

# Subject: Secretariat Quarterly Finance Report – Q1 2023/24

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| <b>Report to:</b>     | <b>GLA Oversight Committee</b>                    |
| <b>Report of:</b>     | <b>Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat</b> |
| <b>Date:</b>          | <b>28 September 2023</b>                          |
| <b>Public Access:</b> | <b>This report will be considered in public</b>   |

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The London Assembly has delegated oversight of the London Assembly’s budget to the GLA Oversight Committee. Officers will provide a quarterly report to the Committee to support effective scrutiny of this budget, in line with wider Greater London Authority (GLA) practice.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the quarterly budget position and forecasts outlined below.**

## 3. Background

- 3.1 In recent years, the GLA Oversight Committee considers the London Assembly’s budget at fixed points in the year and typically as part of the Mayor’s annual budget setting process. The Committee is invited to consider proposals for budget bids for future years in October/November and is then invited to approve budget allocations in February/March once final budget settlements are known. The papers supporting these discussions include an assessment of performance against in-year budgets, but the emphasis is typically on proposals for future years. This report seeks to provide the Committee with a more regular opportunity to assess in-year spend and brings the Assembly more closely in line with the quarterly performance approach in place across the GLA more widely.
- 3.2 This is the first iteration of this report, and officers would welcome views from Members on whether the information provided (and its form) is helpful. Reports will be presented to the first meeting after the quarterly data is available. Commentary will be provided to explain any substantive divergences in spend or forecasts.

## 4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 This is a Quarter 1 report, and as such, Members will note that all budget lines forecast to full spend at the end of the year, despite underspends in most teams in this quarter. This reflects the more limited information available about trajectories in the earliest part of the budget year. Members will be aware that the Secretariat has reported underspends across recent years. This has predominantly been as a result of turnover and vacancies, including as a result of previous restructures. Action is underway to settle this position, but it is anticipated that further underspends will occur in 2023-24, and particularly as the changes resulting from the recent Scrutiny Team restructure are implemented. This will be more fully reflected in forecasts from Quarter 2 onwards and will inform budget proposals for 2024-25 which the Committee will consider at its meeting in November.
- 4.2 The GLA's Quarterly Performance report provides regular information about the GLA's performance against a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) and actions (in addition to budget information akin to that provided for the Assembly here). This is produced at programme/Mission level. Subject to the views of the Committee, it is proposed that officers undertake further work to establish what a more detailed performance dashboard for the Assembly might look like, including consideration of appropriate KPIs.

## 5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The report is prepared in accordance with Section D, Paragraph 2 of the Oversight Committee's Terms of Reference, which enables the Committee to allocate the Assembly's budget and to monitor expenditure on scrutiny throughout the year.

## 6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 None

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### List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 – Quarter 1 Performance Report

### Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

None

### Contact Information

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|------------------|--|
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## Appendix 1

| <b>Summary Report</b>     |                     |                |                 |                  |                 |               |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Q1 report (£000's)</b> | <b>Year To Date</b> |                |                 | <b>Full Year</b> |                 |               |
| <b>by Business Unit</b>   | <b>Budget</b>       | <b>Actuals</b> | <b>Variance</b> | <b>Forecast</b>  | <b>Variance</b> | <b>Budget</b> |
|                           | <b>Net</b>          | <b>Net</b>     | <b>Net</b>      | <b>Net</b>       | <b>Net</b>      | <b>Net</b>    |
| Assembly Communicati      | 100                 | 77             | -23             | 421              | 0               | 421           |
| Committee Services        | 200                 | 142            | -58             | 803              | 0               | 803           |
| Executive Director-       | 75                  | 72             | -3              | 318              | 0               | 318           |
| Scrutiny                  | 424                 | 320            | -104            | 1,746            | 0               | 1,746         |
| Special Projects          | 370                 | 278            | -92             | 1,110            | 0               | 1,110         |
| Member Services           | 455                 | 385            | -70             | 1,970            | 0               | 1,970         |
| Member Services (Gre      | 73                  | 79             | 6               | 295              | 0               | 295           |
| Member Services (Lib      | 47                  | 44             | -3              | 197              | 0               | 197           |
| Member Services (Con      | 212                 | 181            | -30             | 883              | 0               | 883           |
| Member Services (Lab      | 256                 | 245            | -11             | 1,084            | 0               | 1,084         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>2,211</b>        | <b>1,823</b>   | <b>-388</b>     | <b>8,827</b>     | <b>0</b>        | <b>8,827</b>  |

The year-to-date position for Assembly and Secretariat shows a £388k underspend against Q1 budgets.

This comprises the following:

- £238k due to vacancies across the Directorate resulting in underspends, in some cases pending restructures, net down by agency and secondment costs.
- £30k due to delay in the procurement of a transcription service.
- £92k due to profiling of the Special Projects budget; to be adjusted to reflect four equal payments to London TravelWatch.

Any under or overspend will be managed through the Assembly Reserve at year end.