Report to Cabinet

Report of Chief finance officer

Subject Revenue budget monitoring 2014/15 – Period 06

Purpose

To update Cabinet on the financial position as at 30 September 2014, the forecast outturn for the year 2014/15, and the consequent forecast of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account balances.

Recommendation

To note the financial position as at 30 September 2014 and the forecast outturn for 2014/15.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority value for money services and the service plan priority to provide accurate, relevant and timely financial information.

Financial implications

The General Fund budget is forecast to achieve an underspend of £1.485m. The Housing Revenue Account budget is forecast to achieve an underspend of £1.513m.

Monitoring of key budgets does not indicate any unusual cause for concern; however the position will need to be continually monitored in order to deliver to the forecast outturn.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Waters – Deputy leader and resources

Contact officers

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Background documents

Budget Reports (Council 18 February 2014)

Report

- 1. Council approved budgets for the 2014/15 financial year on 18 February 2014.
- 2. The attached appendices show the forecast outturn and year-to-date positions for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account:
 - Appendix 1 shows the General Fund by Corporate Leadership Team responsibilities, and by Subjective Group
 - Appendix 2 shows the Housing Revenue Account in (near) statutory format, and by Subjective Group
 - Appendix 3 shows budget and expenditure for the year to date in graphical format

General Fund

3. Budgets reported include the resources financing the Council's net budget requirement (which includes a contribution of £0.541m to balances as allowed for in the Medium Term Financial Strategy) so that the net budget totals zero:

Item	Approved Budget £000s
Net Budget Requirement	18,407
Non-Domestic Rates	(4,651)
Revenue Support Grant	(5,980)
Council Tax precept	(7,776)
Total General Fund budget	0

4. The General Fund has been forecast to underspend by £1.485m at year end. This compares to a forecast underspend of £1.372m at the end of August. Significant forecast overspends and underspends are explained below:

Previous forecast over/(under) spend £000s	General Fund Service	Current forecast over/(under) spend £000s	Commentary
(810)	Finance	(595)	Both the value of housing benefit payments and the subsidy which funds them have reduced. The shortfall between them has also reduced meaning less Council funding is required in this financial year.
(24)	City Development	(141)	The forecast underspend relates to a reduction in anticipated bad debt, and higher than expected income on Investment Properties.

Previous forecast over/(under) spend £000s	General Fund Service	Current forecast over/(under) spend £000s	Commentary
(128)	Neighbourhood Housing	(123)	Spend on homeless prevention fund is lower than anticipated (£41k) but could show an increase in coming periods due to potential seasonal peak. Private Sector Leasing rental costs are also currently lower than anticipated by £75k.
(59)	Planning	(129)	Forecast underspend is due to staff charges to capital, CIL management fees and higher income from pre application charging.
(152)	Democratic Services	(160)	This relates to an underspend on salaries within the Committee secretariat which has been taken forward as savings within the transformation programme; and to Government grant received for Individual Electoral Registration.

5. For the year to date an overspend against budget of £3.056m is being reported. This overspend is made up of many debit and credit figures where various income and expenditure lines are ahead of or behind budget profile. Significant variances are explained below. These lines will be monitored closely as the year progresses to identify any potential impact on forecast outturn figures.

General Fund Service	Year to date variance Over/(under) £000s	Commentary
Business Relationship Management	(1,482)	This is mainly due to invoices for Finance and for Revenues and Benefits services for the year to date having been received late.
Finance	1,379	The net overspend against profile on finance is due to timing differences in respect of payments made / income received.
Procurement & Service Improvement	(1,793)	This is mainly due to invoices for IT services for the year to date having been received late.
City Development:	(1,037)	The current underspend against profile relates to parking recharges to be re distributed, which will take into account County income; works recharges to be distributed and pension recharges still to be processed.
Citywide Services:	(577)	Waste invoice due in September was paid in October. Garden waste income is higher than profiled budget. Pension recharges not yet received.

General Fund Service	Year to date variance Over/(under) £000s	Commentary
Neighbourhood Housing:	(557)	Partly due to delays in payment of homelessness invoices compared to budget profiling but this underspend in the year to date also reflects the forecast underspend for the full year.
Human Resources	2,335	This relates to pension charges which will be reallocated across service areas.

Housing Revenue Account

6. The budgets reported include a £7.7m use of HRA balances, so that the net budget totals zero:

Item	Approved Budget £000s
Gross HRA Expenditure	80,827
Gross HRA Income	(73,120)
Contribution from HRA Balance	(7,707)
Total net HRA budget	0

7. The Housing Revenue Account has been forecast to underspend by £1.513m. This compares to a forecast underspend of £1.196m at the end of August. Significant forecast overspends and underspends are explained below:

Previous forecast over/(under) spend £000s	HRA Division of Service	Current forecast over/(under) spend £000s	Commentary
103	Repairs & Maintenance	(133)	The forecast underspend is mainly due to £100k of un-budgeted insurance income.
130	Rents, Rates, & Other Property Costs	125	Due to unbudgeted costs for NPS.
(773)	General Management	(708)	The majority of the projected underspend is due to: Contingency fund (£97k); audit fee not required as included in LGSS recharge (£105k); budget for software interface may no longer be required (£50k); lower NPS fees at this stage than budgeted for (£74k); and professional advice / fees budget not required (£190k).
(172)	Special Services	(258)	Mainly due to projected underspend on district heating fuel.

Previous forecast over/(under) spend £000s	HRA Division of Service	Current forecast over/(under) spend £000s	Commentary
(691)	Provision for Bad Debts	(691)	Provision increased in anticipation of the effects of full implementation of bedroom tax and universal credit. Delayed implementation of universal credit and better than anticipated rent collection performance have delivered a lesser call on this provision.
(165)	Garage & Other Property Rents	(116)	Lower than anticipated garage voids rate
396	Service Charges – General	237	Lower income than budgeted for, partially offset by underspend in Special Services (district heating)

8. For the year to date an underspend of £3.485m is being reported. This underspend is made up of many debit and credit figures, where various income and expenditure lines are ahead of or behind budget profile. Significant underspends and overspends to date are explained below. These lines will be monitored closely as the year progresses to identify any potential impact on forecast outturn figures.

HRA Division of Service	Year to date variance Over/(under) £000s	Commentary
Repairs & Maintenance	(3,554)	There are 2 main reasons for this variance: The valuation and invoice process creates an artificial delay between the work being completed on site and the final stage of the invoice amount being posted to the ledger; and Due to the responsive nature of some budget lines within this group it is extremely difficult to accurately profile a years work in advance and some budget line spend is behind profile due to work not being required as predicted.
Rents, Rates, & Other Property Costs	2,860	Water rates accounted for as one annual amount (although actually paid in 10 instalments) – budget profile assumes 10 instalments
General Management	(1,565)	Overall underspend projected, as per comments on previous table. Also pension recharges are yet to be distributed across service areas
Special Services	(973)	Mainly district heating spend not matching anticipated spending profile – profiles to be updated for period 7

Risks

9. A risk-based review based on the size and volatility of budgets has identified a "Top 10" of key budgets where inadequacy of monitoring and control systems could pose a significant threat to the council's overall financial position. These are shown in the following table.

Key Risk Budgets	Budget £000s	Forecast Variance	Forecast Var %	Forecast RAG
Housing Benefit Payments - Council tenants	36,254	-2,129	-6%	RED
Housing Benefit Subsidy - Council tenants	35,514	1,508	-4%	AMBER
Housing Benefit Payments - Other tenants	32,280	-2,119	-7%	RED
Housing Benefit Subsidy - Other tenants	32,923	1,668	-5%	RED
HRA Repairs - Tenanted Properties	12,408	-70	-1%	GREEN
HRA Repairs - Void Properties	2,630	0	0%	GREEN
Multi-Storey Car Parks	1,797	-15	-1%	GREEN
HRA Rents - Estate Properties	-58,916	100	0%	GREEN
Corporate Management including Contingency	1,340	0	0%	GREEN
Private Sector Leasing Costs	2,570	-208	-8%	RED

10. The red / amber status of items in the "Forecast RAG" column is explained below. In all cases the forecasts are for underspends and so although these are rated as red / amber because they are forecast to vary from budget by more than 5% (red) or 3% (amber) they do not pose a significant threat to the delivery of the Council's budget at the current time.

Key Risk Budgets	Comment
Housing Benefit Payments and Subsidy - Council tenants:	Reduced value of claims than planned for but offset by reduced subsidy to fund these payments.
Housing Benefit Payments and Subsidy - Other tenants:	Reduced value of claims than planned for but offset by reduced subsidy to fund these payments.
Private Sector Leasing Costs:	PSL rental costs currently lower than anticipated

- 11. The 2014/15 budgets approved by Council were drawn up in the expectation of reduced resources as announced by the coalition government. There are risks to the current and medium term financial position from:
 - Reductions in government grant the localisation of Business Rates and of Council Tax reductions has increased the risks to the council's financial position arising from economic conditions and policy decisions.
 - Changes in policy if further "empowerment" of local authorities is not matched by devolved resources
 - Delivery of savings the budget incorporates both savings measures already in place, and those planned for implementation during the year. If these savings are not achievable in full, overspends will result. With appropriate approvals these may be mitigated through provision made in the corporate contingency, up to the level of that contingency
 - Identification of further savings work is continuing on developing proposals for additional savings to bridge the medium-term budget gap. If

- these proposals fall short, or are not implemented fully and in a timely manner, further budget shortfalls will result.
- 12. Forecast outturns are estimates based on management assessments, formulae, and extrapolation. They may not adequately take account of variables such as:
 - Bad Debts budget reports show gross debt, i.e. invoices raised. While
 allowance has been made in the budget for non-collections, the current
 economic climate may have an adverse influence on our ability to collect
 money owed. This may be reflected in higher provisions for bad debt, as
 may the impact of welfare reforms such as the so-called "Bedroom Tax".
 - Seasonal Factors if adverse weather conditions or a worsening economic climate depress levels of trade and leisure activities in the city, there may be a negative impact on parking and other income.
 - Housing Repairs & Improvements the rate of spend on void properties, though closely managed, is heavily influenced by void turnaround, since transfers can create a chain of voids involving significant repair costs.

Financial Planning

- 13. Overall levels of overspend and underspend will have an ongoing impact on the budget for following years and the size and urgency of savings requirements.
- 14. Net overspends and underspends will be consolidated into the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account balances carried forward to 2015/16. These are reflected in periodic updates to the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

Impact on Balances

15. The prudent minimum level of General Fund reserves has been assessed as £4.496m. The budgeted and forecast outturn's impact on the 2013/14 balance brought forward, is as follows:

Item	£000s
Balance at 1 April 2014	(8,313)
Budgeted contribution to balances 2014/15	(541)
Forecast outturn 2014/15	(1,485)
= Forecast balance at 31 March 2015	(10,339)

16. The General Fund balance is therefore expected to continue to exceed the prudent minimum. The Medium Term Financial Strategy takes into account all reserve balances above the prudent minimum and reduces the level of savings required in future years to take account of these balances.

17. The prudent minimum level of HRA reserves has been assessed as £3.067m. The budgeted and forecast outturn's impact on the 2013/14 balance brought forward, is as follows:

Item	£000s
Balance at 1 April 2014	(25,129)
Budgeted use of balances 2014/15	7,707
Forecast outturn 2014/15	(1,513)
= Forecast balance at 31 March 2015	(18,935)

18. The Housing Revenue Account balance is therefore expected to continue to exceed the prudent minimum. Balances above the prudent minimum are reflected in future spending plans in the HRA 30 year plan.

Collection Fund

- The Collection Fund is made up of three accounts Council Tax, the Business Improvement District (BID) account, and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).
 - Council Tax is shared between the city, the county, and the police and crime commissioner based on an estimated tax base and the council tax rates agreed by each of the preceptors. Any surplus or deficit is shared in the following financial year.
 - The BID account is operated on behalf of the BID company, to collect their income from the BID levy. Any surplus or deficit is passed on the BID company.
 - NNDR income is shared between the city, the county, and central government. Since "localisation", any surplus or deficit is also shared, rather than as formerly being borne wholly by the government.
- 20. There are particular risks attached to NNDR, which are:
 - Appeals the impact of any appeals will fall on the Collection Fund, and therefore in part on the city. Although the Valuation Office has a large backlog of appeals, the value of the appeals is not known, nor the likelihood of success, nor the timing of the appeal being determined.
 - NNDR billable changes in the NNDR billable, e.g. demolition or construction of new billable premises, will impact on the amount billable. Assumptions of growth may also be affected by changes in the larger economic environment.
 - NNDR collectable arrears and write-offs (e.g. where a business goes into administration) will also impact on the Collection Fund.
- 21. These risks are monitored and mitigated through normal Revenues operations.

22. A summary of the Collection Fund is provided below:

Approved	Current	Collection Fund Summary	Actual To	Forecast	Forecast
Budget	Budget		Date	Outturn	Variance
£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s
		Council tax			
53,797	53,797	Expenditure	28,212	53,797	0
(53,797)	(53,797)	Income	747	(53,797)	0
		Business Improvement District			
656	656	Expenditure	212	656	0
(656)	(656)	Income	23	(656)	0
		National Non-Domestic Rate			
Approved	Current	Collection Fund Summary	Actual To	Forecast	Forecast
Budget	Budget		Date	Outturn	Variance
£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s
77,698	77,698	Expenditure	47,119	79,023	1,325
(77,698)	(77,698)	Income	(79,848)	(79,041)	(1,344)
0	0	Total Collection Fund	(3,535)	(18)	(19)

- 23. On Council Tax, actual income is not posted from the council tax system into the finance system until year-end. The actual year-end surplus or deficit will be taken into account in considering distribution of balances between the preceptors (city, county, and police).
- 24. The council operates the BID account on behalf of the BID company, so no surplus or deficit will fall on the council's accounts.
- 25. If a deficit materialises on the NNDR account, this will roll forward and be distributed in the 2015/16 budget cycle; the city's share would be 50%. Additional (section 31) grant may be received in the General Fund to offset all or part of any shortfall in business rate income due to additional reliefs granted by government.

Integrated impact assessment



Report author to complete	
Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	
Head of service:	Chief Finance Officer
Report subject:	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2014/15
Date assessed:	05/11/14
Description:	This is the integrated impact assessment for the Revenue Budget Monitoring 2014/15 report to cabinet

		Impact		
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)				The report shows that the council monitors its budgets, considers risks to achieving its budget objectives, reviews its balances position, and is therefore able to maintain its financial standing
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact				
ICT services				
Economic development				
Financial inclusion				
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults				
S17 crime and disorder act 1998				
Human Rights Act 1998				
Health and well being	\boxtimes			

		Impact		
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	\boxtimes			
Eliminating discrimination & harassment				
Advancing equality of opportunity				
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation				
Natural and built environment				
Waste minimisation & resource use	\boxtimes			
Pollution				
Sustainable procurement				
Energy and climate change				
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management				The report demonstrates that the council is aware of and monitors risks to the achievement of its financial strategy.

11/19/2014

Recommendations from impact assessment	
Positive	
None	
Negative	
None	
Neutral	
None	
Issues	
The council should continue to monitor its budget performance	e in the context of the financial risk environment within which it operates.

Budget Monitoring Summary Year: 2014/15 Period: 06 (September)

GENERAL FUND SERVICE SUMMARY

Approved Budget	Current Budget		Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
		Business Relationship Management					
2,717,718	2,654,746	Business Relationship Management	1,933,390	451,853	(1,481,537)	2,661,992	7,246
(20,186,020)	(20,170,990)	Finance	(9,112,044)	(7,732,963)	1,379,081	(21,295,976)	(594,986)
33,733	(1,317)	Procurement & Service Improvement	1,870,002	77,233	(1,792,769)	(32,880)	(31,563)
(17,434,569)	(17,517,561)	Total Business Relationship Management	(5,308,652)	(7,203,877)	(1,895,225)	(18,666,865)	(619,304)
		Chief Executive & Corporate					
0	0	Chief Executive	127,866	76,939	(50,927)	(30,109)	(30,109)
(1,079,432)	(1,027,969)	Corporate Management	(1,851,460)	(1,809,187)	42,273	(1,039,132)	(11,163)
(1,079,432)	(1,027,969)	Total Chief Executive & Corporate	(1,723,594)	(1,732,248)	(8,654)	(1,069,241)	(41,272)
		Customers, Comms & Culture					
2,525,619	, ,	Communications & Culture	1,045,603	873,556	(172,047)	2,292,041	(33,316)
(116,196)	, , ,	Customer Contact	1,276,454	946,403	(330,051)	(177,377)	(36,202)
2,409,423	2,184,182	Total Customers, Comms & Culture	2,322,057	1,819,959	(502,098)	2,114,664	(69,518)
		Operations					
(965,936)	, ,	City Development	(2,171,295)	(3,207,822)	(1,036,527)	(1,096,205)	(141,401)
9,978,887		Citywide Services	4,015,972	3,439,230	(576,742)	9,969,633	(36,973)
0	0	Deputy Chief Executive	82,374	55,017	(27,357)	(4,518)	(4,518)
2,654,201	2,661,895	Neighbourhood Housing	1,008,303	451,486	(556,817)	2,539,060	(122,835)
2,229,016	2,332,505	Neighbourhood Services	886,973	791,366	(95,608)	2,307,929	(24,576)
1,743,316	1,743,036	Planning	596,452	236,230	(360,222)	1,614,342	(128,694)
125,419	252,319	Property Services	757,179	521,186	(235,993)	209,042	(43,277)
15,764,903	16,041,557	Total Operations	5,175,958	2,286,693	(2,889,265)	15,539,283	(502,274)
		Strategy, People & Democracy					
303,787	229,444	Democratic Services	491,756	551,152	59,396	69,172	(160,272)
(4)	(5,100)	Human Resources	614,099	2,949,087	2,334,988	(5,582)	(482)
35,892	95,447	Strategy & Programme Management	296,368	141,666	(154,702)	3,333	(92,114)
339,675	319,791	Total Strategy, People & Democracy	1,402,223	3,641,906	2,239,683	66,923	(252,868)
0	0	Total General Fund	1,867,992	(1,187,568)	(3,055,560)	(2,015,235)	(1,485,235)

GENERAL FUND SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Foreca	ıst	Approved Budget		Current Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date Date	Variance To Outturn	Forecast Variance
	0	0		0	(313)	(313)	(625)	(625)
17,366,	808	17,429,262	Employees	9,219,640	9,798,588	578,948	17,135,725	(293,537)
8,577,	187	8,522,187	Premises	4,524,324	5,306,013	781,689	8,418,625	(103,562)
314,	000	313,998	Transport	133,782	65,109	(68,673)	254,925	(59,073)
15,884,	736	16,005,344	Supplies & Services	7,552,194	6,142,004	(1,410,190)	15,597,875	(407,469)
7,784,	578	7,784,578	Third Party Payments	3,892,296	(52,754)	(3,945,050)	7,762,216	(22,362)
94,462,	444	94,462,444	Transfer Payments	47,231,226	50,280,879	3,049,653	90,214,797	(3,797,647)
3,685,	062	3,685,062	Capital Financing	768,660	2,596,732	1,828,072	3,684,512	(550)
	0	15,030	Rev Contribs to Capital	0	0	0	0	(15,030)
(55,0	000)	0	Savings Proposals	0	0	0	0	0
(23,185	,762)(23,185,762)) Receipts	(11,491,948)	(10,695,760)	796,188	(23,455,968)	(270,206)
(118,033,	744)((118,117,443)) Government Grants	(59,058,720)	(63,039,751)	(3,981,031)	(115,244,879)	2,872,564
1,304,	093	1,304,093	Centrally Managed	652,086	29,322	(622,764)	1,304,169	76
17,496,	584	17,552,192	Recharge Expenditure	1,584,894	994,140	(590,754)	17,410,417	(141,775)
(25,600	,986)(25,770,985)	Recharge Income	(3,140,442)	(2,611,777)	528,665	(25,097,023)	673,962
	0	0	Total General Fund	1,867,992	(1,187,568)	(3,055,560)	(2,015,235)	(1,485,235)

Budget Monitoring Report Year: 2014/15 Period: 06 (September)

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STATUTORY SUMMARY

Approved Budget	Current Budget		Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
15,923,170	15,923,170	Repairs & Maintenance	7,898,226	4,344,514	(3,553,712)	15,790,558	(132,612)
6,178,443	6,178,443	Rents, Rates, & Other Property Costs	3,032,178	5,892,575	2,860,397	6,303,521	125,078
11,382,720	11,370,008	General Management	3,922,456	2,357,754	(1,564,702)	10,662,034	(707,974)
5,628,948	5,718,660	Special Services	2,544,818	1,571,803	(973,015)	5,460,629	(258,031)
21,924,793	21,924,793	Depreciation & Impairment	51,252	0	(51,252)	21,924,793	Ó
941,000	941,000	Provision for Bad Debts	470,500	0	(470,500)	250,000	(691,000)
(58,915,983)	(58,915,983)	Dwelling Rents	(30,636,314)	(30,585,259)	51,055	(58,816,957)	99,026
(1,951,186)	(1,951,186)	Garage & Other Property Rents	(980,932)	(1,086,139)	(105,207)	(2,066,899)	(115,713)
(9,643,814)	(9,643,814)	Service Charges - General	(4,607,030)	(4,374,214)	232,816	(9,406,850)	236,964
0	0	Miscellaneous Income	0	(34,623)	(34,623)	(69,246)	(69,246)
9,382,073	9,305,073	Adjustments & Financing Items	(98,000)	(49,550)	48,450	9,305,373	300
(700,164)	(700, 164)	Amenities shared by whole community	0	Ó	0	(700, 164)	0
(150,000)	(150,000)	Interest Received	(75,000)	0	75,000	(150,000)	0
0	0	Total Housing Revenue Account	(18,477,846)	(21,963,139)	(3,485,293)	(1,513,208)	(1,513,208)

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Approved Budget	Current Budget		Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
6,467,099 25,086,833 122,263	25,163,833	Employees Premises Transport	3,440,348 12,271,510 61,140	2,606,817 10,932,658 40,887	(833,532) (1,338,852) (20,253)	6,260,365 24,837,314 105,500	(211,734) (326,519) (16,763)
3,997,007 348,001	3,925,114 348,001	Supplies & Services Third Party Payments	1,633,240 56,796	546,468 1,965	(1,086,772) (54,831)	2,753,107 348,301	(1,172,007) 300
5,847,385 1,167,846	1,167,846	Recharge Expenditure Capital Financing	1,175,544 51,252	809,680	(365,864) (51,252)	5,979,851 1,167,846	65,573 0
(71,877,097) ((221,256) (1,021,221)	(221,256)	Government Grants Recharge Income	(36,907,072) (235,626) (24,978)	(36,826,363) (75,250)	80,709 160,376 24,978	(71,828,891) (150,500) (992,242)	48,206 70,756 28,979
17,035,000 13,048,140	16,958,000	Rev Contribs to Capital Capital Financing	0 0	0 0	0	16,958,000 13,048,140	0
0	0	Total Housing Revenue Account	(18,477,846)	(21,963,139)	(3,485,293)	(1,513,208)	(1,513,208)

The following graphs show the monthly budget profile and income/expenditure to date for each service (both General Fund and Housing Revenue Account) for the financial year.

The actual income/expenditure reported is influenced by accrual provisions brought forward from the previous financial year, and by any delays in invoicing and/or payment.

Budgets are profiled to show the expected pattern of income & expenditure, and will be refined and improved during the course of the financial year.









