



Item: 3

Investments Sub-committee: 25 February 2026.

Revenue Expenditure Monitoring.

Report by Head of Finance.

1. Overview

- 1.1. On 4 March 2025, the Council set its overall revenue budget for financial year 2025/26. On 17 June 2025, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended approval of the detailed revenue budgets for 2025/26, which form the basis of the individual revenue expenditure monitoring reports.
- 1.2. Individual revenue expenditure monitoring reports are circulated every month to inform elected members of the up-to-date financial position. Quarterly revenue expenditure monitoring reports are presented to individual service committees.
- 1.3. In terms of revenue spending, at an individual cost centre level, budget holders are required to provide an explanation of the causes of each material variance and to identify appropriate corrective actions to remedy the situation.
- 1.4. Material variances are identified automatically as Priority Actions within individual budget cost centres according to the following criteria:
 - Variance of £10,000 and more than 110% or less than 90% of anticipated position (1B).
 - Not more than 110% or less than 90% of anticipated position but variance greater than £50,000 (1C).
- 1.5. Priority Actions can be identified at the Service Function level according to the same criteria and these are shown in the Revenue Expenditure Statements. As with individual cost centre variances, each of these Priority Actions requires an explanation and corrective action to be identified and these are shown in the Budget Action Plan.
- 1.6. The details have been provided following consultation with the relevant Directors and their staff.
- 1.7. The figures quoted within the Budget Action Plan by way of the underspend (-) and overspend position will always relate to the position within the current month.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that members of the Sub-committee:

- i. Scrutinise the revenue financial summary statement in respect of service areas for which the Investments Sub-committee is responsible, for the period 1 April to 31 December 2025, attached as Annex 1 to this report, indicating a budget surplus position of £14,575,400.
- ii. Scrutinise the revenue financial service area statement in respect of service areas for which the Investments Sub-committee is responsible, for the period 1 April to 31 December 2025, attached as Annex 2 to this report.
- iii. Scrutinise the explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to this report.

For Further Information please contact:

Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance), extension 2105, Email: shonagh.merriman@orkney.gov.uk.

Implications of Report

1. **Financial:** The Financial Regulations state that Directors can incur expenditure within approved revenue and capital budgets. Such expenditure must be in accordance with the Council's policies and objectives and subject to compliance with the Financial Regulations.
2. **Legal:** Regular financial monitoring and reporting help the Council meet its statutory obligation to secure best value.
3. **Corporate Governance:** In terms of the Scheme of Administration, monitoring the levels of revenue expenditure incurred against approved budgets, in respect of each of the service areas for which the Sub-committee is responsible, is referred to the Investments Sub-committee.
4. **Human Resources:** N/A
5. **Equalities:** An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for financial monitoring.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** An Island Communities Impact Assessment is not required for financial monitoring.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - Growing our economy.
 - Strengthening our Communities.
 - Developing our Infrastructure.

- Transforming our Council.
- 8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - Cost of Living.
 - Sustainable Development.
 - Local Equality.
 - Improving Population Health.
- 9. Environmental and Climate Risk:** N/A
- 10. Risk:** N/A
- 11. Procurement:** N/A
- 12. Health and Safety:** N/A
- 13. Property and Assets:** N/A
- 14. Information Technology:** N/A
- 15. Cost of Living:** N/A

List of Background Papers

Policy and Resources Committee, 25 February 2025, Budget and Council Tax Level for 2025/26.

Policy and Resources Committee, 17 June 2025, Detailed Revenue Budgets.

Annexes

Annex 1: Financial Summary.

Annex 2: Financial Detail by Service Area.

Annex 3: Budget Action Plan.

Annex 1: Financial Summary

December 2025

The table below provides a summary of the position across all Service Areas.

Non-General Fund		Spend £000	Budget £000	Over/(Under) Spend £000	%	Annual Budget £000
Service Area						
Strategic Reserve Fund		(9,476.9)	5,098.5	(14,575.4)	N/A	(1,322.3)
		(9,476.9)	5,098.5	(14,575.4)	N/A	(1,322.3)
Service Totals		(9,476.9)	5,098.5	(14,575.4)	N/A	(1,322.3)

Compared to last month, the total number of PAs has changed as follows:

Service Area	No. of PAs		Service Functions	PAs/ Function
	P08	P09		
Strategic Reserve Fund	3	4	10	40%
Totals	3	4	10	40%

Annex 2: Financial Detail by Service Area

December 2025

The following tables show the spending position by service function

Non-General Fund

Strategic Reserve Fund	PA	Spend £000	Budget £000	Over/(Under) £000	Spend %	Annual Budget £000
Investment Activities	1B	(27,202.7)	(12,560.5)	(14,642.2)	216.6	(19,144.0)
Investment Properties	1B	(656.4)	(998.8)	342.4	65.7	(933.6)
Local Investments	1B	253.9	333.0	(79.1)	76.2	639.7
Conservation Fund		0.0	2.4	(2.4)	0.0	0.2
Travel Fund		0.0	1.1	(1.1)	0.0	0.0
Flotta Decommissioning Fund		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	953.0
Orkney Memorial Fund		28.3	28.3	0.0	100.0	0.0
Renewable Energy Investment Fund	1B	(331.0)	(138.0)	(193.0)	239.9	(138.0)
Movement in Reserves		18,431.0	18,431.0	0.0	100.0	17,233.4
Finance & Capital Charges		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.0
Service Total		(9,476.9)	5,098.5	(14,575.4)	N/A	(1,322.3)

Strategic Reserve Fund

Function	Function Description/ Explanation	Action Category/ Action Description	Responsible Officer	Deadline	Status
R55C	<p>Investment Activities</p> <p>More than anticipated income by £14,642.2K</p> <p>Market returns are volatile at present. At the end of December this budget area showed a positive variance against budget. However, investments can go down as well as up.</p>	<p>Monitor the situation</p> <p>Continue to review market investments.</p>	Erik Knight	31/03/2026	Ongoing
R55D	<p>Investment Properties</p> <p>Less than anticipated income by £342.4K</p> <p>Reduced rental income occurs due to timing issues and other tenancy events across numerous properties, particularly in Hatston which covers 19 properties. One lease entered a "holding over" status where rental invoices were not issued. This has now been investigated, and charges are expected to resume including backdated income.</p>	<p>Monitor the situation</p> <p>The budget is slowly recovering and will continue to be monitored, but it is expected to return lower income than budget forecast at the year end.</p>	Kenny Macpherson	31/03/2026	Ongoing
R55F	<p>Local Investments</p> <p>Less than anticipated expenditure by £79.1K</p> <p>Underspend mostly related to staff costs and delays in external advisors issuing invoices.</p>	<p>Monitor the situation</p> <p>Underspend due to the staff vacancy will carry forward to the year-end. Continue to chase suppliers for all invoices still outstanding, this part of the variance is expected to resolve by the year end.</p>	Sweyn Johnston	28/02/2026	New

Strategic Reserve Fund

Function	Function Description/ Explanation	Action Category/ Action Description	Responsible Officer	Deadline	Status
R55V	Renewable Energy Investment Fund More than anticipated income by £193.0K Dividends received ahead of budget expectations.	Monitor the situation Continue to monitor level of returns for this investment noting that the budget for 2025/26 was reduced to reflect the fact dividend income is not guaranteed and no dividends were received in financial year 2024/25.	Erik Knight	31/03/2026	Ongoing