

Committee(s): Epping Forest & Commons Committee	Dated: 28/11/2024
Subject: Finance Progress Report 2024/25 (Period 6 April - September) – The Commons charities	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	n/a
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	n/a
Report of: Chamberlain	For Information
Report author: Clem Harcourt, Chamberlain’s Department	

Summary

This report provides an update on the finance position as at period 6 (April – September) 2024/25 for each of the Commons charities and sets out each charity’s revenue operating budget position to date and projected year-end outturn, current live capital projects and outstanding debt position. It also provides additional information on the various reserve funds held and other relevant finance information.

The charities included in this report are:

Section A. Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (charity registration number: 232987)

Section B. West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood and Coulsdon and Other Commons (charity registration numbers: 232988 and 232989)

Section C. Ashtead Common (charity registration number: 1051510)

As part of the Corporation’s ongoing Charity Review, future training sessions will continue to be designed for both Members and Officers on key aspects of charity finance.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of this report for each charity and its appendices.

Main Report

Background

1. In order to improve financial reporting related to each of the individual Commons charities, a set of financial appendices and commentary have been produced to enable greater clarity of revenue and capital budgets, reserve balances and other financial information needed to allow greater scrutiny of the financial performance of each charity as well as to provide assurance that the Executive Director Environment remains within her overall local risk resources for 2024/25.

2. To ensure your Committee is kept informed about the financial performance of each of the Commons charities, an update on progress made against budgets as well as other financial matters will be reported to you on a quarterly basis. This approach will allow Members to ask questions and have a timely input into areas of particular importance. The relevant financial information is separated below between each of the individual charities for The Commons.
3. Please also note that in the report below, expenditure and adverse variances are represented by brackets whereas figures without brackets indicate income or favourable variances.

A. Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (charity registration number: 232987)

Revenue Operating Budget – 2024/25

4. The latest budget for Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common charity for 2024/25 currently amounts (£1.07m) net expenditure. As at September 2024, actual net expenditure amounted to (£188k) net expenditure, with a current forecast outturn for 2024/25 of (£1.074m) net expenditure. This amounts to a projected net overspend of (£4k) (0.37%) when compared with the charity's latest revenue budget for 2024/25.
5. This represents a worsening of (£125k) when compared with the projected underspend of £121k to the end of June 2024 reported previously to your Committee. This can be explained by an increase in forecasted expenditure for staffing costs, the purchase of materials and the corporate contract for repairs and maintenance in addition to reduced income forecast from car parking.
6. Budgetary information has been separated to segregate different elements of the budget, comprising direct operating budgets (local and central risk), recharges & support service budgets and City Surveyor-managed repairs and maintenance budgets and to improve in year reporting in line with the recommended approach for the financial reporting of charities.
7. A summary of the latest revenue budget position for 2024/25 is shown in Table 1 below, with further detailed information provided in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, including reasons for significant budget variances.

Table 1 – Revenue Budget Summary 2024/25 – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual - Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Gross Exp	(1,546)	(542)	(1,708)	(162)	(10.48)
Gross Income	476	354	634	158	33.19
Net Exp	(1,070)	(188)	(1,074)	(4)	0.37

Expenditure

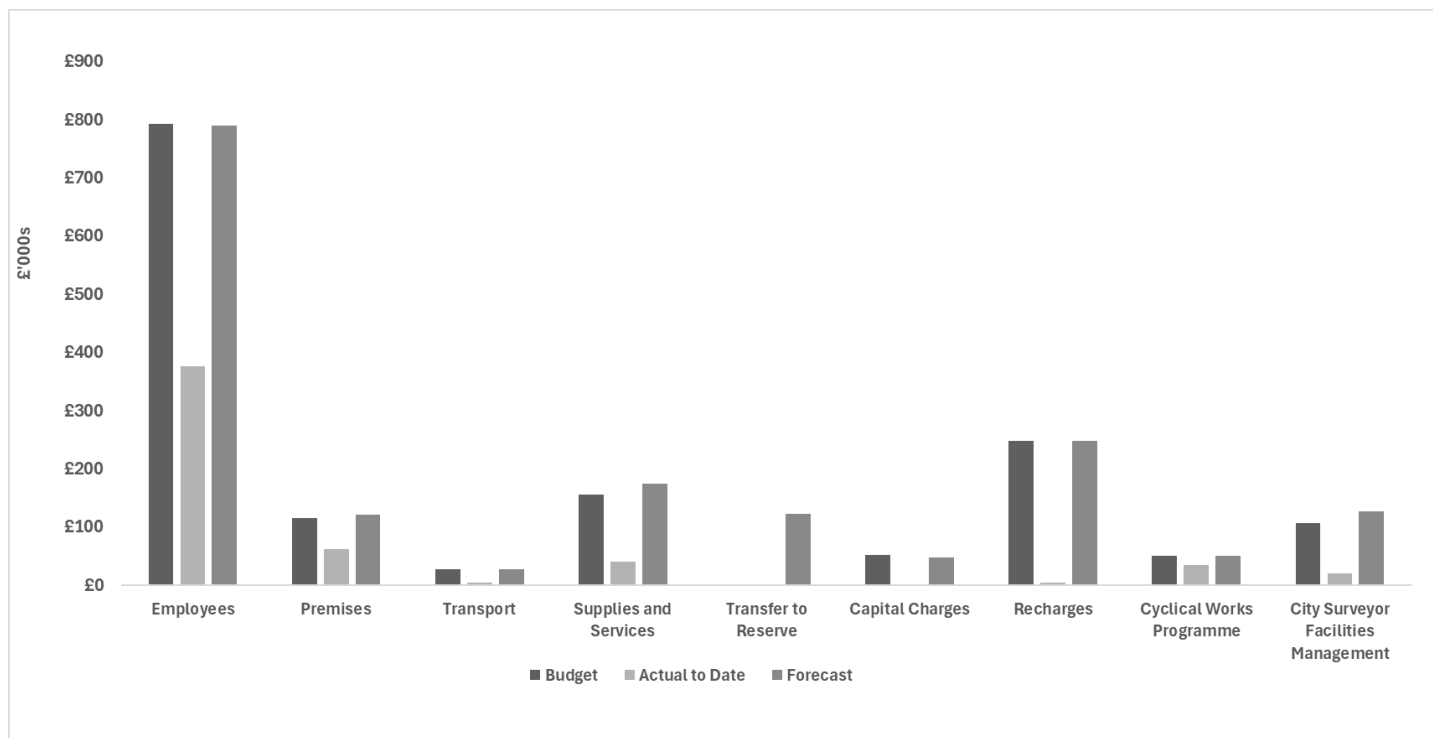
8. A breakdown and analysis of the latest gross expenditure position for 2024/25 is set out in Table 2 below:

Table 2 – Expenditure Summary – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual – Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Direct Operating Budgets	(1,141)	(483)	(1,283)	(142)	(12.45)
Recharges and Support Services	(248)	(4)	(248)	0	0.00
City Surveyor Repairs and Maintenance	(157)	(55)	(177)	(20)	(12.74)
Total Gross Expenditure	(1,546)	(542)	(1,708)	(162)	(10.48)

As shown in Table 2, total gross expenditure to the end of September 2024 amounted to (£542k), equivalent to 35.06% of the total gross expenditure budget for 2024/25 of (£1.546m). The graph below also provides a graphical summary of the categories of expenditure incurred by the charity for April to September 2024 along with the latest budget and forecast for 2024/25 for each type of expenditure.

Graph 1 – Expenditure Categories – 2024/25 – September 2024



9. The charity is currently forecasting total gross expenditure for 2024/25 of (£1.708m), a projected overspend of (£162k) (10.48%) against a total budget of (£1.546m). This overspend in relation to expenditure is primarily explained by the following:

- (£123k) projected year-end transfers to reserves as a result of additional grant monies having been received from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) during 2024/25. Any unspent monies are due to be transferred to the charity's restricted reserve so that it is available to be spent on the purposes of ancient tree management in future years. This variance is offset by additional grant income received (see paragraph 12);
- (£20k) additional expenditure planned on equipment, furniture and materials relating to the purchase of signage and materials which is being funded through extra filming income; and
- (£20k) projected overspend on repairs and maintenance budgets overseen by the City Surveyor with additional expenditure forecast on the corporate Building, Repairs and Maintenance contract at Burnham Beeches.

Income

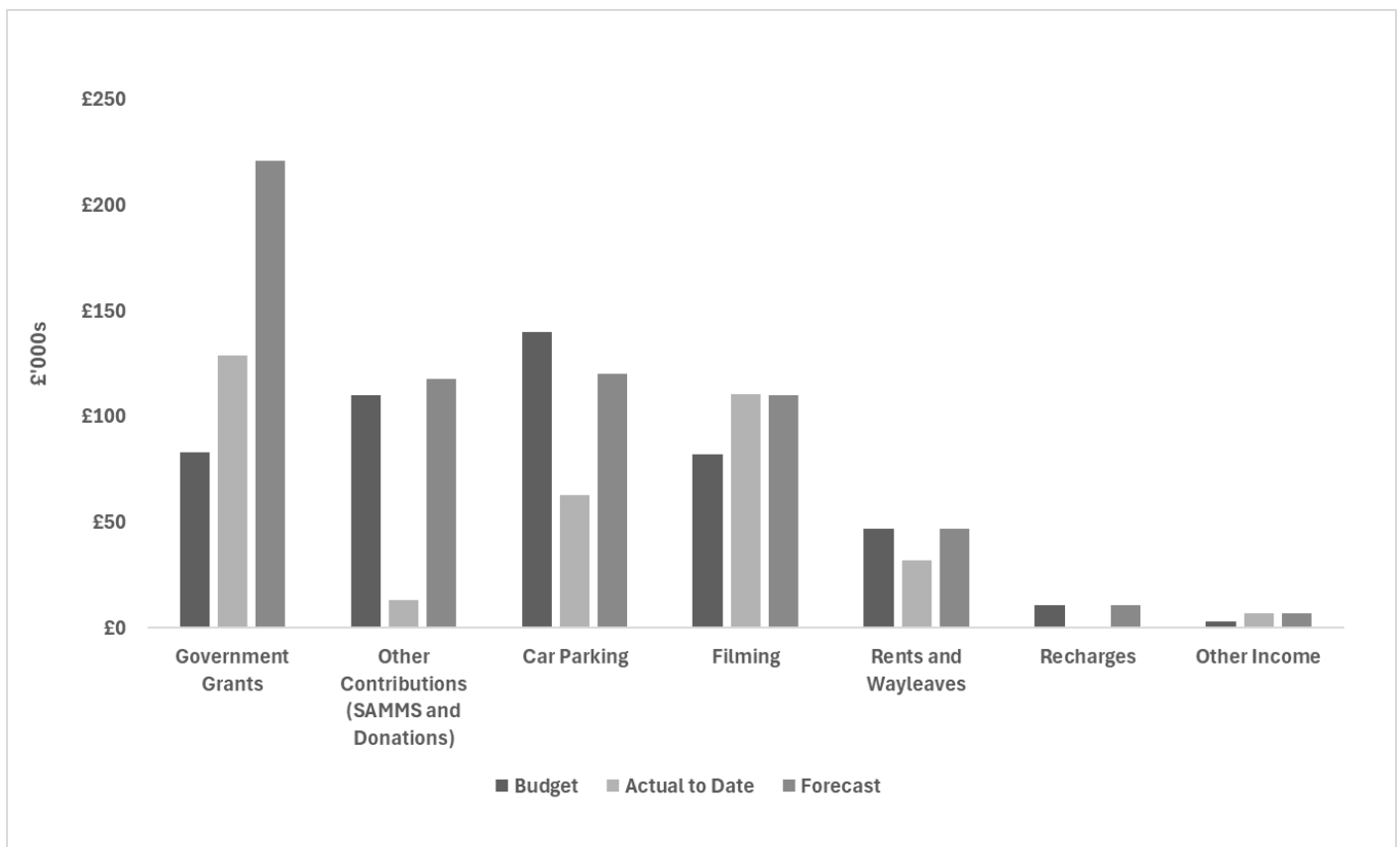
10. A breakdown and analysis of the latest gross income position for the charity for 2024/25 is set out in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Income Summary – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual – Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Direct Operating Budgets	465	354	623	158	33.98
Recharges and Support Services	11	0	11	0	0.00
Total Gross Income	476	354	634	158	33.19

11. As shown in Table 3, total income to the end of September 2024 amounted to £354k, amounting to 74.37% of the total gross income budget for 2024/25 of £476k. Graph 2 below provides a graphical summary of the categories of income generated by the charity for April to September 2024 along with details of the latest budget and forecast for 2024/25 for each type of income.

Graph 2 – Income Categories – 2024/25 - April to September 2024



12. The charity is currently forecasting gross income for 2024/25 of £634k, amounting to £158k in extra income (33.19%) against a total gross income budget of £476k. This favourable variance is largely attributable to the following:

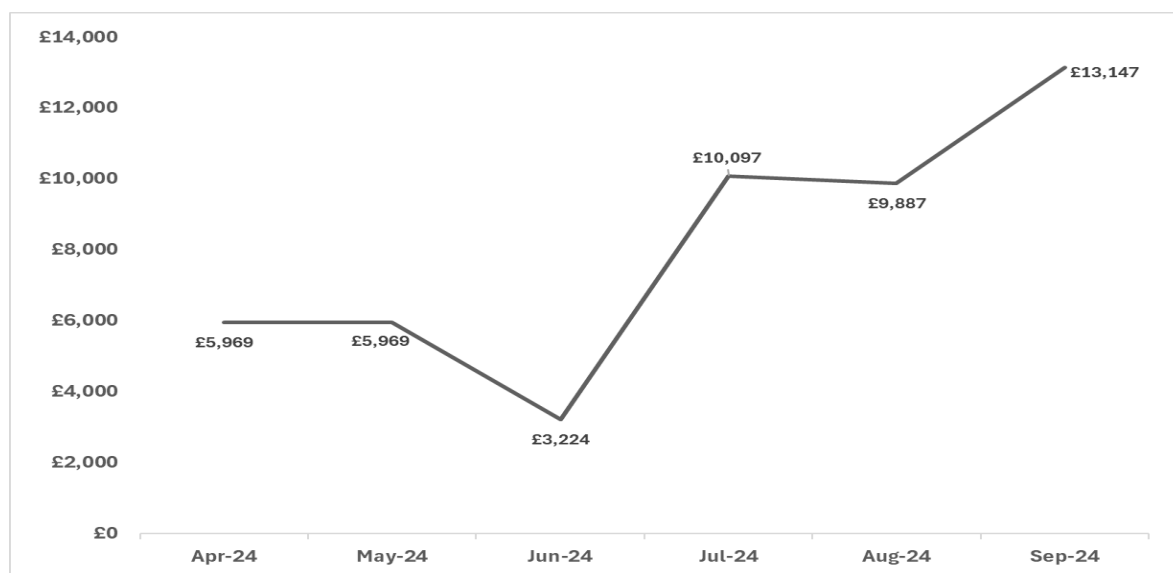
- £138k additional grant income received including £123k in backdated grant monies from the RPA. Any unspent grant monies will be transferred to the charity's reserves at year-end as set out in paragraph 9;
- £28k extra income generated from filming projects which took place earlier in 2024/25; and
- (£20k) reduced income from car parking explained by poor weather at key periods during the year.

Outstanding Invoiced Debts

13. At the end of September 2024, total outstanding invoiced debt for Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common was £13,147, all of which related to debts over 120 days. This comprised debts of £10,123 (77%) outstanding in the 121-365 days bracket and £3,024 (23%) outstanding for more than 365 days.

14. Graph 3 below sets out the trend of the charity's outstanding debts over 120 days over the previous six-month period. As shown in the graph, debts amounted to £13,147 in September 2024, an increase of £3,260 (32.97%) compared with the previous month.

Graph 3 – Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days – April to September 2024



15. Outstanding debts over 120 days at September 2024 includes a sundry invoice for £10,000 which was subsequently settled after the end of the quarter. The remaining £3,147 consists of historical low value property debts primarily relating to hand gates and motor gates which are currently being pursued by the charity.

16. Please also note that a total of £1,245 in outstanding debts has been written off since April 2022. Members should be aware that in line with the City's Standing

Orders, only the writing off of debts over £100k requires the approval of Finance Committee. The writing-off of debts for values below this amount will instead only require the approval of either the Chamberlain or the Assistant Director Financial Shared Services as set out in the Standing Orders.

17. The amount of £1,245 written off since 2022/23 is broken down according to the following amounts covering the previous two financial years:
- 2022/23 – £875
 - 2023/24 – £370.

Charity Reserve Funds

18. Table 4 below provides a summary of the different reserves held by the charity as at the end of September 2024 including movements since the start of 2024/25.
19. Further detail is provided in Appendix 3 which lists the individual restricted, unrestricted and designated funds held by the charity including the opening balance for 2024/25 and any movements in the current financial year to date. Appendix 3 also provides a technical definition for the different types of reserve funds held.

Table 4 – Reserve Funds Summary – September 2024

	Opening Balance 2024/25 £'s	Income £'s	Expenditure £'s	Current Balance £'s
Restricted Funds	1,023,534	136,846	(49,299)	1,111,081
Unrestricted Funds	2,268	£0	0	2,268
Designated Funds	989,506	0	0	989,506
Total	2,015,308	136,846	(49,299)	2,102,855

20. Movements in the charity's reserves in the current financial year include £127k credited to the charity's restricted reserve for the management of ancient trees with additional grant money received from the RPA in addition to the receipt of donations which are available to spend on this purpose.
21. Members should also note that the charity currently holds a balance of £917k in a restricted reserve in surplus Section 106 and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) monies. Movement on this reserve during 2024/25 includes a £10k contribution received to spend on biodiversity projects. Meanwhile, expenditure on the reserve has totalled £49k in 2024/25 to date. Such expenditure comprises £48k in staffing costs for two Community

Engagement Ranger posts funded from Section 106 and SAMMS monies as well as £1k spent on incidental non-staffing costs related to the two posts.

22. It should also be noted that the external audit of the 2023/24 accounts by Crowe U.K. LLP has not yet been completed, and the opening balances shown for each reserve may be subject to revision.

Contributions from City of London

23. The current funding model is for the charity's total net expenditure to be fully funded from City's Estate. This also includes the cost of any capital expenditure incurred during the year as well any works managed under the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP). It should be noted that any changes to the amount of expenditure incurred or income generated over the course of the year will have an impact on the overall level of contribution from the City required by the charity at year end. The total contribution is therefore calculated based on the charity's **actual total net running costs for the year** in addition to any capital expenditure and CWP costs incurred during the year.
24. The table below sets out the contribution provided from City's Estate to the charity over a five-year period. This includes a forecast of the contribution currently expected to be required for 2024/25. This is broken down by the level of gross expenditure and income generated as well as any CWP works and capital expenditure funded through City's Estate. Please also be aware that figures shown for 2023/24 are currently provisional as the external audit of the charity's accounts has not yet been completed.

Table 5 – Contributions from City's Estate – 2020/21 to 2024/25

Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 (Prov.)	2024/25 (Est.)
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Gross Expenditure (excluding Cyclical Works)	(1,124)	(1,088)	(1,380)	(1,438)	(1,488)
Cyclical Works Expenditure	9	(131)	(134)	(87)	(50)
Capital Expenditure	(202)	(88)	(79)	(44)	(6)
Gross Income	281	411	1,223	755	623
Total Contribution from City of London - Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	1,036	896	1,051	972	921

25. There was a reduction in the contribution from City's Estate in 2023/24 compared with the previous year. This is largely explained by reduced expenditure on cyclical works and capital projects compared with 2022/23. This was partly offset by reduced income generated by the charity with backdated Section 106 and SAMMS contributions having been received in 2022/23.
26. There is also a reduction in the forecasted contribution from City's Estate for 2024/25 compared with the previous financial year. This is largely explained by reduced expenditure on projects forming part of the CWP as well as lower levels of capital expenditure projected to be incurred with the one-off purchase of a vehicle having taken place in 2023/24. The forecasted reduction in the contribution is partly offset by decreased income compared to the previous year largely due to additional SAMMS contributions having been received in 2023/24. This is on top of an increase in gross expenditure forecast for 2024/25 explained by additional staffing costs being incurred.

27. Members should also note that alternatives to the current funding model are being explored by the Charity Review with proposed changes to the existing model due to be presented to Policy and Resources Committee and Finance Committee in December 2024.

B. West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood and Coulsdon and Other Commons (charity registration numbers: 232988 and 232989)

Revenue Operating Budget – 2024/25

28. The latest budget for 2024/25 currently amounts to (£1.209m) net expenditure. As at September 2024, actual net expenditure amounted to (£530k) net expenditure with a current forecast outturn for 2024/25 of (£1.205m) net expenditure. This amounts to a projected net underspend of £4k (0.33%). This represents an improvement of £10k compared with the projected net overspend of (£6k) to the end of June 2024 reported previously to your Committee.
29. Budgetary information has been separated to segregate different elements of the budget, comprising direct operating budgets (local and central risk), recharges & support service budgets and City Surveyor-managed repairs and maintenance budgets and to improve in year reporting in line with the recommended approach for the financial reporting of charities.
30. A summary of the latest revenue budget position for 2024/25 is shown in Table 6 below with further detailed information provided in Appendix 4, including reasons for significant budget variances.

Table 6 – Revenue Operating Budget Summary – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual – Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Gross Exp	(1,381)	(644)	(1,388)	(7)	(0.51)
Gross Income	172	114	183	11	6.40
Net Exp	(1,209)	(530)	(1,205)	4	0.33

Expenditure

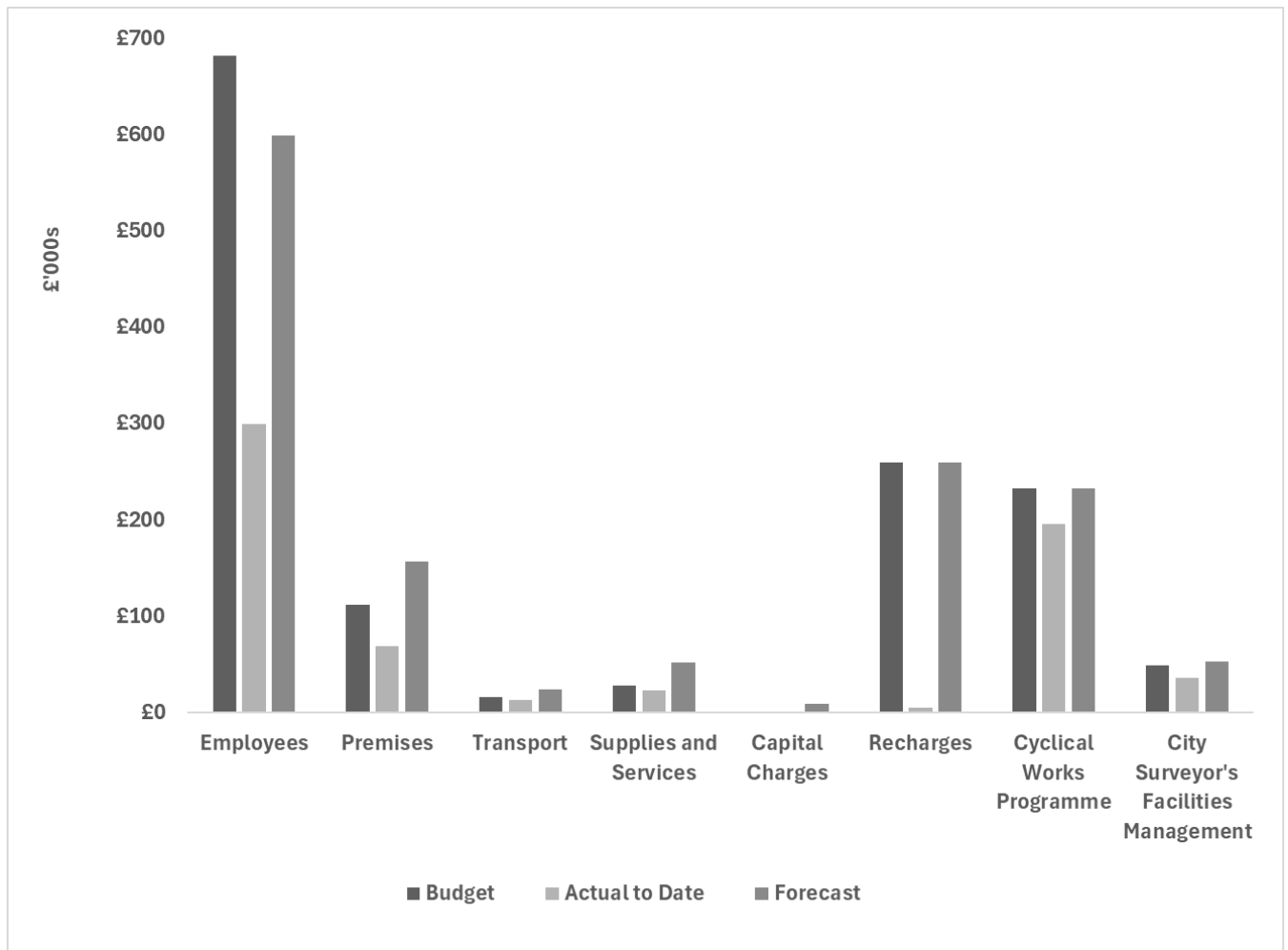
31. A breakdown and analysis of the latest gross expenditure position for 2024/25 is set out in Table 7 below:

Table 7 – Expenditure Summary – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual - Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Direct Operating Budgets	(839)	(406)	(842)	(3)	(0.35)
Recharges and Support Services	(260)	(5)	(260)	0	0.00
City Surveyor Repairs and Maintenance	(282)	(233)	(286)	(4)	(1.42)
Total Gross Expenditure	(1,381)	(644)	(1,388)	(7)	(0.51)

32. As is shown in Table 7, total gross expenditure to the end of September 2024 amounted to (£644k), amounting to 46.63% of the total gross expenditure budget for 2024/25 of (£1.381m). Graph 4 below also provides a graphical summary of the categories of expenditure incurred for April to September 2024 as well as details of the latest budgets and forecasts for 2024/25 for each type of expenditure.

Graph 4 – Expenditure Categories – 2024/25 - April to September 2024



33. The charities are currently forecasting total gross expenditure for 2024/25 of (£1.388m), a projected overspend of (£7k) (0.51%) compared with the latest budget of (£1.381m). This overspend is largely explained by a (£42k) forecasted overspend on grounds maintenance costs as a result of additional resources being required on tree safety works as well as on haymaking, line marking and strimming. This is in addition to a projected (£24k) overspend on supplies and services costs which can be explained by spend being required on fencing as well as for the purchase of livestock, equipment and other materials.

34. The forecasted overspend in relation to gross expenditure is largely offset by an £83k projected underspend on salary costs. This is explained by two roles currently being vacant which will result in employment costs being less than budgeted for 2024/25.

Income

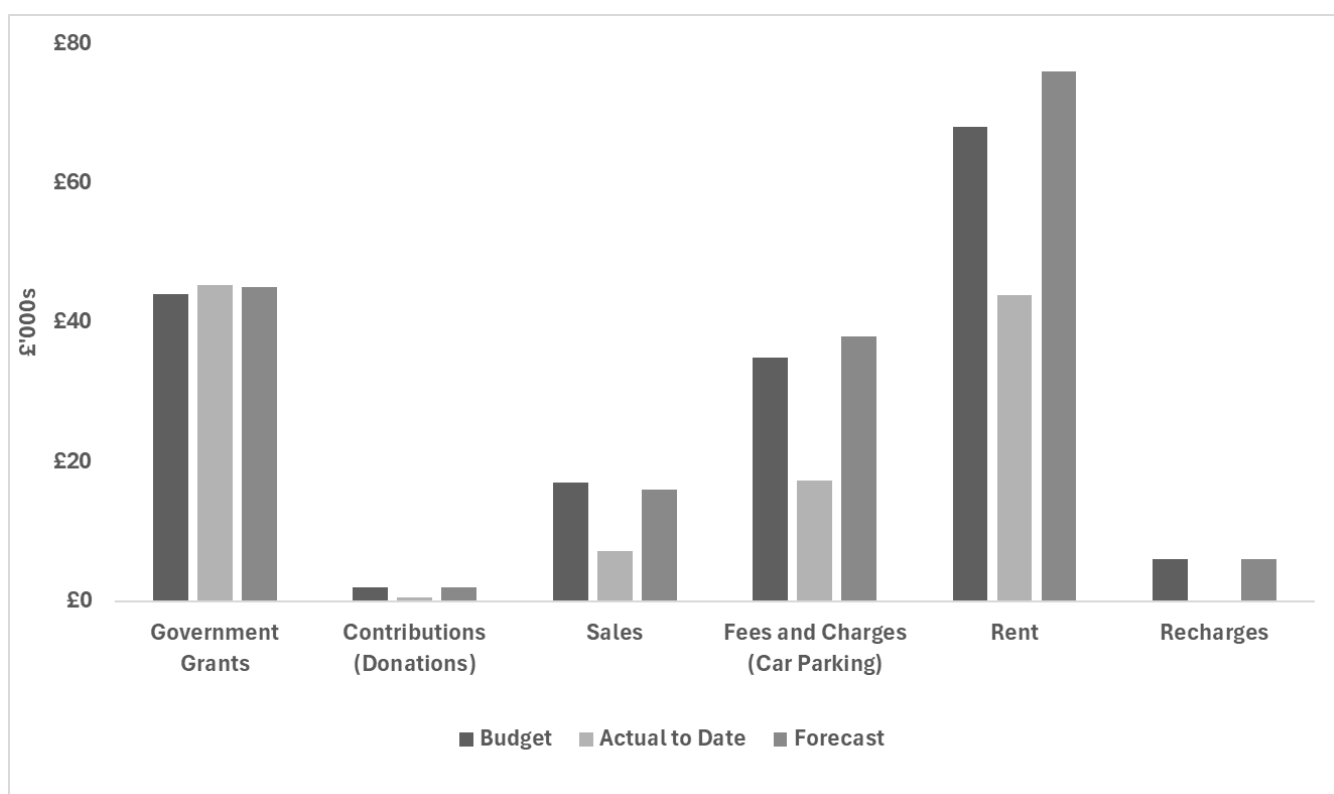
35. A breakdown and analysis of the latest gross income position for 2024/25 is set out in Table 8 below:

Table 8 – Income Summary – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual – Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Direct Operating Budgets	166	114	177	11	6.63
Recharges and Support Services	6	0	6	0	0.00
Total Gross Income	172	114	183	11	6.40

36. As shown in Table 8, total gross income to the end of September 2024 amounted to £114k, equivalent to 66.28% of the total income budget for 2024/25 of £172k. Graph 5 below also provides a graphical summary of the categories of income generated for April to September 2024 along with details of the latest budgets and forecasts for each income type for 2024/25.

Graph 5 – Income Categories – 2024/25 - April to September 2024



37. West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons are currently forecasting total income for 2024/25 of £183k, amounting to £11k (6.4%) in additional income compared with the budget of £172k. The variance can be explained by an additional £8k

forecasted in rental income following a rent review as well as an extra £3k projected from fees and charges such as from car parking.

Outstanding Invoiced Debts

38. At the end of September 2024, total outstanding invoiced debt was £8,772.

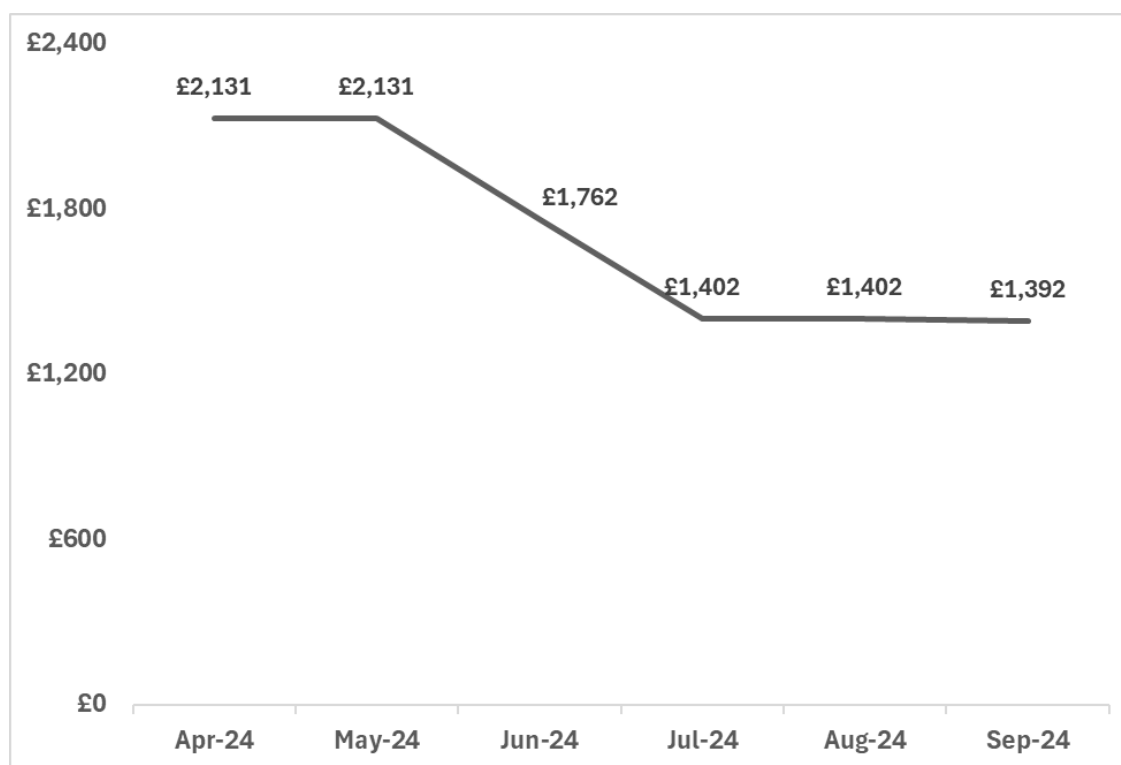
Table 9 analyses the current level of outstanding debt according to the age of the debt:

Table 9 – Analysis of Outstanding Invoiced Debts – September 2024

Age of Debt	Outstanding Debts £'s	Total Debt Outstanding %
0-30 Days	7,264	82.81
31-60 Days	0	0.00
61-90 Days	116	1.32
91-120 Days	0	0.00
121-365 Days	(358)	(4.08)
Over 365 Days	1,750	19.95
Total Outstanding Debts	8,772	100

39. Graph 6 below sets out the trend of the charity's outstanding debts over 120 days over the previous six-month period. As can be seen, debts over 120 days amounted to £1,392 in September 2024, a reduction of £10 (0.71%) compared with the previous month. Outstanding debts over 120 days consist of low value historical property debts for items such as wayleaves and hand gates.

Graph 6 – Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days – April to September 2024



40. Please also note that a total of £3,790 in outstanding debts has been written off since April 2022. This amount consists of the following:

- 2022/23 – £900
- 2023/24 – £2,710
- 2024/25 to date - £180.

Charity Reserve Funds

41. Further detail is provided in Appendix 5 which lists the individual restricted, unrestricted and designated funds held. It details the opening balances for 2024/25 and any movements in the current financial year to date. Appendix 5 also provides a technical definition for the different types of reserve fund held.

42. Table 10 below provides a summary of the reserves held as at September 2024:

Table 10 – Reserve Funds Summary – September 2024

	Opening Balance 2024/25 £'s	Income £'s	Expenditure £'s	Current Balance £'s
Restricted Funds	2,550	0	0	2,550
Unrestricted Funds	3,272	0	0	3,272
Designated Funds	647,263	0	0	647,263
Total	653,085	0	0	653,085

43. As can be seen above, there has been no movement in the reserve funds since the start of the financial year. It should also be noted that the external audit of the 2023/24 accounts by Crowe U.K. LLP has not yet been completed and the opening balances shown for each reserve may be subject to revision.

Contributions from City of London

44. Table 11 below sets out the contribution provided from City's Estate over a five-year period. This includes a forecast of the contribution currently expected to be required for 2024/25. This is broken down by the level of gross expenditure and income generated as well as any CWP works and capital expenditure funded through City's Estate. Please also be aware that figures shown for 2023/24 are currently provisional as the external audit of the accounts has not yet been undertaken.

Table 11 – Contributions from City's Estate – 2020/21 to 2024/25

West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 (Prov.)	2024/25 (Est.)
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Gross Expenditure	(1,266)	(1,113)	(1,209)	(1,182)	(1,146)
Cyclical Works Expenditure	(124)	(14)	(198)	37	(233)
Capital Expenditure	(89)	(158)	0	(77)	(85)
Gross Income	231	239	158	208	183
Total Contribution from City of London - West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons	1,094	1,046	1,249	1,014	1,281

45. There has been a reduction in the level of contribution provided by City's Estate in 2023/24 compared with the previous year. This was explained by reduced expenditure on cyclical works with credits received for projects such as fencing replacement at Coulsdon Common. This was in addition to extra income generated including from the sale of vehicles.

46. The current forecasted contribution for 2024/25 indicates an increase in the level of contribution expected to be provided from City's Estate compared with 2023/24. This is attributable to additional expenditure being required on cyclical works for projects such as electrical and other works at the Merlewood Estate Office. This is in addition to a projected reduction in the level of income expected to be generated which can be explained by one-off income having been received in 2023/24 from the sale of vehicles.

C. Ashtead Common (charity registration number: 1051510)

47. The latest revenue budget for Ashtead Common charity for 2024/25 currently amounts to (£558k) net expenditure. As at September 2024, actual net income amounted to £41k with a current forecast outturn for 2024/25 of (£554k) net expenditure. This amounts to a projected net underspend for 2024/25 of £4k (0.72%) compared with the latest budget of £558k net expenditure.
48. This also represents a worsening of (£21k) compared with the projected underspend of £25k for 2024/25 to June 2024 reported previously to your Committee. This is explained by additional expenditure forecast from grounds maintenance costs and repairs and maintenance budgets managed by the City Surveyor.
49. Budgetary information has been separated to segregate different elements of the budget, comprising direct operating budgets (local and central risk), recharges & support service budgets and City Surveyor-managed repairs and maintenance budgets and to improve in year reporting in line with the recommended approach for the financial reporting of charities.
50. A summary of the latest revenue budget position for 2024/25 is shown in Table 6 below with further detailed information provided in Appendix 6 including reasons for significant budget variances.

Table 12 – Revenue Operating Budget Summary – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual - Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Gross Exp	(606)	(206)	(618)	(12)	(1.98)
Gross Income	48	247	64	16	33.33
Net Exp	(558)	41	(554)	4	0.72

Expenditure

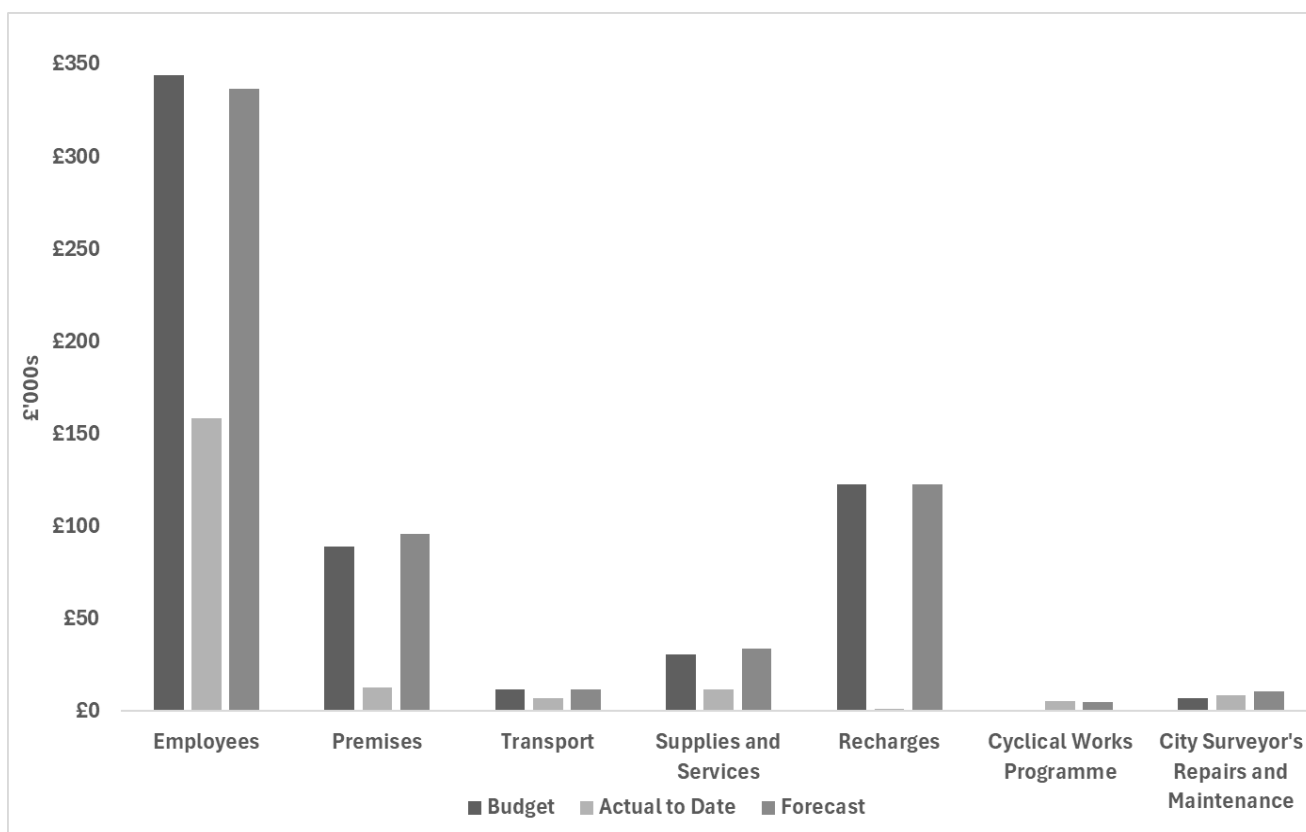
51. A breakdown and analysis of the latest gross expenditure position for 2024/25 is set out in Table 13 below:

Table 13 – Expenditure Summary – 2024/25 – September 2024

	Latest Budget	Actual – Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Direct Operating Budgets	(476)	(191)	(479)	(3)	(0.63)
Recharges and Support Services	(123)	(1)	(123)	0	0.00
City Surveyor Repairs and Maintenance	(7)	(14)	(16)	(9)	(128.57)
Total Gross Expenditure	(606)	(206)	(618)	(12)	(1.98)

52. As shown in Table 13, total gross expenditure to the end of September 2024 amounted to (£206k), equivalent to 33.99% of the total expenditure budget for 2024/25 of (£606k). Graph 7 below also provides a graphical summary of the categories of expenditure incurred by the charity for April to September 2024 as well as details on the charity's latest budget and forecast for 2024/25 for each type of expenditure.

Graph 7 – Expenditure Categories – 2024/25 - April to September 2024



53. Ashtead Common is currently projecting total gross expenditure for 2024/25 of (£618k), amounting to an overspend of (£12k) compared to the total gross expenditure budget for 2024/25 of (£606k). The overspend is explained by additional grounds maintenance costs of (£7k) being required as well as an extra (£5k) incurred on CWP projects managed by the City Surveyor.

Income

54. A breakdown and analysis of the latest gross income position for the charity for 2024/25 is set out in Table 14 below:

Table 14 – Income Summary September 2024

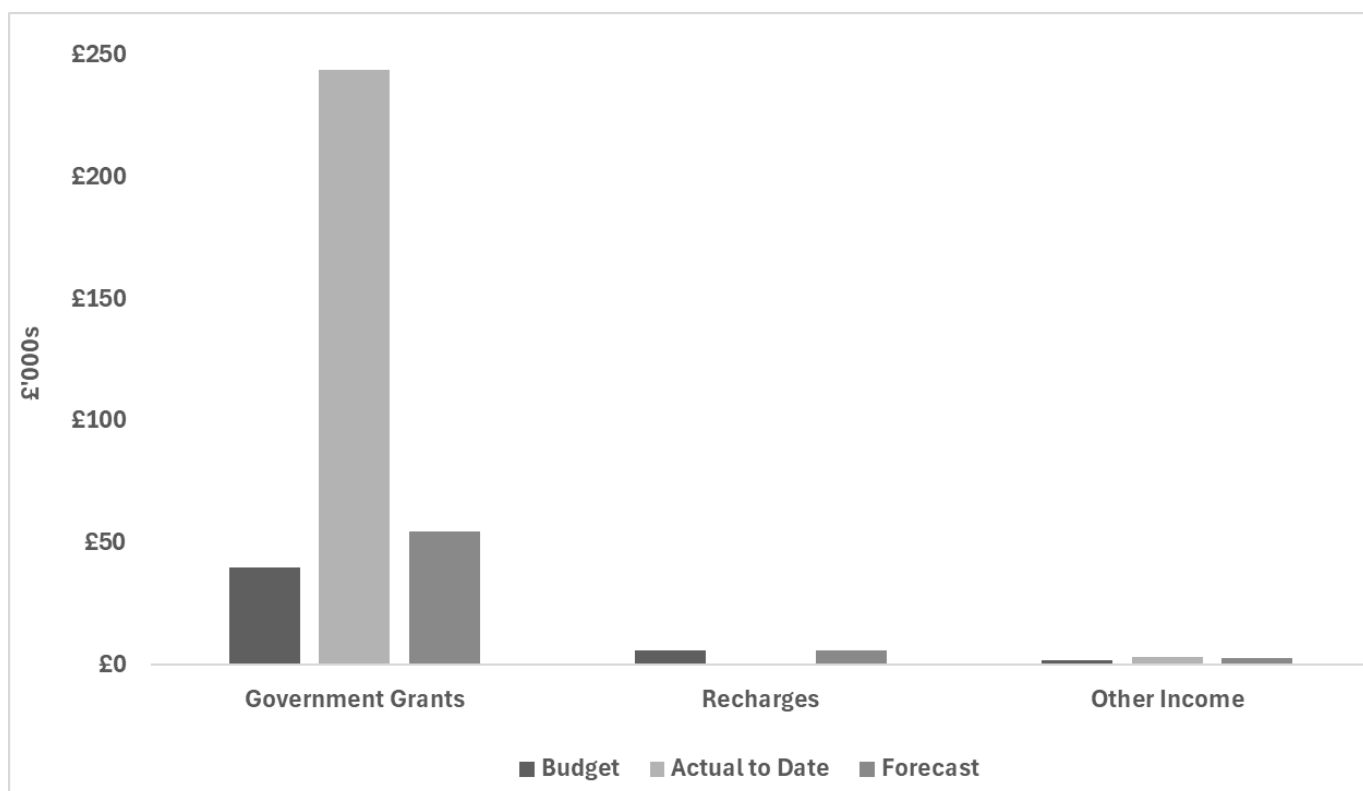
	Latest Budget	Actual - Sept 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	Percentage Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Direct Operating Budgets	42	247	58	16	38.10
Recharges and Support Services	6	0	6	0	0.00
Total Gross Income	48	247	64	16	33.33

55. Total income to the end of September 2024 amounted to £247k, equivalent to 514.58% of the total gross income budget for 2024/25 of £48k with Ashtead Common currently projecting total gross income of £64k for 2024/25. This amounts to a favourable variance of £16k (33.33%) compared with a budget of £48k. This can be explained by additional grant income projected from the RPA for the current financial year related to the number of trees worked on.

56. Income to date predominantly relates to additional grant income having been received from the RPA during 2024/25. This was under review by the Comptroller and City Solicitor as at September 2024 and the forecast of £64k therefore assumes that this income would not be retained by the charity. However, since the end of the quarter, it has been confirmed that this income will now be retained by the charity with any unspent grant monies being put into the charity's reserves at year-end.

57. Graph 8 below provides a graphical representation of the different categories of income received by Ashtead Common in 2024/25 along with the latest budget and forecast for each type of income.

Graph 8 – Income Categories – 2024/25 - April to September 2024



Outstanding Invoiced Debts

58. At the end of September 2024, total outstanding invoiced debt for the charity was £360, all of which relates to historic hand gate debts over 120 days with this level of debt having remained constant since the start of 2024/25.

59. Please also note that a total of £133 in outstanding debts has been written off since April 2022. This amount consists of the following:

- 2022/23 – £25
- 2023/24 – £108.

Charity Reserve Funds

60. Table 15 below provides details of the reserves held by the charity as at the end of September 2024, including movements since the start of April 2024. Ashtead Common currently has a single designated reserve earmarked for funding future ancient tree maintenance works. £244k in income has been credited to the reserve since the start of 2024/25 which includes £243k in grant income received from the RPA. The charity has now received confirmation that this income can be retained and made available for use in future years. Income also includes £500 made in donations.

Table 15 – Reserve Funds Summary – September 2024

	Opening Balance 2024/25 £'s	Income £'s	Expenditure £'s	Current Balance £'s
Designated Funds	2,386	244,022	0	246,408

61. It should also be noted that the independent examination of the 2023/24 accounts is currently taking place and the opening balances shown may be subject to revision.

Contributions from City of London

62. The table below sets out the contribution provided from City's Estate to the charity over a five-year period. This includes a forecast of the contribution currently expected for 2024/25. This is broken down by the level of gross expenditure and income generated as well as any CWP works and capital expenditure funded through City's Estate. Please also be aware that figures shown for 2023/24 are currently provisional as the independent examination of the charity's accounts has not yet been completed.

Table 16 – Contributions from City's Estate – 2020/21 to 2024/25

Ashtead Common	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 (Prov.)	2024/25 (Est.)
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Gross Expenditure (excluding Cyclical Works)	(525)	(491)	(542)	(685)	(613)
Cyclical Works Expenditure	(18)	8	(17)	(7)	(5)
Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	(40)
Gross Income	32	12	35	84	64
Total Contribution from City of London - Ashtead Common	511	471	524	609	594

63. Ashtead Common saw an increased contribution from City's Estate in 2023/24 compared with the previous financial year. This is attributable to an increase in expenditure incurred by the charity which can partly be explained by additional grounds maintenance costs incurred with the charity having carried out extra works on veteran trees in order to catch up on works delayed by drought.

64. 2024/25 is currently projected to see a small reduction in the level of contribution provided by the City compared with 2023/24. This can be explained by a decrease in forecasted gross expenditure with the charity currently anticipating to spend less on premises related costs and supplies and services compared with 2023/24 in addition to savings made on the corporate Buildings, Repairs and Maintenance contract.

Capital Projects

65. Members may wish to note that as part of the 2024/25 capital bidding process, Members agreed two bids for new capital projects involving the Commons charities. These relate to a project for boundary livestock fencing replacement at a total estimated cost of £92k and an entrance board replacement project amounting to £160k. The two projects, which are both being funded from City's Estate monies, are due to commence in the current financial year.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Burnham Beeches - Revenue Operating Budget – 2024/25

Appendix 2 – Stoke Common - Revenue Operating Budget – 2024/25

Appendix 3 – Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Charity - Reserve Funds – September 2024

Appendix 4 – West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons - Revenue Operating Budget – 2024/25

Appendix 5 – West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons Charity - Reserve Funds – September 2024

Appendix 6 – Ashted Common - Revenue Operating Budget – 2024/25

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