

Finance Report

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Summary: A finance statement to the end of January 2007 is presented. Expenditure is predicted to be in line with the budget as previously reported. The project expenditure profile is in line with expectations. Income from non grant sources is higher than expected.

Grant payments from Natural England have been very slow, but the problems have now, nearly, been resolved. As yet there is no grant offer from Natural England for 2007-08.

There has been no formal contact from the Audit Commission on the accounts for 2006-07.

Accounts 2005-06

1. The Board complied with the Accounting and Audit Regulations 2003 and the 2006 amendments, which required the Board to approve accounts by June 30th 2006. The accounts were also made available for public inspection as required. However the Audit Commission should have issued its report by 31st December 2006. As nothing had been heard contact was made in January. They acknowledged they had received the Board's accounts, but due to pressure of work were behind schedule. They indicated they would be in touch shortly, but there has been no further contact.

Finance Statement to 31st January 2007

2. See Table 1 for the core budget and Table 2 for the project budget.

Grant Payments

3. The Board can claim advance quarterly payments from Natural England, to avoid cash flow problems. Each quarterly grant is for approx £110,000. Claims were submitted in October and in January. Unfortunately Natural England's new finance systems could not cope. Eventually the payment expected in October was received on 8th Feb. The January payment is still outstanding. no payments were received until February 7th. This meant that the Board had to live off reserves for several months. Local and regional staff were very helpful but the national payment service, contracted out, is plainly a cause of concern.

End of Year Forecast

4. At the time of writing it is anticipated that core expenditure will be approx. £5,000 less than planned. Income could be approx £6,000 higher than

estimated leaving an end of year surplus of £11,000. This sum can be allocated to the general reserve

5. Project expenditure will be close to estimate. There is likely to be an underspend against the Forest Research Project, but it is likely that the Forestry Commission will agree to these funds being carried forward.

Recommendations

1. **To note the current satisfactory financial position.**
2. **To note that the end of year forecast shows a surplus in the order of £11,000.**
3. **To seek re-assurance from Natural England that its grant payments will be made on time in future.**

Department 20 Countryside Management							
Countryside & FLU Officer	(64,736)	(53,947)	(58,465)	(4,518)	(69,858)	(5,122)	£4k to be recharged to SDF at end of year for admin
Travel and subsistence	(4,000)	(3,333)	(1,867)	1,467	(4,000)	-	
Award schemes	(800)	(667)	(744)	(77)	(800)	-	
Fieldwork & research	(3,000)	(2,500)	(1,519)	981	(4,500)	(1,500)	Overspending - land use survey was doubled in size
Publications	(1,000)	(833)	(315)	518	(1,085)	(85)	
Events	(500)	(417)	(439)	(22)	(500)	-	
Wildlife conference	-	-	2,480	2,480	-	-	Not planned, but delegate fee income will cover cost
Monitoring	(3,000)	(2,500)	-	2,500	(1,500)	1,500	Planned underspend to cover additional cost of land use survey
Miscellaneous	(500)	(417)	(49)	368	(500)	-	
Sub total	(77,536)	(64,613)	(60,917)	3,696	(82,743)	(5,207)	
Description	Annual Budget	Profiled Budget to date	Actual to date	Variance	Projected Outturn	Projected Variance	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Department 30 Planning and development							
Planning Officer	(49,999)	(41,666)	(42,348)	(682)	(50,818)	(819)	
Travel & subsistence	(1,000)	(833)	(1,135)	(301)	(1,000)	-	
Technical assistance	(2,000)	(1,667)	-	1,667	(2,000)	-	Underspending against profile
Planning Committee	(2,000)	(1,667)	(491)	1,176	(2,000)	-	

Department 50 Corporate Services							
Chief Officer / Office Manager / Admin	(116,232)	(96,860)	(93,197)	3,663	(111,278)	4,954	Underspent due to admin ass't post becoming part time
Travel and subsistence	(2,300)	(1,917)	(1,616)	300	(2,300)	-	
Staff training & insurance	(5,700)	(4,750)	(5,549)	(799)	(5,700)	-	
Premises	(28,785)	(27,023)	(26,950)	74	(29,485)	(700)	
Office costs	(17,700)	(14,750)	(17,904)	(3,154)	(17,700)	-	£1,500 postage costs to be recharged to Promotions £2,400 postage costs to be recharged to Projects
Office furniture & equipment	(600)	(500)	(113)	387	(600)	-	
IT (incl OS licences)	(22,450)	(20,850)	(18,989)	1,861	(25,000)	(2,550)	Improved back up system needed
Meetings & events	(1,000)	(833)	(1,062)	(228)	(1,000)	-	
Finance	(32,450)	(15,375)	1,792	17,167	(11,169)	21,281	Savings on audit and payroll services
Personnel	(3,500)	(3,500)	-	3,500	(3,500)	-	
Legal services	(9,800)	(8,167)	(5,746)	2,420	(9,800)	-	
Insurance	(9,000)	(6,000)	(6,962)	(962)	(9,000)	-	
Recruitment	(2,000)	(1,667)	(793)	874	(800)	1,200	
Miscellaneous	(2,000)	(1,667)	(497)	1,170	(2,000)	-	
Sub total	(253,517)	(203,858)	(177,587)	26,272	(229,332)	24,185	

Description	Annual Budget £	Profiled Budget to date £	Actual to date £	Variance £	Projected Outturn £	Projected Variance £	Notes
Department 60 Member Services							
Members' allowances	(36,000)	(30,000)	(30,244)	(244)	(36,000)	-	
Board member training	(1,800)	(1,500)	(2,156)	(656)	(2,175)	(375)	
Board meetings	(2,700)	(2,250)	(889)	1,361	(2,700)	-	
Miscellaneous	(1,500)	(1,250)	-	1,250	(500)	1,000	
Sub total	(42,000)	(35,000)	(33,290)	1,710	(41,375)	625	
Contribution to SE Protected Landscapes Co-ordinator	(2,000)	(1,667)	-	1,667	(2,000)	-	Contribution not yet paid
Merchandise purchases	(2,000)	(1,667)	(320)	1,347	(2,000)	-	Stock levels high
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(588,447)	(478,967)	(439,355)	39,611	(583,208)	5,239	
Income							
Description	Annual Budget £	Profiled Budget to date £	Actual to date £	Variance £	Projected Outturn £	Projected Variance £	Notes
Countryside Agency/Natural England	454,000	454,000	454,000	-	454,000	-	
Local Authorities	117,513	117,513	102,070	(15,443)	102,070	(15,443)	Balance of budgeted amount collected in 2005/06
Transfer from reserve	-	-	-	-	15,443	15,443	and transferred from reserves in 2006/07
Merchandise sales	3,000	2,500	6,277	3,777	4,500	1,500	Performing well ahead of target

Other income	15,300	12,750	15,902	3,152	19,800	4,500	Interest from investment of surplus cash ahead of budget
TOTAL INCOME	589,813	586,763	578,248	(8,515)	595,813	6,000	
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	1,366	107,796	138,893	31,097	12,605	11,239	

Table 2

PROJECT ACTIVITY YEAR TO DATE 2006/07								
MONTH 10: JANUARY								
PROJECT	Budget Expenditure	Actual Exp. YTD	Actual Income YTD	Transfer from Reserves	Actual Income and Reserves less Exp YTD	Income Secured incl. income received, grant offers and reserves	Balance to Find	Comments
PROMOTION AND AWARENESS								
Getting Close to Nature	(31,000)	(13,399)	21,023	7,744	15,368	31,000	-	HLF has agreed the project can continue to Sept '07. On target for 06/07
Red Kites	(3,000)	(886)	1,511	2,010	2,635	3,000	-	Expenditure will be covered by donations
Friends of Red Kites	-	(408)	2,523	195	2,310	685	-	
Parishes Fund	(10,000)	(4,853)	-	10,000	5,147	10,000	-	Grants paid likely to be £8,000 by year end
Dunstable Downs	(10,000)	-	-	-	-	10,000	-	
People and Places	(5,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	HLF has warded a grant of £13,000 (7.2.07)
TOTAL	(59,000)	(19,545)	25,057	19,949	25,461	54,685		

COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT								
Chalk Streams	(48,700)	(25,704)	25,200	20,400	19,896	48,700	-	On target
Woodland Research Programme	(47,000)	(436)	-	24,106	23,670	47,000	-	Most of the work will be completed and paid for in quarter 4.
Commons	(10,000)	(1,639)	541	2,000	902	5,000	(5,000)	Most of the balance is given in the form of volunteer time.
Special Trees and Woods	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£3k will be met from Woodland Research Prog.
Chalk Grassland Programme	(18,000)	(878)	1,087	2,000	2,210	9,000	(9,000)	A number of projects are nearing implementation stage.
Hedgerow Survey	(5,000)	(3,162)	-	-	(3,162)	5,000	-	Completed. Results are being prepared.
Landowner Management Guidance	(2,500)	(2,730)	1,136	2,500	907	2,500	-	Published
TOTAL	(131,200)	(34,548)	27,964	51,006	44,422	117,200	(14,000)	
ACCESS AND RECREATION								
Ridgeway Link	(17,700)	-	-	6,059	6,059	17,700	-	Works underway
Visitor Survey	(4,000)	-	3,000	-	3,000	4,000	-	Survey commissioned
Access Publications	(4,000)	-	226	-	226	4,000	-	Ongoing
Routes for All	(12,000)	(811)	1,700	-	889	12,000	-	Underway
Chilterns Country Leaflets	(5,000)	(3,484)	1,550	-	(1,934)	5,000	-	Several have had to be re-printed
Tranquil Cycling	(2,000)	(590)	-	2,000	1,410	2,000	-	Ongoing
TOTAL	(44,700)	(4,885)	6,476	8,059	19,420	44,700	-	

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT								
Building Heritage Skills Project	(1,000)	(664)	-	-	(664)	12	(640)	
Historic Environment	(1,000)	-	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	HLC additional work has begun, but only likely to cost £1,000
TOTAL	(6,000)	(664)	-	1,000	336	1,012	(640)	
Sustainable Development Fund	(80,000)	(724)	60,000	-	59,276	80,000	-	
GRAND TOTAL	(320,900)	(60,366)	119,497	80,014	148,915	297,597	(14,640)	

