



CHILDREN AND FAMILY COURT ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Paper for the Board Meeting 7 February 2014

QUARTER THREE FINANCIAL RESULTS

KEY POINTS

- The budget for 2013-14 has continued to align with and support operational and strategic priorities.
- The level of spending after the first nine months of the year remains lower than budgeted for, but the rate of spending continues to increase compared to budget as actual spend on projects and activities the budgets for which had been profiled earlier in the year is now being incurred.
- Overall, the forecast spend is expected to remain in line with the budget.

1. AIM AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report the financial results for the nine months ended 31 December 2013 and the forecast results for the year ended 31 March 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS/ACTION FOR THE BOARD

- 2.1 To review the financial results for 2013-14.

3 BACKGROUND DECEMBER 2013 ACCOUNTS AND FORECAST 2013-14

- 3.1 These accounts are reviewing the financial position at the end of the first nine months of the financial year. Summaries of income and expenditure at the end of December by budget holder are included at Table 2. Table 3 presents the allocation of the budget and forecast spend by budget holder between its administration and programme elements. The overall position from budget holder returns is an underspend of £1.047m. Of this Operational Areas have returned an underspend at the end of October of £0.665m. The balance of £0.382m relates to slippage on estates projects and a release of some estimated accommodation costs from the previous year end together with a reduction in the amounts set aside for future dilapidation costs, in line with the recommendations arising from the audit of the financial statements for the previous financial year.

£'000

Budget for the nine months to December 2013	92,476
Actual spend for the nine months to December 2013	91,429
Underspend at 31 December 2013	1,047

- 3.2 Overall forecast expenditure is expected to be in line with budget. The operational area is forecasting an underspend of £0.559m, due mainly to changes in the London service area assumptions about what were expected to be rising staff costs to meet workload pressures. These are being managed without the need for additional resources. While

National Office budgets are also forecasting a broadly balanced position, there are significant cost pressures being managed within the Future Working Programme (FWP). These are consistent however with the previous periods reporting and the systems to monitor and forecast the costs of a number of complex projects are effective. A summary of spending and budget for the remainder of the year is set out below:

	£'000
Budget for the three months to March 2014	34,724
Forecast spend for the three months to March 2014	35,631
Underspend at 31 December 2013	(1,047)
Forecast outturn	140

- 3.3 No other significant spending pressures are now anticipated at this stage. The agreement of our grant funding for 2014-16 also negates any requirement for further savings programmes next year that may have a cost associated with implementation not already being managed within the current year. The balance of underspend shown above is considered adequate to provide a small contingency to manage and matters in the final three months of the year.

4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT/PROPOSAL TO DELIVERY OF THE 2013/15 CAF/CASS STRATEGIC PLAN

- 4.1 The budget for 2013-14 has continued to align with operational and strategic priorities, by prioritising funds to service delivery, maintaining a safe minimum set of corporate and national functions and a contingency to deal with unforeseen spending pressures as well as enable short term investment in initiatives supporting specific actions within the strategic plan. This alignment will be kept under review through the monitoring of both financial performance and progress towards delivery of the strategic and national business plans.

5 KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES FOR THE BOARD TO CONSIDER

- 5.1 The 2013-14 results now cover nine months of the financial year. There are a number of spending pressures being managed without compromise to the overall balanced position being forecast. Any further changes in spending levels now are expected to be low in value based on firm existing and forecast commitments.

6 BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN

- 6.1 The delivery of safe, high quality and timely services remains a priority for service delivery. In order to achieve this, a budget plan is needed that is sufficient in size and appropriately allocated across functions and geographic areas to ensure resources are available to support service delivery.

7 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The financial implications of this paper are contained in the main body of this report.

8 RISK ANALYSIS

- 8.1 Risks to managing within allocated resources are kept under careful and constant review through the monitoring and reporting of regular financial information by budget holders and regular dialogue with the department in relation to sharing information on the implications of government guidance. The retention of a corporate contingency also provides some resilience against financial pressures that cannot be mitigated in other ways.

9 DIVERSITY ANALYSIS

- 9.1 Ensuring Equality and Diversity are central to all our work remains a key operational priority. In much the same way as ensuring the objectives of benefits for children are met through financial planning and management, so the active management of spending against a properly constructed budget will help ensure an equitable distribution of resources to enable equality of access to services.

10 COMMENTS FROM THE HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 10.1 No additional comments required.

11. COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1 No additional comments required.

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31 January 2014