

**Chief Executive's Report to the SPCB
May 2019**

Introduction

This report looks at recent activities across the organisation and includes the SPCB financial report for Period 12 of the 2018-19 financial year, along with the Quarter 4 Performance Report.

Items worth highlighting include:

- deafscotland awarding Public Information and Resources with the Scottish Sensory and Equality Award for inclusive communication.
- SPICe's work with the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex, using the EUROMOD microsimulation model to produce a briefing setting out a range of illustrative policy options to tackle child poverty in Scotland.
- The Committee Engagement Unit's use of a Citizens' Jury to consider the question of how funding and advice for land management should be designed to help improve Scotland's natural environment.
- The collaboration between Events, Visitor Services and Outreach to produce two successful events in April with the theme of Science.
- Visitor Service's introduction of the new 20th Anniversary products to the Shop.

If you have any comments or questions on any aspect of this report, I would be happy to discuss them with you.

Paul Grice

Clerk/Chief Executive

OVERVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITIES

Parliamentary business

Legislation

The remainder of May and June is expected to be busy with legislation. Six Government Bills are expected to be introduced and Stage 3 proceedings on a number of bills are likely to take place in the Chamber ahead of the summer recess, which may require later decision times. This will impact on resources of various departments.

In addition, there are currently three NGBU-drafted Members' Bills in progress – all at Stage 1. Six other MSPs have obtained the right to introduce a Member's Bill, and these are at various stages of preparation, with introduction likely between June and the end of 2019: Tied Pubs (Neil Bibby); Protection of Workers (Daniel Johnson); European Charter of Local Self-Government (Andy Wightman); Industrial Disease (NHS Cost Recovery) (Stuart McMillan); Responsible Breeding of Dogs (Christine Grahame); Funfair Licensing (Richard Lyle). Nine other MSPs have lodged draft proposals.

SPPA Committee

The SPPA Committee has been considering the recommendations made by the Joint Working Group on Sexual Harassment with a view to revising the Code of Conduct. The Committee also prepared revisions to the Code to tighten up the provisions relating to confidentiality. These were agreed by the Parliament and the changes were made at the end of April.

OSSP

OSSP, SPICe and Clerking teams worked together to support Committee scrutiny of legislation considered critical to correct deficiencies in retained EU law in advance of the planned EU exit day. Committees considered a total of 31 Scottish statutory instruments, and 90 notifications relating to 133 UK statutory instruments. This effort ensured that the legislation considered essential in the event of a 'no deal' exit was in place prior to the anticipated exit days of 29 March and 12 April 2019. Preparatory work has also been undertaken to support scrutiny of Withdrawal Agreement Bill".

Committees

Committees continue to focus on engagement as a key strand of their work, in line with their objectives of being inclusive and responsive, with positive results. During a recent inquiry on subject choices, 4% of secondary teachers in Scotland responded to a survey on subject choice for teenagers (1,100 responses).

An inquiry into Primary Healthcare is exclusively centered around hearing directly from the public. Over 3500 survey responses have been received and

locally based panels have been established and met in the East, West and North of the country with members randomly selected to provide their views on how Primary Care should be delivered in the future. Finalised views will be converted into a Committee report upon which the second part of the inquiry will be based.

Scrutiny of issues relating to the UK's withdrawal from the EU continue to feature in the work of a number of committees.

Committee Engagement Unit

We now have 3 different digital consultation tools which can be used by committees for more in-depth deliberative engagement, and it is by using these and other tools that we are learning how to make best use of the resources we have and to refine and improve the impact of such work in the future.

On the weekend 29-31 March 2019, the Scottish Parliament hosted its first ever Citizens' Jury which involved 21 jury members, randomly selected to form a broadly representative sample of the Scottish population. The Jury considered the question of how funding and advice for land management should be designed to help improve Scotland's natural environment and heard from a range of experts about the topic, working together to come up with a set of principles that the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee will now be asked to consider. Other deliberative events are now taking place to inform the Health and Sport Committee's Primary Care inquiry.

Parliamentary Engagement

SPICe

SPICe recently published [Child poverty in Scotland: forecasting the impact of policy options](#), a joint piece of work between the Financial Scrutiny Unit and the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex, using the EUROMOD microsimulation model. The briefing set out a range of illustrative policy options to see how effective they would be in tackling child poverty in Scotland. The analysis highlighted how different policy choices could have very different implications for child poverty and is intended to provide some illustrative scenarios to inform the debate around child poverty as the Scottish Government implements its Child Poverty Delivery Plan and considers the introduction of a new "income supplement".

In April, SPICe participated in the [Paris Collaborative on Green Budgeting](#) organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). As well as learning from other countries, we shared experiences of the Scottish Parliament's new budget process and how environmental priorities are represented in our financial scrutiny process. This work was linked to the ECCLR Committee's pre-budget scrutiny focus on aligning the budget and Scotland's Climate Change Plan. More details are available in the SPICe blog [How to count to net-zero](#).

Public Information

At the Scottish Sensory and Equality Awards in March, the Public Information and Resources team won the award for inclusive communication. The awards were organised by deafscotland and Disability Equality Scotland.

A new [animation](#) on how MSPs can help their constituents and how they can be contacted was launched in March. A British Sign Language version is also available.

Interviews have taken place for a British Sign Language Development Officer. The successful candidate will take up the part-time, fixed-term post in early June.

International Relations Office

The International Relation Office supported the following inward visits:

- A delegation headed by the President of the Assembly ('Sobranie') of the Republic of North Macedonia visited the Parliament on 20 and 21 March. The focus of the visit was financial oversight with a particular interest in the establishment of an Assembly parliamentary budget office
- In April, Deputy Presiding Officer Linda Fabiani MSP and Liam McArthur MSP took part in a series of engagements in North America. In addition to participating in the annual Tartan Day Parade in New York, Liam McArthur MSP visited the Centre for Court Innovation and Midtown Community Court and Linda Fabiani MSP, as part of her role in the Young Women lead programme, held discussions which promoted the empowerment of young women in politics and sport. This included meetings with UN Women and the Women's Sport Foundation. In Toronto, the delegation undertook a programme of meetings at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, including meetings with the Speaker, focusing on parliamentary reform and training for members.
- Kenneth Gibson MSP and Maureen Watt MSP were part of a CPA UK Branch delegation to deliver a parliamentary strengthening programme for Members and officials at the National Assembly of Namibia from 4-8 April 2019. There was also a diplomatic component to the programme which included meetings with a number of Ministers and parliamentarians on issues around human rights, trade and sustainable development.
- Stuart McMillan MSP attended the mid-year meeting of the CPA's International Executive Committee as Acting Regional Representative for the BIMR and attended meetings of the Planning and Review Sub Committee. The meeting took place in Ottawa, Canada from 11-15 April.
- The International Relation Office also supported inward visits by the Palestinian Head of Mission, Quebec Agent General and the Ambassadors of Italy and Finland. The Education Committee from the

Norwegian Parliament visited in March followed by a visit by the Norwegian Minister of Culture. April concluded with a visit by the Prime Minister of Iceland who met with the Presiding Officer. Further visits were hosted by delegations from the USA, Sweden and Jordan.

Events and Exhibitions

On Friday 8 March, and as part of the Parliament's 20th Anniversary programme, the new digital exhibit about the Travelling the Distance artwork by Shauna McMullan was launched. The Presiding Officer hosted an event with the artist and invited guests.

The Deputy Presiding Officer Linda Fabiani MSP hosted International Women's Day on Saturday 9 March. The event provided an opportunity for women, living and working across Scotland, to network and meet Members. The theme of this year's event is #BalanceforBetter.

The 'A Human Touch' exhibition, created by Edinburgh Science Festival, was on display in the Landscaped Gardens and the Parliament's Main Hall from Wednesday 20 March to Wednesday 8 May. It featured the work of 16 photographers exploring the impact of human activity on a wide range of environments.

As part of the Parliament's 20th Anniversary programme of events and activities, we held the first two of our series of Family Days on Saturday 6 and Saturday 13 April. Branded as Explore Science - Kids science day at the Scottish Parliament - nearly 4,400 people attended over the two Saturdays taking part in science-themed activities including an inflatable planetarium to exploration of deep-sea coral reefs and the Sci-Fun Roadshow held in partnership with a range of Scottish universities. The Festival of Politics staged two panel events – "The Toxic School Run? and How to Live Plastic Free"; and "In Conversation with Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock MBE", space scientist, broadcaster and science educator – chaired by the Deputy Presiding Officer Christine Grahame MSP in the Debating Chamber. Visitor Services delivered new versions of the Ten-Minute Talks, to appeal to family groups, including the first use of the new VR headsets, which were received very positively.

As part of the Parliament's 20th anniversary programme of events and activities, on Thursday 9 May the Presiding Officer hosted a Festival of Politics panel discussion "Still true to its principles? 20 Years of the Scottish Parliament" with five former Members – Annabel Goldie; Robin Harper; George Lyon; Tricia Marwick; and Henry McLeish – for invited guests and members of the public.

The Deputy Presiding Officer Christine Grahame MSP hosted Euroquiz 2019 on Monday 13 May featuring P6 pupils from across Scotland who were quizzed on European geography, languages, and history.

Visitor Services

The months March and April were busier than over the same period in 2018, with a total of 46,825 visitors over the two months compared to 44,714 the previous year.

Guided tours were also busy, with the majority of tours fully booked in advance. 1,663 visitors joined the guided tours in March and 2,064 in April, with a further 3,137 visitors attending the 186 Ten-Minute Talks that were also provided. A larger number of tours for Members' constituency visits on parliamentary business days were delivered over this period than in 2018.

Visitor Services introduced new retail products to the Parliament Shop, marking the Scottish Parliament's 20th anniversary, in addition to new environmental / children's titles in the popular book ranges and additional designs featuring the official tartan.

Parliamentary Services

Period and Menopause Policy

Following Monica Lennon MSP's parliamentary question to the SPCB on the provision of free sanitary products, HR and the Parliament's Women's Network took forward work to develop a period and menopause policy. It was felt that a policy would be a positive step towards supporting staff and managers to understand the impact of periods and the menopause at work. After considerable consultation carried out through other networks such as SPOut and ParliAble, the TUS and individual managers, the policy has been signed-off and is due to be launched on 11 June.

SPCB FINANCE REPORT Period 12 – March 2019

1. This report is to inform SPCB of the draft full year outturn for 2018-19. The final accounts figures remain subject to adjustment as part of the normal year end process.

Executive Summary

Performance against Budget (year to date variance)		
a) Total SPCB revenue and capital expenditure	1.3%	Para 2 & 5
b) Total SPS expenditure	0.3%	Para 6
c) Total project expenditure	0.2%	Para 7
Operation of Financial Controls		
d) Key reconciliations up to date	100%	Para 4
Other Key Indicators		
e) Payment performance	99.1%	Para 4

Key: RAG Status

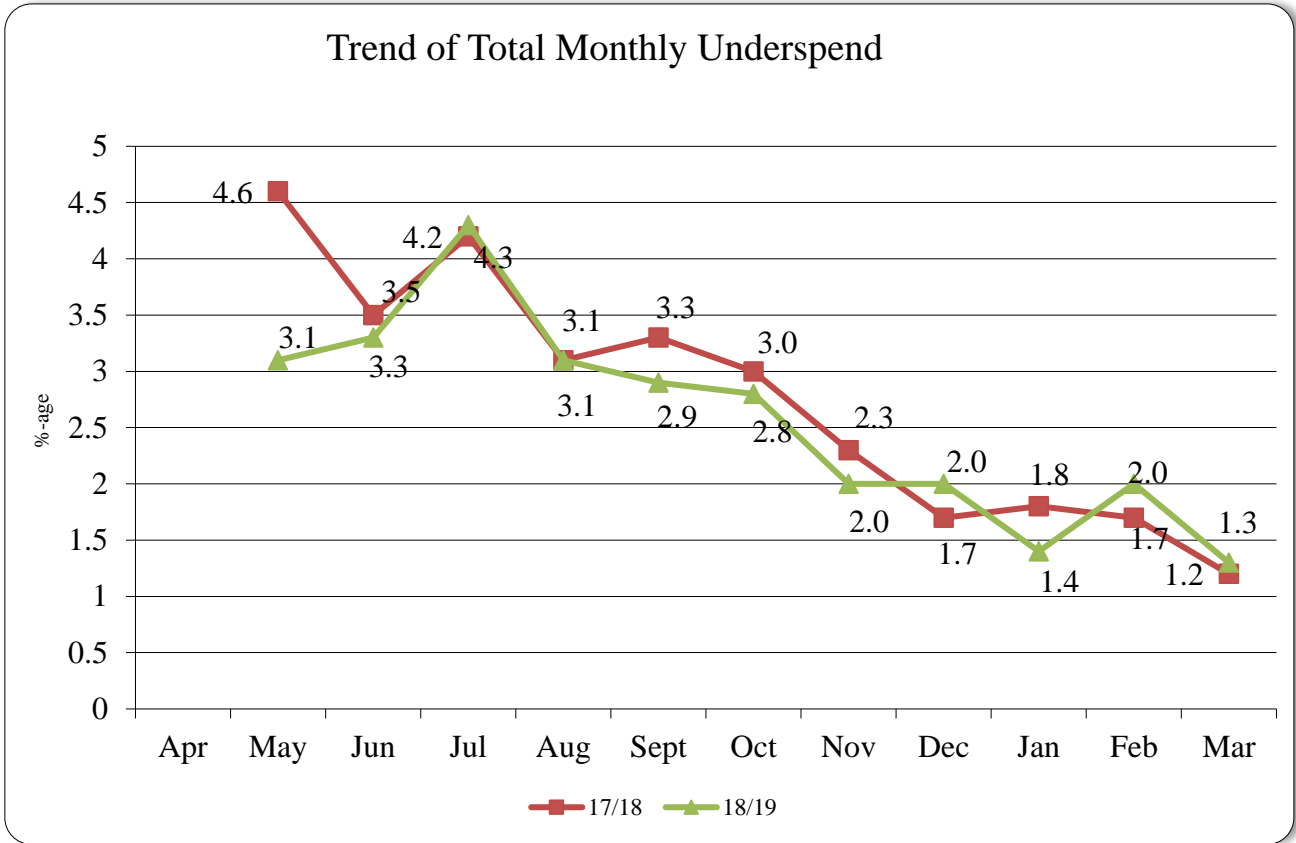
G	Performance within target range
A	Performance outwith target range but acceptable
R	Performance outwith target range not acceptable

Financial Commentary

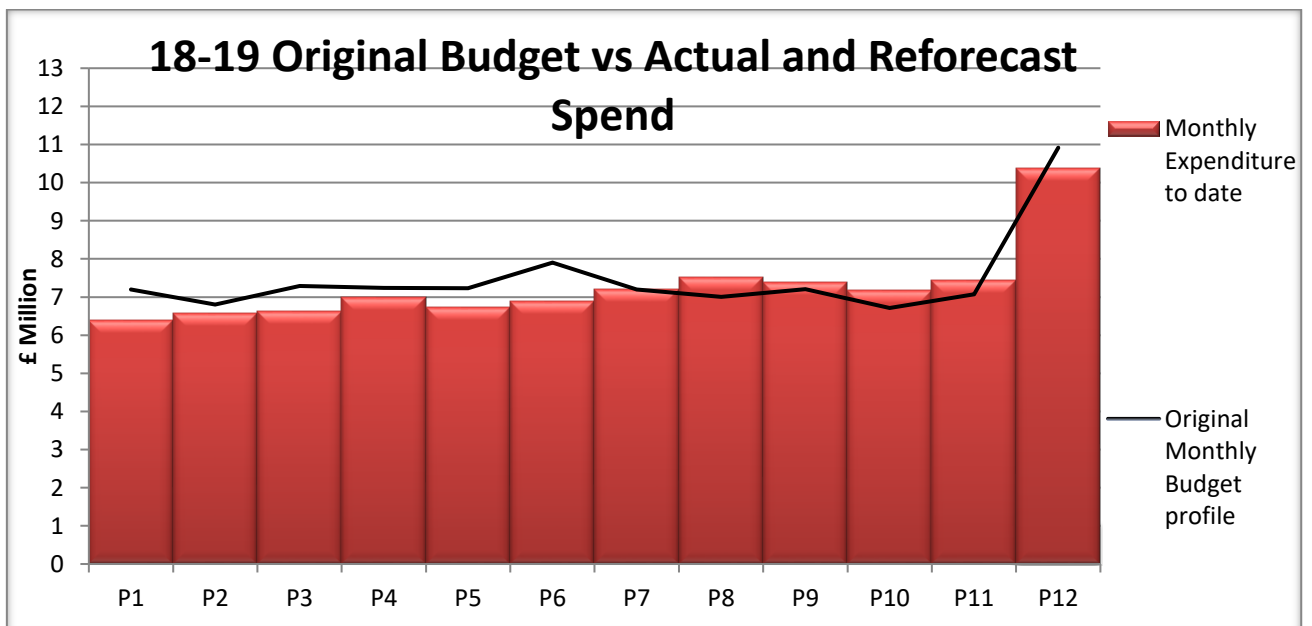
2. The Scottish Parliament's total revenue and capital expenditure for 2018-19 was £88.7m, representing an underspend against budget of £1.2m (1.3%) which is within the SPCB's target range of 0% to 2.5% (as shown in green in the Executive Summary chart). The comparable 2017-18 position was expenditure of £84.2m which represented an underspend against budget of £1.0m (1.2%). Year-end accounting adjustments and accruals are expected to further reduce the level of underspend in 2018-19 and will be reflected in the final published accounts.
3. The SPCB's central contingency ended the year at £50k and this is reflected in the period 12 figures.
4. All key reconciliations are up to date. Payment performance within contract terms for the year to date meets the 99% target. The equivalent figure for payment within 10 days is 97.8% for the year to date.

Financial Results

5. The SPCB's total revenue and capital expenditure per Schedule 1 for March 2019 is £88.7m, which is £1.2m (1.3%) under the approved year to date budget of £89.9m. This compares with the underspend for the year ended March 2018 of £1.0m (1.2%).

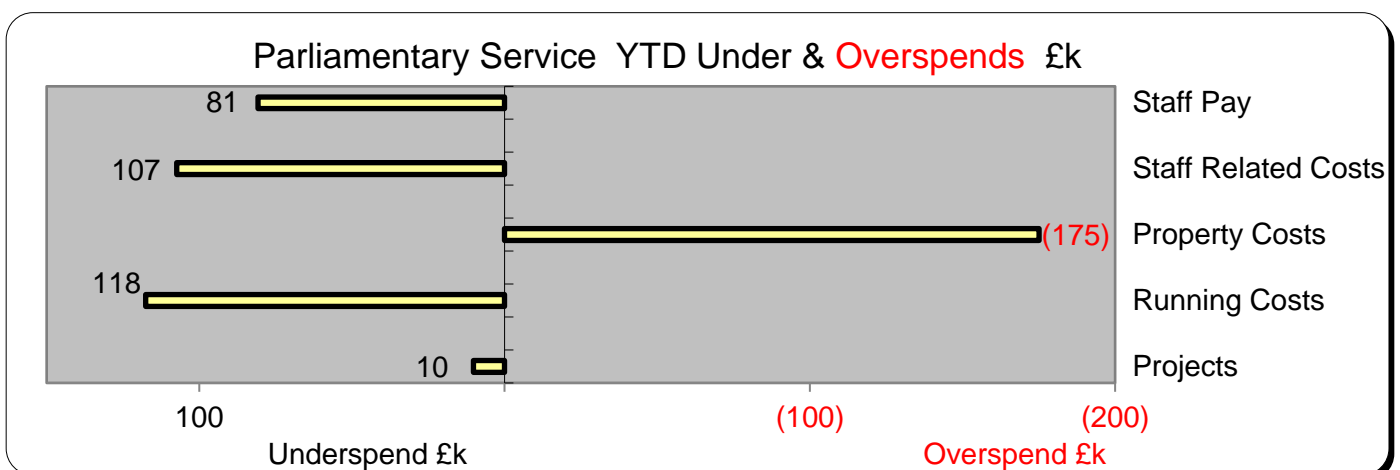
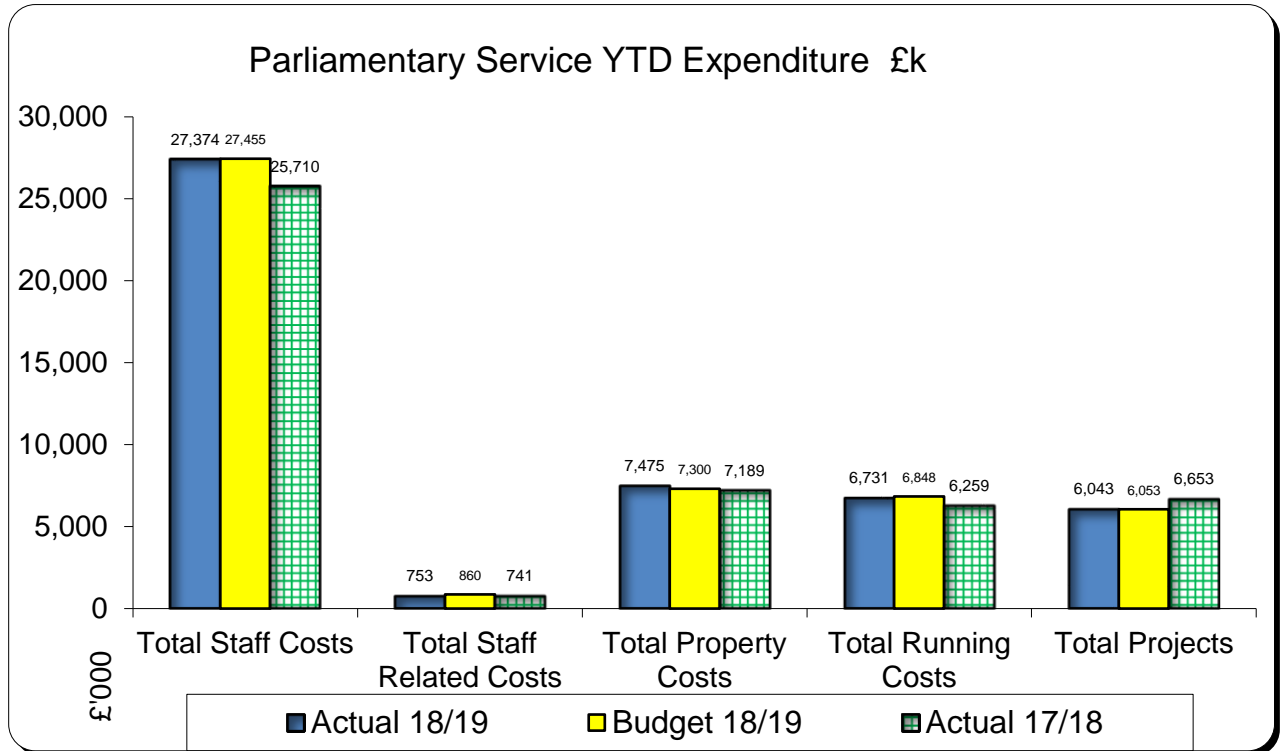


6. The table below shows actual 2018/19 monthly expenditure (red) up to the end of March. The original monthly budget profile is shown by the black line.



Parliamentary Service Costs (Schedule 2)

7. The year to date expenditure for the Parliamentary Service (SPS) of £48.4m is £141k (0.3%) under budget. Parliamentary Service Costs incorporate both capital and revenue projects. The previous year's expenditure of £46.6m at period 12 was £0.3m (0.6%) over budget. An analysis of the current financial year by main category of expenditure is shown in the two charts below.

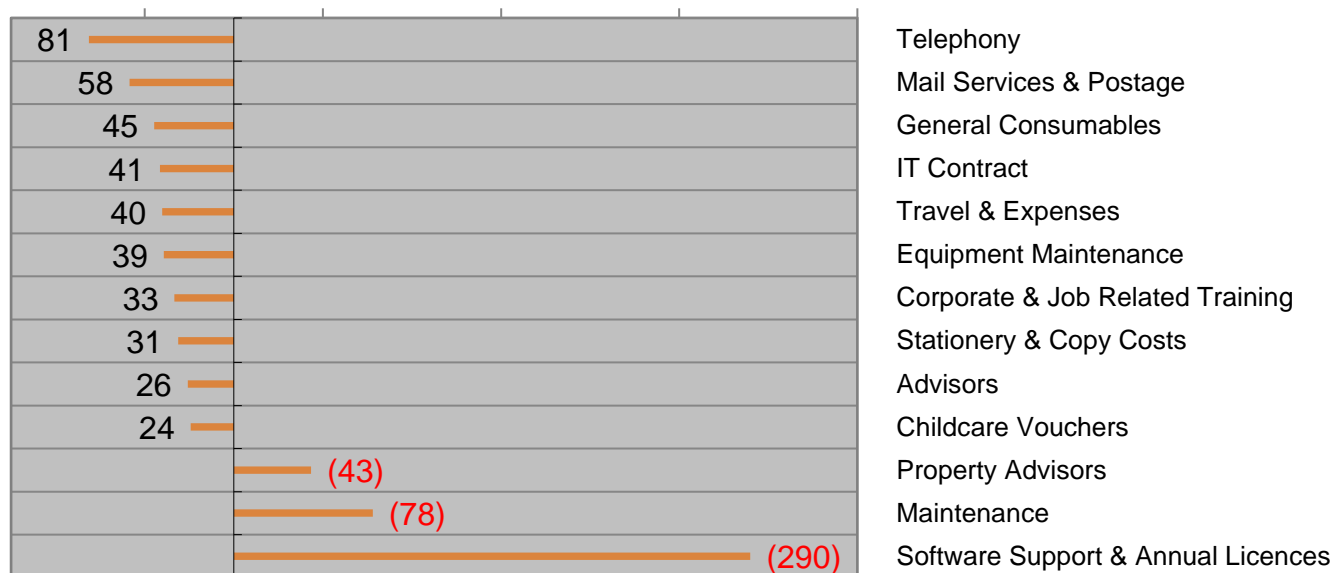


- Staff Pay is reported as £81k (0.3%) under budget including Agency staff and contractors. Staff turnover and the associated vacancies have exceeded the budgeted vacancy assumption in 2018/19.
- The expenditure on staff pay of £27.4m is £1.7m (6.4%) higher than the equivalent 17-18 costs. This increase is due to approved additional staff for Brexit related work (5 in Legal, 2 in Committee and 4 in SPICE). Also,

there are additional posts for public engagement in Media (2), Broadcasting (2), Outreach (2.5) and the Committee Engagement Unit (5).

- Expenditure on Staff Related Costs is £753k. This is £107k (12.5%) below the annual budget of £860k. Actual spend on staff related costs is £12k (1.6%) more than for the equivalent period in 2017-18. Healthy Living & Well Being (£32k), Corporate Training (£28k), Childcare Vouchers (£24k) and Travel and Expenses (£40k) make up the biggest elements of the underspend. This is slightly offset by higher expenditure on Recruitment (£19k).
- Property Costs of £7.5m are £145k (2.4%) higher than the annual budget, principally accounted for by Maintenance (£78k) and Property Advisors (£43k).
- Running Costs of £6.7m are £118k (1.1%) under budget. Main running cost underspends are in Telephony (£81k), Mail Services & Postage (£58k), General Consumables (£45k), IT Contract (£41k), Travel & Expenses (£40k), Equipment Maintenance (£39k), Corporate & Job-Related Training (£33k), Stationery (£31k), Advisors (£26k) and Childcare Vouchers (£24k). These are offset by higher expenditure on Property Advisors (£43k), Maintenance (£78k) and Software Support and Annual Licences (£290k).

PS (Excluding Projects)
Key YTD Under/(Overspends) £k



Project Reporting (Schedule 3):

8. Schedule 3 shows project spend by category of project.

- Total project expenditure to March 2019 is £6.0m, £10k (0.2%) under the annual budget.
- Revenue Projects show a total spend of £4.1m, an underspend of £438k (9.7%) against the phased budget of £4.5m. £60k additional project expenditure in FM was authorised to be funded by a forecast underspend in Members budget. This was utilised by year end, however, this was offset by an equivalent underspend in BIT projects.
- Capital Projects have spent £1.9m for the year, £427k (28.1%) higher than the phased budget of £1.5m. The expenditure is mainly in respect of the Security Systems Replacement project (£1.4m).

Members' Costs (Schedule 2)

9. Members' costs are analysed in Schedule 2, which shows £29.1m reported cost to March 2019, £673k (2.3%) lower than the annual budget. (The corresponding figures for 2017-18 at period 12 were expenditure of £28.2m with an underspend of £1,105k, (3.8%)). We expect the level of reported underspend for 2018-19 to reduce slightly once the full year accounts are finalised, as claims for the financial year are still being processed until mid-May.

Commissioners & Ombudsman Costs (Schedule 2)

10. The SPCB's funding cost for Commissioners and Ombudsman (Officeholders) in the 12 months of 2018-19 amounts to £11.2m, which is £316k (2.7%) under the annual budget. (The corresponding figures for 2017-18 at period 12 were expenditure of £9.5m with an underspend of £196k, (2.0%)). Expenditure includes £1.4m spent on the Officeholders' accommodation project which will be accounted for through the SPSO's accounts.

Central Contingency

11. The central contingency has remained at £50k in period 12.