

**Chief Executive's Report to the SPCB
September 2011**

Introduction

The monthly Chief Executive report gives me the opportunity to keep you up-to-date with what is going on across the Parliament. It will include information on issues which may have arisen since my last report and also a look ahead to any matters on the horizon.

This report covers activity over the summer including a look back at the Festival of Politics and other events held here at the Parliament. The summer was a busy time for some teams especially those situated in the HR Office and BIT who have been continuing their post-election work. Staff in the Finance Office have been working on the 2012/13 budget round exercise which is now well under. All bids submitted to the Finance Office are currently undergoing scrutiny and challenge. A high level outline will be brought to you in September for initial consideration followed by the full budget paper in October.

This report also includes the Finance Report for the first quarter of financial year 2011/12 in Section 2 and an update on progress against Key Performance Indicators attached at Annex A.

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

P E GRICE

Clerk/Chief Executive

SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITIES

Parliamentary Business

- Most committees were supported in holding business planning days that included discussions with stakeholders and forward work programmes.
- Training on the budget process was offered to new members. This was provided by Prof David Bell, adviser to the Finance Committee.
- The Bureau met at the end of the recess to decide the business to recommend to the Parliament for the first few weeks of the new term.
- The Presiding Officer wrote to the Convener of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee on 23 August, requesting that the Committee undertakes an inquiry into Parliamentary sitting patterns and Themed Question Time. The Presiding Officer has requested that the Committee brings recommendations to the Parliament before the end of the year and indicated that she will continue her dialogue with those she feels are best placed to assist in bringing about the changes she believes will improve the Parliament.
- Members have all been given the opportunity to test the new chamber sound and voting system. The Parliamentary Business Team will continue to work with Business Managers and individual members to ensure that familiarity with the new system is as high as possible.
- The Non-Executive Bills Unit has contacted Business Managers offering presentations in party groups on the services it provides. It also intends to contact all new Members directly in the near future.
- The Presiding Officer will invite the Conveners Group at its meeting on 16 September to endorse ways in which committees can improve their performance. Clerks have been working on 2 detailed papers covering issues including setting up focussed inquiries, improving engagement and securing outcomes.

Post-election work

- As at 20 August 2011: The number of staff recruited by members since the election is 109. The number of redundancy cases we have processed relating to the election is 208.

Events and Exhibitions

- **World Press Photo 2011** was on display in the Main Hall from Saturday 6 to Saturday 27 August, during which time we received 34,709 visitors over 19 days

- **Festival of Politics 2011** another successful Festival with 38 events over the week with the majority of events taking place over the last 3 days, Thursday 25 to Saturday 27 August. Uptake for tickets was high at 75% with 15 events sold out. Forecast outturn is within agreed budget. A full report on this year's Festival will be presented to the SPCB in due course.
- **Get the Picture** - an innovative event held on the first day of the Festival and attended by 150 young people from across Scotland. The event gave them the opportunity to showcase their views, issues and lives in Scotland. It also gave them the opportunity to present their aspirations for Scotland for the next 5 years.
- **Moving Stories Travelling Exhibition** - will open at Cumbernauld College on Monday 12 September, and then move to the College's East Dunbartonshire campus on Tuesday 4 October

Forward look

- Wednesday 26 October - Presiding Officer will host the annual PoppyScotland Reception.
- Saturday 29 October – Scottish Parliament Communities Conference.

Security Office

- The new operational structure of security teams endorsed by the previous SPCB commenced on 11 July 2011
- All security staff have now undergone Personal Protection and Control Training which included input from our Legal Office
- In line with the recommendations of the security review the wearing of Protective Vests by security staff at the Public Entrance and Security Gatehouse was introduced on 24 August

HR

- All monthly pay slips and annual P60s are available electronically through the E-HR system. All Members, their staff and SPCB staff have been issued with a personal PIN number to access the system. If anyone has lost their PIN they should contact the HR Enquiry Service on x86500.

- Equality Framework and Single Equality Scheme: The revised Equality Framework and new Single Equality Scheme which were approved by the SPCB in March 2011 were published as part of the new website launch in August 2011.
- Equality Advisory Group: As the SPCB will be aware we recently advertised for volunteers to become members of the SPCB's Equality Advisory Group. An update on the progress of establishment of the group will be included in the next Chief Executive's report.
- Learning & Capability Development: In total 235 members of SPCB & MSPs staff attended 26 training sessions in July. Of that figure, 203 attended the Fire Safety training. All instances of MSPs staff attending training related to Fire Safety Training.

UK and International Relations Office (UKIRO)

- At the end of July I attended the Commonwealth Society of Clerks-at-the-Table meeting and delivered a presentation about delivering parliamentary services during times of austerity to my counterparts. This meeting took place during the CPA Annual Conference in London.
- Sandra White MSP and Clare Adamson MSP attended the CPA Annual Conference in London. This is the first major CPA event following the 2011 Scottish elections and provided an opportunity for a new Member as well as a Member of the Branch Executive Committee to attend a major international conference. Clare Adamson also attended the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians meeting.
- The Deputy Presiding Officer hosted a courtesy call and lunch for Speaker of the Canadian Parliament's Upper House, The Hon Noel Kinsella, and 3 accompanying Senators on Thursday 1 September.
- The next meeting of the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly (BIPA) is due to take place in Brighton from 23 to 25 October. This will be the first meeting of the Assembly to include the full contingent of MSPs nominated to that body.

Media

- Looking back we had positive '1 July' media coverage achieved over a sustained two and a half month period from mid May to the end July, with 187 articles generated in the media: local media (74%), national media (17%) and online (9%). 56% of coverage related to MSPs' local heroes.

SPICe Research

- In SPICe the recess period involved work on briefings requested for committees, (including the Scotland Bill Committee), particularly for the business planning days, answering a substantial number of enquiries (including many from new Members), and work to implement the results of reviews of the research and information services. For the e-services team August was particularly busy, with the migration of content onto the Content Management System of the new website.
- In September we are anticipating increased enquiry numbers and regular requests for committee briefings, particularly as a number of key strategic documents are published, not least the programme for government and the draft budget/spending review. Work will continue in SPICe bedding in the new processes on the website, and preparing for the formal office review later in the year.
- Following the UK general election, the Hansard Society has been running a research project exploring the experience of new MPs during their early months in office. Interim results have already been published. The Society has been in contact with the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales with a view to extending the study to look at the experience of newly elected MSPs and AMs. Discussions are also in progress with the Dail. The outputs of the study will provide valuable insights into the experience of newly elected Members in all of the legislatures studied and will help to inform the arrangements which are made to support any future new intake of elected members. The costs of participating can be met from current budgets.

Public Information and Publications

- Public Information and Publications started a trial of a Parliament twitter account on 6th May, post-election, and it has proven very popular with lots of positive anecdotal feedback. Over the period from 6th May till mid-August the number of followers has increased from 552 to 2,152. The most popular tweets were on MSP details, the Business Bulletin and the Education wallchart. An evaluation report will be compiled at the end of September and will feed into the new web and online strategy being developed for Parliament.
- Over recess Public Information and Publications have also been bedding in the new print contractor for the production of the business publications (APS) which I made mention of in my previous report. We are using the Scottish Government framework for this contract.

Business Information Technology

- During the summer, the Business Information Technology Office remained extremely busy. Significant change has been undertaken to the IT systems used by the Parliament and Members and work to review and rectify any issues arising from the changes has begun.
- During the early hours of Thursday 1 September, a problem occurred with the power supply which serves the IT Communication rooms. The impact of this problem was eventual loss of power to the communications rooms, and the resultant loss of IT services. The Facilities Management Office quickly rectified the issue and the Business IT Office worked to bring the effected services back online. In order to try and prevent a future occurrence, the Facilities Management Office undertook preventative maintenance on effected equipment on the evening of Saturday 3 September.

Broadcasting

- The Broadcasting Office has been working with the suppliers of the new sound and voting system to ensure the new voting system will be ready for the start of business in September. Staff from the FM, Chamber and BIT Offices have been working with Broadcasting colleagues over the summer to decommissioning and uninstalling the old system and install, integrate and test the new system.

SECTION 2 - FINANCE REPORT

SPCB FINANCE REPORT Period 3 – June 2011

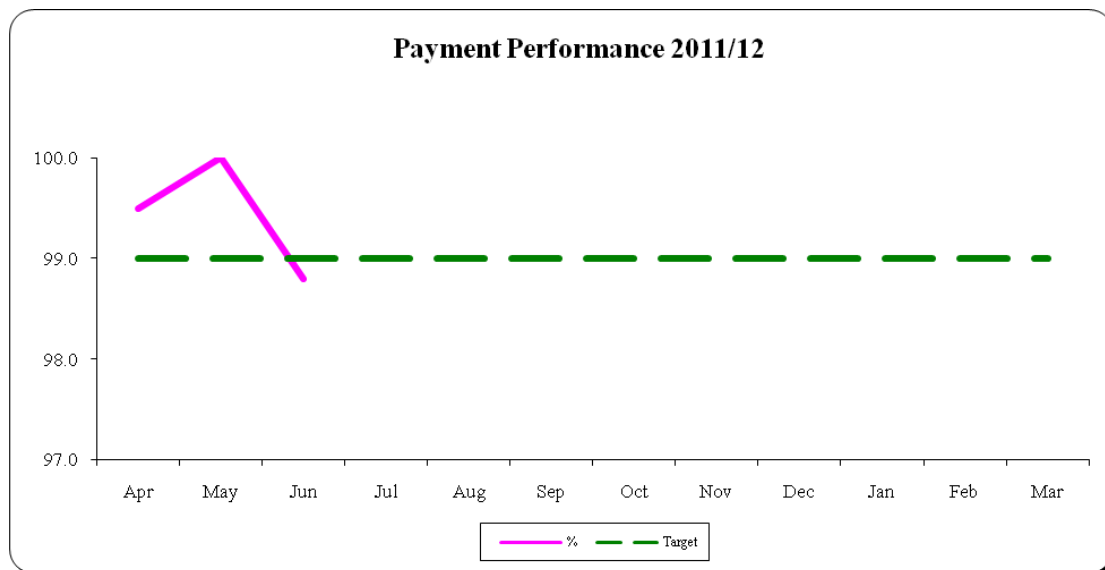
1. This report is to inform SPCB of general financial activity and expenditure trends in 2011-12 and is the first report of the current financial year.

Head of Financial Resources Commentary / Executive Summary

2. The Scottish Parliament's total revenue and capital expenditure for the first three months 2011-12 of £19.4m represents an underspend against budget of £1.1m (5.3%). The comparable figure in 2010-11 at period 3 was £1.4m (7.7%).

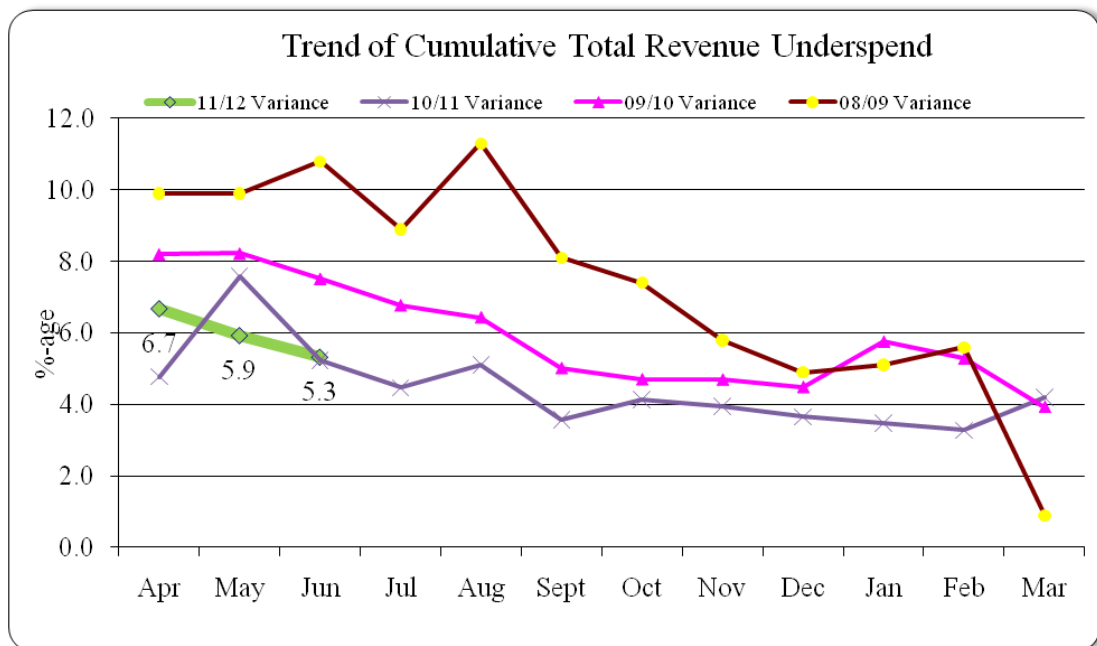
General Financial Activity

3. Draft SPCB 2010-11 accounts have been prepared to schedule, including all control account reconciliations, and Audit Scotland commenced audit fieldwork on 25 July. The draft SPCPF accounts have been prepared and the audit fieldwork completed by Pannell Kerr Foster (PKF) in early July with no significant issues arising.
4. Bank reconciliations and main control account reconciliations for the current financial year have been completed up to period 3 and work is underway on the payroll and CASE SEAS expenditure reconciliations.
5. Our performance for payment of invoices within contract terms was 99.3% for the year to date, which exceeds our target of 99.0%. Performance for the month of June was just below target at 98.8%. Performance for payment within 10 days was 95.7% for the year to date.



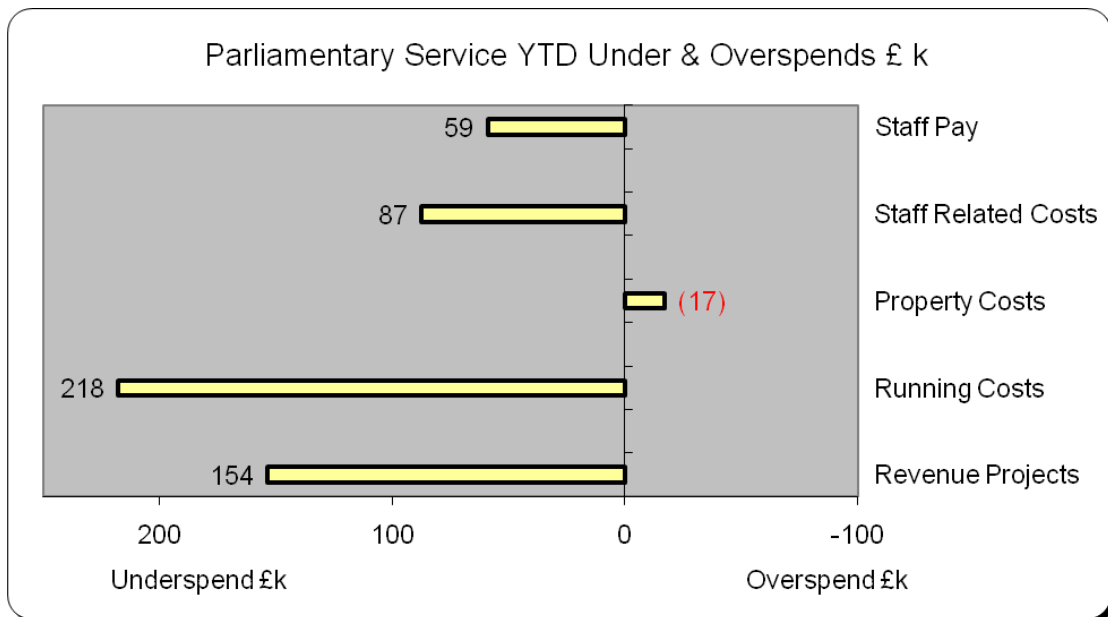
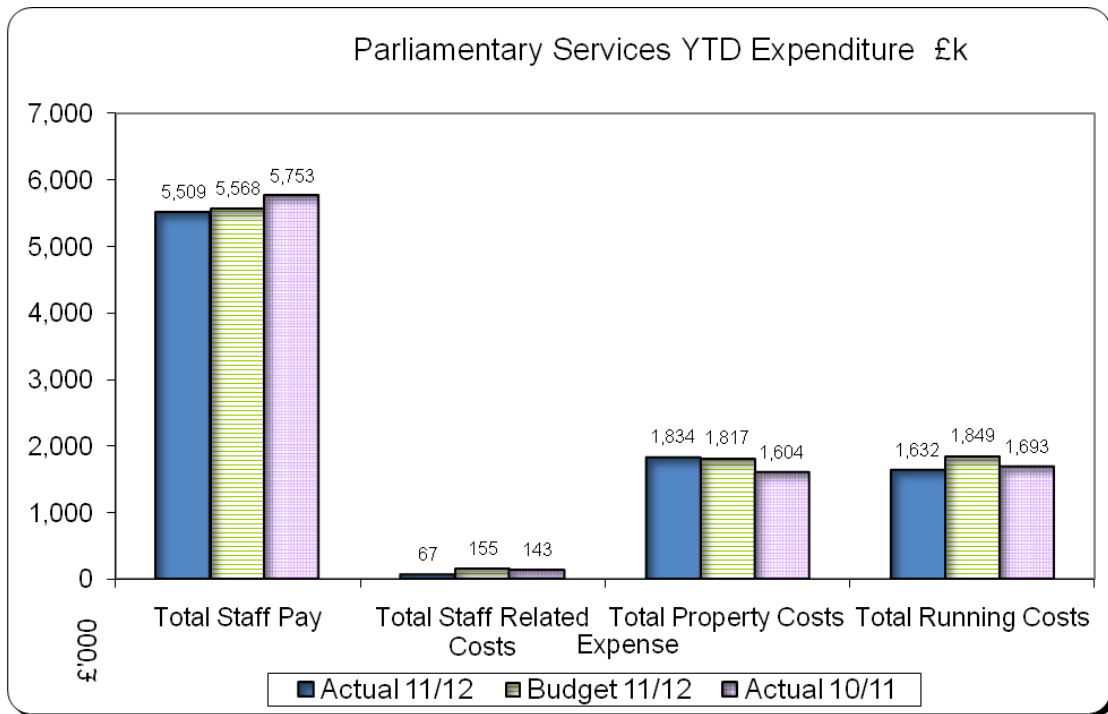
Financial Results

6. The SPCB's net revenue expenditure per Schedule 1 for the three months ended June 2011 is £19.2m, which is £1.1m (5.3%) under the approved revenue budget of £20.2m. Around 40% of this reported underspend is attributable to Members' Expenses, reflecting the fact that claims do not occur evenly across the financial year. The comparable net revenue underspend at June 2010 was £0.9m (5.2%).



Parliamentary Service Costs (Schedule 2)

7. The cumulative gross revenue expenditure for the Parliamentary Service, at £9.2m, is £0.5m (5.2%) under budget. The previous year's expenditure of £9.5m at the equivalent stage was £0.6m (5.6%) below budget. Revenue projects are £154k (53%) under budget. An analysis of the current financial year by main category of expenditure is shown in the two charts below.



- Staff pay and staff related costs, which represent over half of Parliamentary Service Costs, are £146k under budget. Within this figure, staff pay at £5.5m is £59k (1.1%) under budget and is £244k below the comparative position in June 2010. The annual staff pay is budgeted to reduce by £740k between 2010/11 and 2011/12, so we are well on the way to reaching this target. Staff related costs of £67k are £87k (56.5%) below budget, with under spends against budget present across most expenditure lines but most notably against Travel, Expenses, Corporate Training and Job Related Training.

- Property costs of £1.8m are £17k (0.9%) over budget as some maintenance has been brought forward.
- Running costs of £1.6m are £218k (11.8%) under budget. The main underspends are against Publications (£41k), Software Support (£29k) and Advertising (£29k).
- Revenue Projects are analysed in Schedule 3 and show an actual spend of £138k against the budget of £292k, an under spend of £154k (52.7%). The bulk of this (£104k) is in the timing of FM costs resulting from the May 2011 Election. The Web Development Project is showing costs of £16k to date during 2011/12 due to the revised implementation timetable.

Members' Costs (Schedule 2)

8. Members' costs are analysed in Schedule 2, which shows £8.1m reported costs for the year to date, £0.5m (6.2%) below budget. (The corresponding figures for 2010/11 were £0.4m, 7.1%). Of this underspend, £438k is on Members' Expenses. Party Assistance at £57k is £53k (48.3%) below budget.

Commissioners & Ombudsman Costs (Schedule 2)

9. The SPCB's funding cost for Commissioners and Ombudsman (Officeholders) for the year to date amounts to £1.9m, which is £33k (1.7%) below the phased budget.

Central Contingency

10. The SPCB's central revenue contingency is unchanged at £100k.

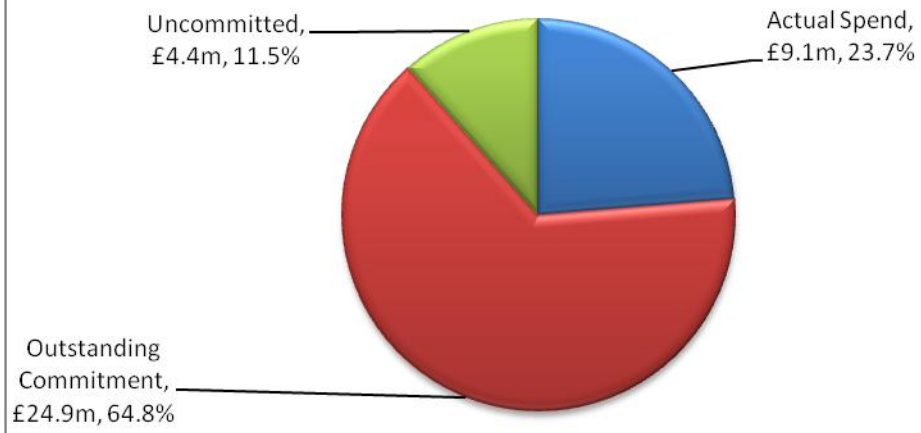
Capital Expenditure (Schedule 3)

11. The capital expenditure programme for 2011-12 of £1.3m includes £965k identified against specific projects and £335k of capital contingency. Total expenditure for the year to date is £222k against the budget of £231k. The variance on capital projects of £9k (3.8%) is principally due to the timing of BIT costs resulting from the May 2011 Election.

Commitment

13. The Parliamentary Service (including Revenue Projects) has committed 88.5% of its approved annual budget as at the end of June 2011.

Committed Funds as at June 2011 : £m,%



The Scottish Parliamentary Service

April 2011 - June 2011

Ref	Activity	Target	Actual
1	All parliamentary business takes place as scheduled	100%	100%
2	Payment of travel/expenses claims to timetable set out in Service Level Agreement	95% within 10 days	85.2%
3	Payment of allowances claims to timetable set out in Service Level Agreement	85% within 10 days	79.3%
4	Number of schools reached through inward and outward education programmes	848	204 (on target for year)
5	Visitors to Scottish Parliament	350,000	95,598
6	Number of Member-sponsored events	385	60 (on target for year)
7	Outturn against budget for financial year within target range	0 – 5% under	5.3%
8	Payment of valid invoices within contract terms	99%	99.3%
9	Staff absence levels	6.7 days	7.7 days
10	Reduction in Scottish Parliament carbon footprint from 2005-06 baseline by March 2012	18%	On track

Explanatory Notes (these relate to the row numbers above):

2 and 3. Service Levels were affected by the impact of the election on the Allowances Office workload.

4. There are no school visits during July and August due to the summer holidays, so the target given here covers a total of 10 months out of 12.

5. The target has been reduced for 2011-12 as no MSP sponsored events took place over April and May due to the election.

7. The target range for outturn against budget is set at 0-5% for the first 6 months of the financial year and at 0-2.5% for months 7-12 of the financial year. Performance for quarter 1 was 5.3% and is on track to reduce to the outturn target.

9. Staff absence for the reporting year is higher than the target of 6.7 days per person (based on the overall UK average across all sectors in 2009) but remains below the public sector average of 9 days.

10. At the end of the first quarter the target is on course to be achieved.