

---

**Agenda Item:** Finance Report

**Meeting Date:** 3 February 2025

**Contact Officer:** Responsible Financial Officer

---

***Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 12 noon on Monday 3 February to allow for a full response at the meeting.***

### Background

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed. The period to which this report relates is 1 April to 30 November 2024.

### Current Situation

#### A Management accounts

The Council has appointed five standing committees which have delegated powers to make decisions, including financial decisions, regarding the services which are included within their terms of reference, subject to the committee having the necessary budget. The Council's coding system and management accounts reflect the committee structure.

The Committee's terms of reference details the various responsibilities of this Committee.

- The Committee has budgets which are its direct responsibility.
- The Committee also has the responsibility for oversight of the all the Council's resources, its terms of reference including: "b. To conduct effectively the Council's budgetary, financial and precepting responsibilities in accordance with statutory requirements, and to keep the smooth functioning of the Council's work under review" and "d. To consider the resources available to meet the Council's objectives in terms of land, property, finance and manpower and to advise other committees and the Council as required." Consequently the management accounts of other committees are also brought forward to the Policy, Finance and Governance Committee, by committee.

Within each committee, there are individual **cost centres**, comprising three digits, typically representing a discrete service entity, to which income and expenditure is allocated against previously agreed revenue budgets.

The cost centres for which this committee has **direct responsibility** are:

Cost centre (CC)	Service
401	Civic activities
407	Grants and donations
502	Town Hall Maintenance
505	Precept
506	Interest received
601	Works department
602	Central support
604	Works depot, vehicles , equipment etc
605	<i>General maintenance – now part of 601 and 604</i>
606	<i>Grounds maintenance – now part of 601 and 604</i>
700	Strategic planning initiatives
701	Corporate management
702	Democratic representation and management
800	Capital Projects

In relation to the Committee’s **oversight responsibilities** these are in the detailed management accounts as follows:

Committee	Cost centres
Parks and Recreation	201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215,216,217,218,219,299
Stronger Communities	402, 408
Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments	102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 301,302, 303, 305
Climate, Biodiversity and Planning	206, 403

Within each cost centre income and expenditure is then allocated to a four-digit nominal ledger code; these codes are common across the cost centres. Nominal ledger codes further define the costs associated with the cost centre and correspond to a specific type of account, such as materials or staffing costs. Codes commencing with “1” are income codes; codes commencing with “3” or “4” are expenditure codes.

The format of this report is as follows:

- (i) Last year 2023-24 - the first two columns relate to the original budget from 2023/24 against the actual figures for last year.
- (ii) Current year 2023-24. (a) Brought forward – sums brought forward from last year against specific codes. (b) Net virement – this represents in year transfers between budget lines. (c) Agreed budget – estimate agreed by the Council in January 2024. (d) EMR – budgeted use of earmarked reserves. (e) Total – this is the total amount approved in the current year budget, the total of columns (a) to (e) inclusive. (f) Actual year to date spend.

- (iii) Next year 2025-26. The three columns show, respectively, the agreed budget to be funded from precept, the contribution to or from earmarked reserves and any sums which are budgeted to be carried forward.

The Omega financial programme has a number of different report formats and this is the first time that I have chosen to present this one. This format has been chosen because it shows much more clearly the use of earmarked reserves by including columns showing the earmarked reserve movements. The downside is that this report format does not show the revised 2024-25 estimates agreed in January 2025 and for these I would refer Members to the report submitted to the meeting of 6 January 2025.

A full review of the budgetary position was undertaken during the budget cycle. Most areas of interest were raised at the last meeting of this committee and the subsequent Policy Governance and Finance Committee and full Council meetings. The RFO would refer members to the finance/ budget reports which were approved at those meetings for further details.

However there are a number of points it is worth making:

1. Current year budget: In terms of the report presented at this meeting, the current year (2024/25) budget is that originally agreed in January 2024 ahead of the 2024/25 year – see comments above.
2. The actual year to date figures are for the period April to November 2024, subject to the comments in relation to recharges of overheads (point 4, below).
3. The treatment of overheads was previously reported to Members. Central support overheads (nominal ledger codes 4892 and 4893) have been allocated in the current year to 30 November 2024. Works overheads (nominal ledger codes 4888, 4890 and 4899) have been allocated in the current year to 30 September 2024.

During the final stage of the budget process all central support and works overheads were removed from the service cost centres in relation to the revised 2024/25 estimates and the 2025/26 estimates . There was no impact on the Council's overall budget. I am now in the process of transferring these overheads into the individual cost centres based on updated estimates of staff time allocations. This is ongoing so some allocations have yet to be made meaning that the estimates for individual cost centres 2025/26 for overall total expenditure should be treated with caution as it does not include these overheads. Again, there is no impact on the bottom line – as the transfers are agreed the net cost of the cost centres 601,602 and 604 are reduced by the same amount as the increases to the service cost centres.

## B Investments

At each meeting members receive the latest updates in relation to the Council's investments.

The Council holds the following investments:

1. Public Sector Deposit Fund (CCLA Investment Management Ltd.) – Value of £1,160,303 as of 31 December 2024 (Value of £1,141,326 as of 31 August 2024 ) an increase of £18,977 over the four-month period (1.67% over the four months).
2. The Local Authorities' Property Fund (CCLA Fund Managers Ltd.) – Value as of 31 December 2024 = £58,214 (31 August 2024 - £57,374). This represents an increase in value of £840 over that period, i.e. 1.46%. Income is credited to the Council on a quarterly basis and the sum of £715 was credited at 31 October 2024.

Previously it was agreed that during this financial year the RFO to come forward with proposals at a future meeting regarding investment in [the CCLA Better World Cautious Fund](#). It is understood that this fund has enhanced sustainability criteria, over and beyond the current funds which have high sustainability criteria.

At the next I will report back to Members regarding investment in this fund, including the criteria, liquidity and yields from the Fund.

## **Impact Assessments**

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – no implications directly resulting from this report.
- b) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- c) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - no implications directly resulting from this report.

## **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The provision of regular financial reports is part of the Council's risk management system.

## **Social Value**

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Social value is not quantified in the financial reports but clearly the creation of social value is dependent on setting adequate budgets to meet the Council's objectives.

## **Financial implications**

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. The financial implications are detailed above and also in the attached appendices.

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure incurred to be reviewed and to be compared with the Council's budgets.

### Witney Music Festival – added by the Deputy Town Clerk

At the last meeting of the Committee Members asked for further information concerning governance and a further breakdown of figures (minute no. F656). Confidential appendices to this report outline the current position for Members' information. £10,000 has been budgeted for the 2025 event.

### Corn Exchange - Carer Ticket Discount- added by Deputy Venue & Events Officer

A request has been received from a local organisation to provide three carers' tickets in order to facilitate the attendance of nine adults with autism to attend one of the West End Magic performances in April. As a ticket split is in place with the promoter If approval is granted this would be at a cost of £5.70 per ticket (£17.10 Total) to the Council. Officers would ask that the promoter replicate the Council decision to ensure that the tickets are free to the carer. If the promoter declines, the Council could still offer to discount the ticket by £5.70.

Officers will draft a carers ticket policy for consideration of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee on 16 March 2025. But provisional approval is sought at this time for tickets to this event.

## **Recommendations**

1. Members are invited to approve the report and the management accounts of the Committee's services to 30 November 2024 and,
2. To note the current situation regarding Witney Music Festival and,
3. Approve the discount for carers tickets.

