

Action Plan

CORPORATE SERVICES 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4a

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Council Tax Collection	(£88,582)	(£64,151)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is due to the anticipated shortfall in the surplus on Council Tax collection. Council Tax collection rate to the end of June is 1.1% (£350,000) lower than expected compared to the same period last year. <p><u>Actions</u> During the initial months of the Covid 19 pandemic, formal debt recovery action was suspended. From August 2020 recovery action has been reinstated which will hopefully have some impact upon collection rates.</p> <p>Discussions with WG (via WLGA & SWT) will continue to lobby for financial report for this loss of income.</p>	Unknown	Rhian Hayden
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	(40,748)	(£627,383)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is due to an increase in the number of claimants following the Covid-19 pandemic. It has been assumed that the increased level of claimants will continue for the remainder of the financial year. New claims processed in Quarter 1 of 2020, compared to the same period in 2019, have increased by 911 (an increase of 158%). <p><u>Actions</u></p>	Unknown	Rhian Hayden

Action Plan

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Appendix 4a

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The WLGA, on behalf of all LA's, has collated the CTRS cost pressure across Wales and information has been submitted to WG officials, with a view to it being considered by Ministers in the "Star Chamber". It is hoped that WG will consider providing additional funding to address this pressure. 		
Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	(£760)	(£64,742)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced income, due to Covid-19 pandemic (e.g. restrictions on wedding ceremonies) <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of income will form part of the claim to WG for financial support. In addition, The Registrar Service is working to clear the backlog of registration services which could have a positive impact on the forecast level of income by the year end 		Andrea Jones

Action Plan

SOCIAL SERVICES

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4b

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Looked After Children	(427,589)	(399,699)	<p>Legal Services</p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u> There is an ongoing pressure in this area due to the number of looked after children, and the problems with retention and recruitment of staff has resulted in more services being outsourced to an external provider. It is anticipated that the Legal budget will be significantly overspent again this year.</p> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>A long term solution will need to be identified in conjunction with Legal Services to mitigate this cost pressure for future years and a collaborative arrangement for legal services is being considered with a neighbouring council.</p> <p>This cost pressure is currently being offset by favourable variances within other social services budgets.</p>		Tanya Evans

Action Plan

Economy

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4c

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
General Offices	£481	(£18,132)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid 19, which resulted in the GO being closed to the general public, has had a detrimental effect on conference and meeting room facilities (including refreshments and equipment hire). <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A claim for loss of income to Welsh Government will be submitted • Re-open the facility to business users and tenants. • Consider diversifying from meeting rooms to office rentals. • Review BGCBC staff office and consider making available as offices to let to businesses. • Future proof the building and adopt new technology for Microsoft Team Meetings, as the video conferencing will have a huge effect on our industry, so we need to embrace it. • Introduce a registered business address for a fee. • Engage with academia (Coleg Gwent), to consider lecture theatre i.e. cinema. 		

Action Plan

Economy

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4c

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Nursery Units	£39,881	(£226,063)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a delay to the refurbishment/investment to improve attractiveness to incoming and existing tenants as a result of Covid-19 • 1 month rental holiday in April given to all businesses within the Units • Covid 19, detrimental effect to the worldwide/local economy. Business start-ups, expansions (including business relocations) on hold. Business community in hibernation mode. • Business Tenant Support Scheme introduced to support SME's within the portfolio i.e. April rent free period and rental holidays. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Rates and Business Innovation Team at BGCBC, worked extremely hard to support business tenants with Covid 19 grants schemes. • Refurbishment scheme underway at Roseheyworth Business Park to focus on constrained business, which will result in further revenue potential. • An exercise to re-value the rentals and potential yield investments. • Secure marketing budget, to Increase marketing awareness to attract new customers i.e. rightmove.co.uk 		

Action Plan

Economy

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Appendix 4c

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-gear existing leases and offer financial incentives for new tenants. • Exploring options to secure external funding for further refurbishment schemes (WG) i.e. Phase 2 – Roseheyworth Business Park. • Investment plan to review and secure funding for wider refurbishment scheme across the portfolio. 		
Estate Management Non Rechargeable	£24,536	(£54,831)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of non-operational -assets under Bridging the Gap delayed due to staff redeployment on Covid-19 workstreams and suspension of recruitment within the Council <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment commenced • Reduction of expenditure could help but large items of maintenance could limit possibilities 		

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Technical Services	£1,448	(£96,000)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated loss of income as a result of COVID-19. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of income to potentially be met by way of Covid-19 grant funding from WG in 20/21. 		C Rogers / M Price
Waste Services	(£75,460)	(£548,076)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reason for Adverse variance</u> • a forecast loss of recycle income and suppression of market prices. • An estimated increase in residual waste tonnages during the lockdown period. There is the potential for these additional costs to be reclaimed from the WG Hardship Fund in the second quarter. • New Commercial Waste Service was suspended due to covid-19. The loss of income for the period April 2020 to June 2020 has been factored into the forecast, however, the overall savings target from the Bridging the Gap project will be difficult to achieve during the current financial year. 		M Perry / M Stent

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
			<p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased costs and loss of income to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.• Commencing side waste enforcement from July 2020, which will reduce residual waste charges. Currently due to easement of side waste, the cost to the authority is approx. £18,000 per month. This figure will reduce as restrictions on black bags commence borough-wide.• Capital bids will be submitted into Welsh Government (27th July deadline) for receptacles. If the bid is accepted, this will contribute £50,000 towards the revenue budget.• The delay in the opening of the new HWRC has contributed positively to the revenue budget.• Review social distancing rules in conjunction with the Trade Unions in the Autumn 2020 to potentially revert back to 3 staff in the cab. At the point in time this is agreed, the forecast adverse variance will improve (in relation to agency staff and transport costs).		

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Grounds Maintenance	£0	(£83,003)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of income from suspension of activities and loss of SLA for 6 months as a result of COVID 19 <p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>Loss of income to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</p>		M Perry/ D Watkins
Corporate Landlord	(£2,960)	(£68,850)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecast based on 19/20 draft outturn, except for known 20/21 Rates and other known expenditure, albeit there will be savings in utility charges for the period of time that the Civic centre is closed. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise and monitor expenditure on all non-essential maintenance buildings. 		C Rogers / M Price

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Building Cleaning	£0	(£244,608)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential reduction in schools SLA due to school's closure as a result of Covid 19 • <p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>loss of income to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</p>		C Rogers / M Price
Catering Account	£0	(£215,804)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <p>Potential reduction in schools SLA and loss of school meals income due to school closure as a result of Covid 19, over and above the loss of income claim to Welsh Government for the period April to June 2020</p> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>Further loss of income claims to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</p>		C Rogers / M Price

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Environmental Health	(£9,137)	(£66,642)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget pressures resulting from the end of the Public Protection Collaboration have been built into the budget. Some savings delayed due to staff sickness/extended notice period into the new financial year • Other staff savings postponed due to Covid 19 pandemic and reassessment of service needs. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMR 2 report and reassessment of service needs due to Covid 19 pandemic. The Service is likely to need to submit an application for a cost pressure for 21/22 		D Thompson
Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(£64,131)	(£25,079)	<p><u>Reason for Variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity costs are the main reasons for the variance. The plan of action from 19/20 has continued (electricity meter changes and resident recharge increases) and this is led to a decrease in forecast net costs. Work is continuing. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work is planned to attempt to reduce losses. 		D Thompson

Action Plan

Planning Committee and Licensing Committee 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4e

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Dealing with Applications	2,153	(31,293)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Downturn in Planning Fees received due to the effects of covid 19. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The department is hopeful that fees will improve during the last six months of the year as we come out of Covid19 restrictions.		

Action Plan

Planning Committee and Licensing Committee 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4e

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Licensing	(8,728)	(25,904)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed income, due to Covid 19 pandemic – (e.g. Pub and Club renewals) • Reduced income, due to Taxi fee proposed increases not actioned in 19/20 and for 20/21 due to pandemic, but inflationary increases have been applied to the budget in both years. • Potential further loss of income if local businesses are affected by the economic impacts of the pandemic <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers will monitor the budget and consider options to reduce costs. The Service is likely to need to submit an application for a cost pressure for 21/22. 		D Thompson