation between the opening and current budget in **APPENDIX 4**.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Period 8 Budget Monitoring report provides financial forecast for the Council for the full year ending 31 March 2026 including revenue and capital forecasts and the impact of those on retained reserves (General and Earmarked).
- 3.2 The report shows operational budget performance closely aligned to budget plans. This demonstrates the accuracy of the base budget position and the effectiveness of budget management by officers.

3.3 Revenue Budget Monitoring – Period 8

- 3.3.1 The forecast for the revenue budget projects an underspend of £240k against the 2025/26 budget, reduced through a transfer to reserves.
- 3.3.2 The strong performance is attributed to additional investment income along with better than expected receipts from the planning activities. Strong income performance has also offset additional unbudgeted costs in I.T ensuring that systems are sufficiently maintained. Further detail is included in **APPENDIX 1**.

3.4 Capital Budget Monitoring – Period 8

- 3.4.1 The forecast for the capital budget projects an underspend of £1,324k against the revised 2025/26 Capital programme of £6,980k. The main project details can be found at **APPENDIX 2**.
- 3.4.2 Many capital projects get under way in the early part of the year. Completions tend to come through during the second half of the year. Schemes completed during the year to November are shown below. These were all completed within planned timescales and budgets.
- 3.4.3 Project delivery up to 30 November:

	Budget	Actual
Riverside Park Skate Park and Equipment	£193k	£193k
West Maldon Councillor Shaughnessy Park	£138k	£138k
Oaktree Meadow play site resurfacing and fencing	£146k	£146k
Amphitheatre	£79k	£79k
Community Engagement vehicles	£36k	£36k
Parks Transit vehicle	£35k;	£35k
Scout Hut, Brickhouse Farm	£26k	£25k
99 Wood Road – Community supermarket	£20k	£20k
Demolition of Hythe Quay classroom	£20k	£20k
Blackwater Leisure Centre Roof Safety system	£20k	£20k
	Budget	Total Spend
Maintenance team vehicle	£38k	£38k

3.5 General Fund Debtors

- 3.5.1 Members have previously requested further information on the debt position. Outstanding debt for general fund activities as at 30 November was £255k, as shown in Table 1 below.
- 3.5.2 General debt written off by the Council to the end of November 2025 amounts to £33k. Tax debt (not general debt), where there has been an approved debt write-off, or a write-down of liability (reduced amount payable) arising from the agreed policies of the council amount to £165k for Council tax and £103k for Business Rates. In total, collectible amounts have been reduced by £301k during the year to date. This is written off against the bad debt provision set up at the start of the year, which was £1,030k (note 13, 'debtors impairment allowance').

Table 1 - general debt by area as at 30 November.

	31+ days ↓ (Stage 1) £	41+ Days (Stage 2) £	'55+ days (Stage 3) £	Total 31+ days
49 S106	-	2,475	85,945	88,420
25 Leisure / Events	-	10,317	15,685	26,002
31 Community Safety	-	14,332	15,032	29,364
01 Rent in Advance	-	3,126	12,025	15,151
09 Bed & Breakfast	366	-	30	9,265
13 Misc Rent/Lease	-	-	8,119	8,119
12 Kiosks	1,200	-	6,781	7,981
34 Other Income	-	-	6,488	6,488
25 Leisure & Liveability	-	-	6,079	6,079
20 Ind Site leases	-	-	0	5,914
13 Misc Rent / Leases	9,971	-	5,024	14,995
26 Parks / Grounds Maintenance	-	4,106	3,911	8,018
41 DFG / Housing	-	-	2,397	2,397
50 Legal Services Income	-	125	1,350	1,475
21 Roundabout Sponsorship	-	-	1,200	1,200
11 Building Control	759	-	854	1,613
29 Ranger Services	-	-	746	746
16 Human Resources	-	-	679	679
06 Food Safety	-	177	678	855
08 Burials	-	136	492	356
22 Waste/Recycling/Bins	300	12,959	473	13,732
28 Alcohol Licensing	-	2,997	391	3,388
15 Vet Inspections	-	-	248	248
41 DFG/Housing	-	-	-	-
18 Recharge Works	24	-	-	24
26 Parks Trading	-	1,643	-	1,643
17 PPC - Polution Permit	-	1,161	-	1,156
15 Vet Inspection	-	-	91	-
04 Moorings	-	-	168	-
Grand Total	12,619	53,252	189,176	255,047

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report provides an update on the current financial performance of the Council. It highlights that operational expenditure budgets are being well managed within allocated budget limits. In some areas, income received is exceeding previous expectations. This provides good assurance that the starting point for planning next year's budget is sound.
- 4.2 Debt due to the Council is held at a reasonable level with appropriate and proportionate action in place to secure unpaid debt where needed.
- 4.3 Capital schemes are being delivered largely within budget and time expectations, although some slippage on delivery to next year is anticipated.
- 4.4 Reserves are maintained at a robust level compared to likely requirements.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 2028

5.1 Delivering good quality services

5.1.1 Regular reporting and monitoring of the Council's financial position is a key control in ensuring the Council makes the best use of its resources and is able to make informed decisions to support our residents.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None directly.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None directly.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – None directly.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The subject of this report.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None directly.
- (vi) **Impact on Devolution / Local Government Reorganisation** – The financial position of the Council will be scrutinised in advance of reorganisation as part of planning for LGR delivery. This report is written with that scrutiny in mind.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Ben Jay, Director of Finance (S151).