

Decision Maker: PUBLIC PROTECTION & ENFORCEMENT PORTFOLIO
HOLDER

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Public Protection & Enforcement PDS
Committee on:

Date: 7th September 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22

Contact Officer: Keith Lazarus, Head of Finance ECS & Corporate
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Chief Officer: Colin Brand, Director of Environment & Public Protection

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

This report provides the first revenue budget monitoring position for 2021/22 for the Public Protection & Enforcement Portfolio based on expenditure and activity levels for the first quarter of the financial year.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Public Protection & Enforcement Portfolio Holder is requested to:

- 2.1 Endorse the 2021/22 revenue budget monitoring for the Public Protection & Enforcement Portfolio.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: None directly from this report.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Sound financial management
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council Quality Environment
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost
 3. Budget head/performance centre: All Public Protection & Enforcement Portfolio Budgets
 4. Total current budget for this head: £32.4m
 5. Source of funding: Controllable revenue budgets 2021/22
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 145.6fte
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement: The statutory duties relating to financial reporting are covered within the Local Government Act 1972; the Local Government Finance Act 1998; the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996; the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government Act 2002
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The services covered in this report affect all Council Taxpayers, Business Ratepayers, those who owe general income to the Council, all staff, Members and Pensioners.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 This report sets out the results of the first quarterly revenue budget monitoring exercise for the 2021/22 financial year for the Public Protection & Enforcement Portfolio. Due to the timetabling of this year's Committee meetings, this has already been considered by the Executive at its meeting on 15th July.
- 3.2 For the first quarter of the year, based on financial information available at the time, there was no overall variation projected for the Portfolio. It should be noted that monitoring this year now takes into account any ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the Portfolio's budgets, and anticipated application of available Covid-19 grant funding where relevant.
- 3.3 Further details are given in Appendix 1A, which shows the forecast spend for each service within the Portfolio compared to the latest approved budget.
- 3.4 As set out in Appendix 1B, the only variation relates to the Council's contribution to the pan London shared costs for emergency mortuary provision put in place for the Capital in 2020 as a response to Covid-19, which is to be funded by an allocation of Covid-19 grant.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The "Building a Better Bromley" objective of being an Excellent Council refers to the Council's intention to provide efficient services and to have a financial strategy that focuses on stewardship and sustainability. Delivering Value for Money is one of the Corporate Operating Principles supporting Building a Better Bromley.
- 4.2 The "2021/22 Council Tax" report highlighted the financial pressures facing the Council. It remains imperative that strict budgetary control continues to be exercised to minimise the risk of compounding financial pressures in future years.
- 4.3 Chief Officers and Departmental Heads of Finance are continuing to place emphasis on the need for strict compliance with the Council's budgetary control and monitoring arrangements.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A detailed breakdown of the projected outturn by service area is shown in Appendix 1A with explanatory notes in Appendix 1B.
- 5.2 Overall, no variation is projected to the year-end based on the information available for the first quarter of the year, taking into account allocation of Covid-19 grant funding of £469k.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC PROTECTION

- 6.1 The Public Protection and Enforcement Portfolio has had to meet the significant unbudgeted costs of the Council's contribution to London-wide emergency mortuary provision, with a contribution this year of £469k. During 2020/21 there was also an impact on the Council's own services due to the impact of an increased number of Covid-19 deaths on the costs of the Coroner's and mortuary services, together with expected reduction in income from public protection services. Although no variations this year are currently projected, this situation could easily change if there were further increases in infections especially over the winter period.
- 6.2 Any high-profile inquests or significant increase in volume of cases could increase the cost of the Coroner's service. There is also still some uncertainty with regard to the Coroners core costs for 2021/22.

- 6.3 The provision of a sustainable mortuary service at an affordable cost in the long term is problematic due to variables in demand and a very limited market with little competition.
- 6.4 While all Covid restrictions have recently been lifted, uncertainty remains as to what the longer term wider economic impacts will be and how this will affect services later in the year and beyond.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal, Personnel & Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	2021/22 budget monitoring files within E&CS Finance section