

Appendix A

General Fund Financial Monitoring 2022/23 Outturn

Babergh District Council June 2023



1. Background

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- 2. The General Fund Budget for 2022/23 was approved by Council in February 2022. in previous years, worst-case scenarios were typically used when putting budget proposals together. Amalgamating these assumptions across the whole organisation has resulted in overspends.
- For 2022/23 stretching, but realistic, assumptions were used when putting budget proposals together across both expenditure and income. However, global events, rising inflation and interest rates have created an unprecedented financial challenge for the Council and in anticipation of this a £500k earmarked reserve was created in 2021/22.
- 4. Inflation, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased significantly during 2022, reaching a peak of 11.1% in October before dropping to 10.1% at the end of the financial year. The increased cost of fuel, materials and services has been reflected in the variances for 2022/23.
- 5. Attempting to curb inflation, the Bank of England has increased the base rate from 1.75% at the start of 2022/23 to 4.25% in March. These increases have been much greater than expected when the budget was approved and consequently there is an overspend on interest payable for 2022/23.
- Employee costs are approximately 40% of the Councils revenue expenditure budget and an increase of 2.2% was included in the budget. A national pay award offer for 2022/23 of £1,925 from 1 April 2022 was agreed for all staff. This equates to an increase of approximately 8% and an additional cost of £580k.

7. Outturn position 2022/23

- 8. Budget monitoring is a key tool and indicator on the delivery of the Council's plans and priorities for the year. There will, of course, always be reasons why there are variances such as the current inflationary pressures.
- 9. Based upon financial performance and discussions with budget managers and the Senior Leadership Team, key variations on expenditure and income compared to budget have been identified.

- 10. The overall position of the Council's Revenue General Fund for 2022/23 is a surplus of £327k, this was £199k less than budget.
- 11. A net overspend on services against budget of £208k is the position for 2022/23 compared to a forecast overspend of £486k at the end of Quarter 3.
- 12. The key variances that make up this overspend are shown in the following sections of this report.
- 13. Recruitment remains challenging and the Council continues to experience significant delays between people leaving the organisation and these posts being filled. However, underspends resulting from vacancies have been offset by the £1,925 pay award and temporary cover for vacant posts.
- 14. Key Recommendations for the 2022/23 year are that:
 - 1. £698k is transferred to the Strategic Priority Reserve
 - 2. (£108k) is transferred from the Council Tax and Business Rates Reserve to cover prior year deficits that will be met in year with Section 31 Grants.
 - 3. £164k is transferred to the Waste & Recycling Reserve to guard against ongoing inflationary pressures and income uncertainty.
 - 4. £73k is transferred to the Carry Forwards Reserve to fulfil commitments made on the Council's priorities as detailed in section 4.
 - 5. (£500k) is transferred from the Inflationary Pressures Reserve as mentioned in Paragraph 3.

2. General Fund Revenue – Draft Outturn

Service Area		Budget	Total Actual	Variance to Budget (underspend) / overspend	Variance as % of Budget
		£'000	£'000	£'000	
	Assets & Investments	461	461	-	09
	Communities & Wellbeing	879	749	(130)	-159
	Corporate Resources	1,663	2,339	676	419
	Customers, Digital Transformation & Improvement	1,910	1.851	(59)	-39
	Economic Growth & Climate Change	301	336	35	129
Net Service	-				
Costs	Operations	3,658	3,440	(218)	-69
	Housing	559	421	(137)	-259
	Law & Governance	918	1,005	88	10
	Planning & Building Control	1,203	1,106	(98)	-8
	HR & Organisational Development	461	488	27	6
	Senior Leadership Team	692	716	24	4
Net expenditu	ire on services as above	12,705	12,913	208	20
Recharges	Charge to HRA/Capital	(1,347)	(1,698)	(351)	26
Capital	Interest Payable	455	518	63	14
Financing	Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	1,445	1,475	30	2
Investment	Pooled Funds Net Income	(569)	(497)	72	-139
Income	Interest Receivable	(2,184)	(2,115)		-3
Total Net Cos		10,505	10,596	91	19
Government	New Homes Bonus	(802)	(802)		09
Grants	Services, Rural Services & Lower Tier Grants	(556)	(560)	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	1
	Baseline Business Rates	(3,041)	(3,264)	· · · · · ·	79
Business	Growth / Pooling Benefit	(333)	(525)	(192)	58
Rates	Enterprise Zone income	(216)	(1,056)		389
	B/R Prior Year Deficit/(Surplus)	218	1,628	1,410	6479
Council Tax	Council Tax	(6,185)	(6,228)		19
	Council Tax Prior Year Deficit/(Surplus)	(116)	(116)		0
Total Funding	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	(11,031)	(10,923)	108	-1%
Net Position E	Before Reserves	(526)	(327)	199	
	Strategic Priorities Reserve	526	698	172	
Movement in	Council Tax & Business Rates Reserve		(108)	· · · · ·	
Reserves	Waste & Recycling Reserve		164	164	
	Carry Forwards Reserve		73	73	
	Inflationary Pressures Reserve	0	(500)	(500)	

Net Service Costs

• Explanations for these variances are provided in section 3, pages 4-7.

Capital Financing & Investment Income:

- A variance in interest payable costs has arisen due to an increase in rates for short-term borrowing. These have increased from an average rate of 0.2% in 21/22 to around 4%.
- Returns on the pooled funds for 2022/23 are lower than budget due to market conditions.

Business Rates:

- The Business Rates figure reflects the NNDR1 figures for 2022/23. The prior year deficit will be met by S.31 grants received in 2022/23 and held in the Council Tax and Business Rates Reserve.
- At the end of March 2023, the collection rate was 97.64% compared with 96.77% for the same period the previous year

Council Tax:

- Council tax income is set as part of the budget with any variation in income recognised as a surplus or deficit to be carried forward in the Collection Fund and recognised in the following year.
- At the end of March 2023, the collection rate was 98.11%, compared with 98.06% for the same period the previous year.
- Of the surplus on the Collection Fund of £160k for Council Tax, Babergh's share of £36k will be realised in 2023/24 and has been built into the 2023/24 budget.

Reserves:

- A full breakdown of forecast reserve movements compared to the 2022/23 budget is shown in Section 5, page 9.
- £500k was put into an Inflationary Pressures Reserve at the end of 2021/22 and this has been utilised to cover cost pressures and boost reserves earmarked for the achievement of the Council's priorities.
- The Council Tax and Business Rates Reserve will be used to cover the timing differences between S.31 grants and gains/losses.
- A £526k transfer to the Strategic Priorities Reserve was included in the budget. This is increased to £698k.

Area	Full Year Budget £'000	Actual Outturn £'000	Variance Total £'000	Explanation of Major Variances		Q3 Variance
Assets & Investments	461	461	1		0%	88
Strategic Property	368	379	12	 Completion date for surrendering Endeavour House lime block floorplate later than budgeted - rent, service charges and business rates £50K overspend, however savings on the capital expenditure. Reactive depot repairs of £24K. Overall electricity utility pressure on properties of £35K. Consultancy on Asset Utilisation (£83K) underspend due to delay in Crown Commercial planning & mapping works which will now take place and have been budgeted for in 2023/24. Staff Vacancy (£17K). 	3%	93
The Councils' Companies	93	82	(11)	Staffing underpsend due to vacant post	-12%	(5)
Communities & Wellbeing	879	749	(130)		-15%	10
Leisure Contracts	253	239	(14)	• (£16K) underspend against budgeted NNDR costs for 22/23.	-6%	(16)
Communities	626	510	<mark>(</mark> 116)	 (£72k) underspends on GP Referrals, Women's Cycle Tour, Community Achievement Awards (cfwds requested) (£20k) cfwds, offset by £41k costs for Cost of Living post (£14k) cfwd of Locality Award funds (£31k) carry forwards from 21/22 	-18%	10
Corporate Resources	1,663	2,339	676		41%	662
Finance, Commissioning & Procurement	1,663	2,339	676	 £500k Budgeted vacancy management factor offset by savings within the service areas. £66k Salary overspend on Interim and agency staff in both Finance and C&P. £47k premium on the Employees Insurance Policy higher than budgeted. £69k Budgeted savings contingency removed. £43k Bank Charges overspend due to increase in credit card transactions. £39k Overspend on Audit Fees as we have caught up on the accruals for outstanding audits to date £22k overspend for Insurance costs due to 20% increase in costs on Q4 charges (Jan-Mar 23). (£56k) Savings on budgeted security costs with work starting on council offices. (£43k) Family Annex Grant received, not announced until after budget set. 	41%	662

Area	Full Year Budget £'000	Actual Outturn £'000	Variance Total £'000	Explanation of Major Variances	% Variance	Q3 Variance
Customers, Digital Transformation & Improvement	1,910	1.851	(59)		-3%	(32)
Communications	177	187	9		5%	10
Customer Operations	538	519	<mark>(19</mark>)	 (£38k) Due to vacancies in first half the of year. £19k Spend on Residents Survey, Inform Communication Subscription & ICS Membership 	-4%	<mark>(</mark> 16)
ICT	913	905	(8)		-1%	2
Strategic Policy, Performance & Improvements	282	240	(41)	 (£145k) Due vacancies from team restructure. £110k Budgeted movement from reserves not required. 	-15%	(27)
Economic Growth & Climate Change	301	336	35		12%	3
Open for Business	301	336	35	Budgeted movement from reserve to cover salary costs not made, as staff were recoded at source, mitigated by underlying underspend on salary costs with full and part year vacancies.	12%	3
Housing	559	421	(137)		-25%	(140)
PV Panels	(141)	(273)	(132)	Difference on timing of invoicing and actual income	93%	8
Housing Solutions	700	695	(5)		-1%	(148)
HR & Organisational Development	461	488	27		6%	28
HR & OD	461	488	27	Over budget on centrally held recruitment and advertising costs for the council and cost of implementing HR Oracle system, partially offset by staff vacancies.	6%	28

Area	Full Year Budget £'000	Actual Outturn £'000	Variance Total £'000	Explanation of Major Variances	% Variance	Q3 Variance
Law & Governance	918	1,005	88		10%	74
Electoral Services & Land Charges	94	155	61	Land charges income down against budget £71k	64%	41
Governance & Civic Office	353	377	24	£38k overspend on postage due to increase in volume and costs	7%	29
Internal Audit, Risk & Data	85	82	(2)		-3%	3
Shared Legal Service	386	391	5		1%	0
Operations	3,658	3,440	(218)		-6%	(283)
Car Parking	308	265	(43)	 (£37K) underspend on equipment and tools budgeted for implementing the car parking strategy approved by October 2022 Cabinet, mapped implementation expenditure has been budgeted in 2023/24. (£15K) underspend due to Pin Mill CIC charges ceasing. 	-14%	(21)
Health & Safety, Business Continuity and Emergency Planning	222	193	(29)	Operating cost savings have been made by changing supplier for lone working devices and licences, resulting in a re-current saving.		(52)
Public Protection	562	495	(67)	Community Outbreak Management funding covering backlog recovery employee costs included in budget	-12%	(64)
Public Realm	1,321	1,419	98	£60k Pressures on Salary spending given higher than budgeted pay award £137k inflationary pressure on Operational Costs, (£55K fuel; £52K vehicle purchases for repairs and maintenance; £21K grass cutting, £8K in additional protective equipment). Partly mitigated by transfer from reserves	7%	(22)
Recycling, Waste & Fleet	1,212	1,048	(164)	• (£284K) saving from historically low costs for Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) which is set quarterly based on tonnage and overall market commodity value. Mitigated partly by inflationary pressures on collection and disposal costs of materials on the Waste Services Contract £117K. It budgeted and therefore proposed that any underspend will be transferred fully in the Waste reserve to stabilise the medium-term budget pressures on the service (less corporate recharges).		(116)
Service Improvement (Environment & Community Services)	32	21	(11)	33% of employee costs transferred to Finance Transformation Project.	-35%	(7)

Area	Full Year Budget £'000	Actual Outturn £'000	Variance Total £'000	Explanation of Major Variances	% Variance	Q3 Variance
Planning & Building Control	1,203	1,106	(98)		-8%	54
Building Control	82	66	(16)	 (£22k) Employee underspend from vacancies and officers reducing hours. Income levels recovered in Q4 bringing to overall shortfall in income down to £6k 	-20%	27
Development Management, Heritage & Enforcement	545	551	6	(£103k) Salary underspend due to vacancies (£169k) Operating Costs underspend mainly due to lower than anticipated costs on Judicial Review, partly offset by other appeal costs. £268k deficit on budgeted income with Planning Income down by 60%	1%	129
Service Improvement (Sustainable Communities)	36	33	(3)		-8%	1
Strategic Planning	540	456	(84)	 (£51k) Employee underspend due to vacancies. (£229k) saving on Strategic Planning consultancy and legal costs (costs deferred to 23/24) (£14k) saving on Neighbourhood Plans consultancy costs. £140k less income on Neighbourhood Plans due to claim window. (£126k) less to reserves for Neighbourhood Plans due to timings of claims, offset by £230k to reserves ref underspend on consultancy and legal costs due to deferred costs 	-16%	(103)
Senior Leadership Team	692	716	24		4%	54
Senior Leadership Team	692	716	24	Overspend due to the use of interims whilst permanent posts are recruited to. Also includes recruitment costs.	4%	54
Grand Total	12,705	12,913	209		2%	486

Service Area	Amount £000's	Reason
Communities	52	Two year GP Referral scheme & swim lesson scheme with Abbeycroft for children on free school meals
Communities	10	To support the costs associated with the Domestic Homicide Review that occurred in the district in 2022/23
Communities	11	Funding for various small projects
	73	

5. General Fund Revenue - Reserves

Earmarked Reserve	Balance 31 March 2022 £'000	Actual To Reserve 22/23 £'000	Actual From Reserve 22/23 £'000	Balance 31/03/23 £'000
Business Rates & Council Tax	4,967		(108)	4,859
Business Rates Retention Pilot (BRRP)	812		(20)	792
Carry Forwards	420	73	(345)	148
Climate Change and Biodiversity	309	-	(59)	250
Community Housing Fund	140	-	(18)	122
Commuted Maintenance Payments	937	549	(139)	1,346
COVID 19	1,674	15	(188)	1,501
Elections Equipment	35	-	-	35
Elections Fund	70	20	-	90
Government Grants	259	-	-	259
Homelessness	277	48	(34)	291
Joint Local Plan	100	-	-	100
Neighbourhood Planning Grants	48	30	(29)	49
Planning (Legal)	668	85	(11)	742
Planning Enforcement	93	-	-	93
Rough Sleepers	88	-	(71)	17
Strategic Planning	93	130	(0)	222
Strategic Priorities	1,704	698	(537)	1,864
Temporary Accommodation	238	-	(18)	220
Waste	230	164	(14)	380
Well-being	176	-	(91)	85
Inflationary Pressures Reserve	500	-	(500)	-
TOTAL	13,838	1,811	(2,183)	13,466

6. General Fund Capital

1.Use of capital and one-off funds is critical and needs to be linked into our future delivery plans.

2.With complex capital schemes it is difficult to accurately assess the level of payments that will be made during the financial year. The Council continues to embark on new projects where it is difficult to accurately predict how payments will fall. Councillors should therefore focus on whether overall outcomes are being achieved because of the capital investment rather than variances against the plan for a particular year.

3.Capital expenditure for 2022/23 totals £5.728m, against a revised programme (including carry forwards) of £23.628m, as set out below.

4. The surplus primarily relates to underspends against the Regeneration Fund and the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, offset to a small degree by spend against CIL funded infrastructure grants and S106 open spaces grants.

5.Contractual commitments are detailed in the table below. These funds were committed in 2022/23 and will be spent in 2023/24. The resources to fund these commitments will also be transferred to 2023/24.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - Position as at 31 March 2023	£'000
Revised Capital Programme	23,628
Actual Expenditure	5,728
Underspend against Programme:	(17,900)
Contractual Commitments	277
Carry forward requests	10,820
Net Capital Programme (underspend) / overspend after commitments:	(6,803)

BABERGH DC CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - Position at 31 March 2023	
Contractual Commitments	£'000
Replacement Finance Management System	196
Community Development Grants	81
Total Contractual Commitments	277

6. General Fund Capital (Cont'd)

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23	Original Budget	Carry Forwards / Budget Adjustments	Current Budget	Actual Spend to date	Contractual Commitments	Uncommitted Carry Forwards	Variance after Carry Forwards (underspend) / overspend	Explanation of Major Variances
General Fund Housing								
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant	760	937	1,697	596		240	(861)	The variance represents DFG funding received but not yet spent. It will be used in future years.
Renovation/Home Repair Grant (formerly Discretionary Housing Grants)	100	<mark>(</mark> 10)	90	69		21	0	Plans to increase staff to promote these grants going forward
Discretionary Housing Grants	-	-	-	-		-	-	
Empty Homes Grant	100	241	341			341	-	There are plans to appoint a PR company to promote these grants and it is expected that the volume of applications will increase in 2023/24.
S106/CIL Affordable Hsg Grants	-	-	-	-		-	-	
Grants for Affordable Housing	-	400	400	-		400	-	A policy is being drawn up with proposals for awarding grants. Unspent allocation to be carried forward and utilised as per the policy.
Total General Fund Housing	960	1,568	2,528	665	-	1,002	(861)	
Operations								
Replacement Refuse Freighters - Joint Scheme	2,060	-	2,060	2,001	-	59	-	Underspend is required for a vehicle to be delivered in 2023/24
Recycling Bins	75	-	75	138		-	63	Increased spend due to housing growth and take up of garden waste collection service (generating additional revenue income)
EV Charging Points	-	-	-	-		-	-	
HVO Storage Tank	-	-	-	-		-	-	Cost of tanks less than anticipated. To be financed from
Public Sector Decarbonisation	-	-	-	0		-	0	Funded by grant
Total Operations	2,135	-	2,135	2,140	-	59	63	
Public Realm								
Planned Maintenance / Enhancements - Car Parks	7	13	20	8		12	-	
Vehicle and Plant Renewals	100	144	244	319			75	New vehicles ordered near the end of the financial year were delivered in 2022/23.
Pin Mill - Planned Maintenance	115	-	1 1 5	4		111	-	Works to upgrade public conveniences are progressing more slowly than anticipated
Total Public Realm	222	157	379	331	-	123	-	

6. General Fund Capital – (Cont'd)

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23	Original Budget	Carry Forwards / Budget Adjustments	Current Budget	Actual Spend to date	Contractual Commitments	Uncommitted Carry Forwards	Variance after Carry Forwards (underspend) / overspend	Explanation of Major Variances
								Alternatives for the site are under review, including works to
Belle Vue	-	1,901	1,901	(15)		1,916	-	the toilets, café and park entrance
Total Economic Development and Regeneration	-	1,901	1,901	(15)	-	1,916	-	
Sustainable Communities								
S106/CIL Play Equipment	-	-	-	-		-	-	
Play Equipment	50	199	249	(4)		253	-	Delays in some schemes due to resourcing issues
S106 Open Spaces Grants	-	-	-	71		-	71	Financed from S106 monies
Community Development Grants	117	80	197	116	81	-	-	Grants will be spent before December 2023
Total Sustainable Communities	167	279	446	182	81	253	71	
Leisure Contracts								
Kingfisher Leisure Centre - Repairs and Renewals	100	641	741	196		545	-	Carry forward will be used for repairs and renewals once the findings from the condition survey have been analysed
Hadleigh Pool and Leisure - Repairs and Renewals	50	403	453	6		447	-	and programmed
Kingfisher Leisure Centre Refurbishment	-	-	-	9			9	
Hadleigh Pool and Leisure - New Pool and Refurbishment	-	258	258	9		-	(249)	Budget not required. Required works will be covered by the Repairs & Renewals budget
Battery Storage and Solar Car Ports	-	-	-	(16)		-	(16)	
Total Leisure Contracts	150	1,302	1,452	204	-	992	(256)	-

6. General Fund Capital – (Cont'd)

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23	Original Budget	Carry Forwards / Budget Adjustments	Current Budget	Actual Spend to date	Contractual Commitments	Uncommitted Carry Forwards	Variance after Carry Forwards (underspend) / overspend	Explanation of Major Variances
Assets and Investments								
Planned Maintenance / Enhancements - Corporate Buildings	330	26	356	204		152	-	
CIL Funded Infrastructure Grants	-	-	-	405		-	405	To be financed from CIL
Strategic Investment Fund	-	2,906	2,906	129		2,777	-	Investigating further opportunities for investment.
A1071 Roadside Commercial Workspace Development	1,075	<mark>(</mark> 72)	1,003	(29)	-	1,003	(29)	Scheme is progressing. Planning application being drawn up for part of the site.
Regeneration Fund	-	6,190	6,190	11			-	Going forward business cases will be drawn up to apply for approval for expenditure on a case by case basis.
Hamilton Road Regeneration	-	168	168	60		108	-	Plans for the future of the area are under review following the failed bid for levelling up funding
Borehamgate	64	170	234	39		195	-	
Regeneration Fund	64	6,528	6,592	110		303	(6,179)	Asset reviews are being undertaken to plan future spend.
Regeneration Fund - Former Council Offices (Babergh Growth Ltd)	500	2,841	3,341	1,101		2,240	-	Work on the HQ site has commenced in 2022/23. Expenditure in year are loans to the Growth company
Babergh Growth Ltd		-	-			-	-	Work on the HQ site has commenced in 2022/23. Expenditure in year are loans to the Growth company
CIFCO - further investment	-	-	-	-		-	-	
Total assets and Investments	1,969	12,228	14,197	1,919	-	6,475	(5,803)	
Corporate Resources								
Replacement Finance Management System	325	-	325	129	196	-	-	Budget expected to be fully spent but implementation project running for longer than originally anticipated.
Total Corporate Resources	325	-	325	129	196	-	-	
Customers, Digital Transformation and Improvement								
ICT - Hardware/Software Refresh	150	115	265	157			(108)	Expenditure mainly relates to equipment re EH
ICT - Caps Uniform	-	-	-	15			15	reconfiguration. Budget carry forward not required.
Total Customers, Digital Transformation and Improvement	150	115	265	172	-	-	(93)	· · ·
Total General Fund Capital Spend	6,078	17,550	23,628	5,728	277	10,820	(6,803)	

BABERGH DC CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - Position at 31 March 2023	
Carry Forward Requests	£'000
Strategic Investment Fund	2,777
Regeneration Fund - Former Council Offices	2,240
Belle Vue	1,916
A1071 Roadside Commercial Workspace Development	1,003
Kingfisher Leisure Centre - Repairs and Renewals	545
Hadleigh Pool and Leisure - Repairs and Renewals	447
Grants for Affordable Housing	400
Empty Homes Grant	341
Regeneration Fund	303
Play Equipment	253
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant	240
Planned Maintenance / Enhancements - Corporate Buildings	152
Pin Mill - Planned Maintenance	111
Replacement Refuse Freighters - Joint Scheme	59
Renovation/Home Repair Grant(formerly Discretionary Housing Grants)	21
Planned Maintenance / Enhancements - Car Parks	12
Total General Fund Carry forwards	10,820