

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 6 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Social Services						
Older People						
Localities	18.814	18.080	-0.734	-0.649	Residential and Nursing Care is projecting a £0.494m underspend due to fluctuation in demand for residential and nursing care placements as well as increases to capital limits. Staff budgets are underspending within Intake/First Contact and Localities Teams, not all staff are currently top of grade and there are in-year savings due to short term vacancies.	ICF Grant funding is used to fund residential care to reduce the amount of time people spend in hospital. If this funding is fully spent duuring the year sliippage on the residential care budget is requiredto continue minimising hospital stays.
Reablement Services	0.542	0.445	-0.096	-0.120	The service is expected to underspend due to in-year savings from vacancies.	
Resources & Regulated Services	7.018	7.671	0.653	0.613	Council provided residential care is £0.449m overspent due to relief and agency cover. Relief and agency staff are requird to maintain the mandatory level of staff within the residential homes, however the amount of budget to fund this is low and does not contain contingencies for sickness absences. There are also pressures from buildings expenditure such as repairs and maintenance.	
Minor Variances	0.717	0.723	0.006	26.753		
Adults of Working Age						
Resources & Regulated Services	24.170	23.639	-0.531	-0.664	This is due to a combination of a decrease in high cost placements at the end of 2018/19 with the subsequent full year financial impact showing in 2019/20 and inflation provision for care provider fee increases not automatically passing to all providers and in some cases are only considered upon request.	This service area is subject to changes in demand for services. Thee are always a number of potential service users which may require services in the future. Although these service users are known to us at this time the most appropriate care package has not yet been determined and full costs associated for their care cannot yet be estimated and included within this months financial projections. There also remains potential for providers to request increases in their fees and the Council is currently negotiating with some specialist providers over proposed uplifts.
Transition & Disability Services	0.765	0.704	-0.061	-0.073	The service is expected to underspend due to all staff at top of grade and one off in-year vacancy savings.	
Residential Placements	1.241	1.717	0.476	0.476	The overspend is because of the number of residential placements currently funded.	This service is a demand led service and can be volatile.
Professional Support	0.821	0.760	-0.062	-0.076	Salary underspends due to staff not being top of scale and in-year vacancy savings.	
Minor Variances	2.957	2.887	-0.070	-0.009	Minor variances across the portfolio below £0.050m	
Children's Services						

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Family Placement	2.564	2.889	0.325	0.319	The overspend is due to current demands on the service from the number of fostering placements, which in some cases avoid making an Out of County placement. The main pressure areas and payments for foster care, foster agencies and special guardianship payments.	
Family Support	0.371	0.521	0.150	0.136	This is due to the number of court directed contact sessions which require support workers to attend. Sessional workers were historically used, however the need to use sessional workers has increased to a level whereby, under employment regulations, sessional workers are required to be issued fixed term contracts.	Parts of this service are being reviewed with a view to making it more cost efficient.
Legal & Third Party	0.178	0.477	0.299	0.288	Legal costs are overspent due to the number of cases going through the courts and the use of external legal professionals. Direct payments have recently seen an increase in demand.	
Professional Support	5.190	5.262	0.072	0.151	To support adequate levels of child protection the established staffing structure needs to be maintained at the required standard as much as possible. Vacancies are therefore minimised and challenges to recruitment leads to the use of agency staff, this leads to an increase in costs as agency rate isd higher than non-agency staff. The use of agency staff is monitored and kept to a minimum as much as possible but it is not possible to avoid altogether.	
Minor Variances	1.125	1.152	0.027	0.027		
<i>Safeguarding & Commissioning</i>						
Charging Policy income	-2.923	-3.096	-0.174	-0.183	Charging policy income is expected to exceed the budgeted amount due to increases in the non-residential care maximum weekly charge cap and an increase to the base number of service users who contribute to their care.	
Business Support Service	1.235	1.128	-0.107	-0.101	There are a number of short term vacancy savings and some posts currently occupied by staff who are not top of grade.	
Safeguarding Unit	0.923	0.844	-0.079	-0.084	The underspend is due to a number of short term vacancy savings and some posts currently occupied by staff who are not top of grade.	
Management & Support	-1.929	-1.730	0.198	0.193	There is a shortfall from the assumed proportion of grant allocations announced by Welsh Government which were included within the 2019/20 budget. The total shortfall across the three grants is £0.283m, although some of this is partly mitigated by one off refunds from the Regional Collaboration Unit.	
Vacancy Management	-0.080	-0.304	-0.224	-0.224	Short term vacancy avings transferred from across the portfolio.	

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Minor Variances	2.262	2.264	0.002	0.068		
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	65.962	66.032	0.070	0.093		
Out of County						
Children's Services	5.288	6.942	1.655	1.633	The overspend is influenced by a significant increase in the number of placements and the full year impacts of new placements which emerged during 2018/19.	A threefold approach to mitigation by :- 1) - direct action e.g Commissioning Practice 2) Expenditure controls within the same service or portfolio 3) After exhaustion of 1 and 2, consider how to effect corporate level mitigation
Education & Youth	3.745	4.311	0.567	0.474	The overspend is influenced by a significant increase in the number of placements and the full year impacts of new placements which emerged during 2018/19.	A threefold approach to mitigation by :- 1) - direct action e.g Commissioning Practice 2) Expenditure controls within the same service or portfolio 3) After exhaustion of 1 and 2, consider how to effect corporate level mitigation
Total Out of County	9.033	11.254	2.221	2.108		
Education & Youth						
Integrated Youth Provision	1.290	1.208	-0.083	0.002	Underspends across the whole of the service identified through the challenge of non-essential spend	
School Improvement Systems	1.716	1.579	-0.137	-0.097	In year savings identified through the challenge of non-essential spend across School Improvement and Early Entitlement	
Minor Variances	5.513	5.408	-0.104	-0.024	Minor variances across the portfolio below £0.050m	
Total Education & Youth	8.519	8.194	-0.325	-0.119		
Schools	91.946	91.946	-0.000	0.000		
Streetscene & Transportation						

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Service Delivery	8.536	8.665	0.129	0.109	Following the extreme weather event during June 2019, the service has incurred additional revenue pressures from responding and resolving flooding issues across the County. The network damage was widespread and included road foundations being undermined, particularly on roads adjacent to water courses, and road surfaces being lifted by inspection covers, due to the pressure created by the sheer volume of water within the drainage system. The costs include the additional staffing costs towards responding and repairing the highway along with costs of plant and materials. A claim to Welsh Government has recently been notified as unsuccessful and the service is now working to mitigate these costs. Potential total cost up to £0.180m. The flooding has also impacted the capital programme creating an additional pressure of £0.350m for highway repairs.	
Transportation	8.598	9.793	1.195	1.288	The pressure in school transport costs are as a result of several factors across the service. Effect of non-statutory school transport arrangements and delay in implementing policy on removing historic transport anomalies. Increase in mainstream secondary education pupil transport and Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupil transport, both in County and out of County placements, along with an increase in number of school escorts to accompany SEN pupils and growth in number of single occupancy routes. Transporting enrolment cohort to Connahs Quay High School and placing duplicate vehicles on public bus services as a response to non-eligible pupil displacement. There is also an increase in number of school days in 2019-20. The Transportation service have successfully reviewed high cost routes and retendered contracts where a more favourable rate may be secured. The impact of this to date is a reduction in the forecast position from £1.238m variance figure reported last month to £1.195m and work is ongoing to mitigate this further. Increased transport provision to Social Services of £0.048m. The Transportation service are looking to mitigate this pressure through a route optimisation exercise.	The Transportation Service are attempting to mitigate some of the pressure.

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Regulatory Services	4.841	5.021	0.180	0.185	Car Park income. The pressure is based on the average shortfall in income against monthly projections for each town following the first full ten months of implementation (received in 2018/19) of the increased tariff charges. A large section of car parking	Keep car park income closely monitored.
Other Minor Variances	21.737	22.028	0.291	0.311	Minor variances across the portfolio below £0.050m	
Total Streetscene & Transportation	30.335	31.821	1.487	1.599		
Planning, Environment & Economy						
Business	1.583	1.635	0.052	0.065	Extension of two EHO contracts has been agreed due to increasing service pressures and demands	
Access	1.337	1.402	0.065	0.055	Historic Income Target not realised due to cessation of Environment Single Revenue Grant in March, 2019 £0.027m. Service Review in Rights of Way resulting in increased staffing costs £0.028m	
Management & Strategy	1.390	1.324	-0.066	-0.057	Vacant posts across the service: Land Drainage and Planning Policy	
Minor Variances	1.598	1.570	-0.028	-0.009		
Total Planning & Environment	5.907	5.931	0.024	0.053		
People & Resources						
HR & OD	2.367	2.444	0.076	0.078	The launch of the salary sacrifice scheme for AVSC was undertaken earlier this year and all existing employees paying AVSC have been written to encouraging them to take up the scheme together with information for all staff via the infonet workforce news. To date only £0.009m has been achieved through this scheme and this has been estimated to a full year efficiency at £0.018m	Promote the AVSC Scheme and encourage further staff take up.
Corporate Finance	2.083	2.092	0.009	0.023		
Total People & Resources	4.451	4.536	0.085	0.100		
Governance						
Legal Services	0.723	0.895	0.172	0.163	Overspend as a result of employing locums to December, 2019 covering absence to ensure continuing client service delivery in the area of child protection £0.090m. Previous years efficiency target that was dependant on demand reduction in another service that has not occurred, thereby preventing the consequent achievement of the efficiency £0.090m. Mitigated by the fee income and commitment challenge within the service £0.017m	Absence monitoring and monitor fee income levels
Revenues	0.197	0.151	-0.046	-0.025	Early indication of a potential surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund	Continue to monitor collection data

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Minor Variances	8.256	8.182	-0.075	-0.087	Minor variances across the portfolio below £0.050m	
Total Governance	9.177	9.228	0.051	0.051		
Strategic Programmes						
Leisure	5.272	5.273	0.000	0.000		
Minor Variances	5.272	5.273	0.000	0.000		
Total Strategic Programmes	5.272	5.273	0.000	0.000		
Housing & Assets						
Caretaking & Security	0.263	0.208	-0.055	-0.006	Savings identified arising from the review and challenge of non-essential spend, of which £0.034m relates to staff cost savings arising from vacancies and reduced overtime payments. A further £0.015m saving on R and M of Buildings arose from the challenge of non essential spend making a total of £0.049m for this service. The remaining £0.006m of the projected underspend relates to minor savings which had previously been identified and reported.	Continue to review and challenge all non essential spend in future months.
CPM & Design Services	0.673	0.604	-0.069	-0.060	Mainly due to a surplus of income recovered via Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and also £0.012m arising from the review and challenge of non-essential spend.	Continue to review and challenge all non essential spend in future months.
Benefits	11.566	11.291	-0.275	-0.273	Projected underspend on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS).	
Minor Variances	2.636	2.635	-0.000	0.040		
Total Housing & Assets	15.137	14.739	-0.398	-0.300		
Chief Executive's	2.801	2.660	-0.141	-0.153	Vacant Posts	
Central & Corporate Finance	22.810	22.433	-0.377	-0.390	Over recovery of planned pension contributions recoupment against actuarial projections due to pay award increase mitigated by the under achievement of Income efficiencies and Workforce efficiencies	
Grand Total	271.350	274.048	2.698	3.043		