

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
Joint Housing & Social & Health - Initial Budget Proposals 2014/15

No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
1.0	<u>Joint Housing & Social & Health Comments / Issues</u>	
1.1	<u>General Comments / Issues</u>	
1.1	Assurance sought about the systems in place to monitor risks particularly around Children's services. Is the system in place for monitoring these risks robust enough?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the close of the budget setting process, we highlight the risks that may impact in the year ahead and throughout the year, we have systems in place which enables us to address issues as they arise.
1.2	No mention of collaborative ventures within this budget – why and does this mean we cannot make cuts to these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All collaborative ventures are constantly under review an example of this is the Telecare service.
1.3	Mental Health costs have been discussed at a previous committee where a comparison was made of in house cost v external provision. Why is there no detail of that in the budget?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the future we will continue to look at all options and are doing so. In relation to how we provide and commission services, this will be one of the decisions for Members consideration going forward.
1.4	Investment from Reserves of £3.7m contingency and £3.7m equal pay. Is there a specific purpose for it to be used for? Clarification sought on this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contingency reserve is the amount over and above the required base level of reserves and is to meet one off costs including exit costs. The investment strategy is to utilise the equal pay capitalisation as part of a collective approach to total workforce costs. There is also a thorough review underway of all reserves to make sure we have an adequate level of investment to meet one off costs.

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2.0	<u>Pressures</u>		
2.1	With reference to the pressures for Foster Care and Children's Out of County Placements, are the amounts enough to meet the demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Foster Care placements figure is based on current demand on the service. A risk based approach has had to be taken on the level of this and the Out of County Placements figure given the demand led nature of these services. ▪ In 13/14 an additional £110k was approved for the Family Placement team to meet the increased costs of Foster Care and increased cost of court orders for residences and special guardianships. Within Children's Out of County Placements, an efficiency of £533k was realised as a result of a decrease in costs from improved procurement practice. ▪ These will be categorised for final budget report. 	
2.2	What was the increase in 13/14		
2.3	Pressures and Investments is not spit into categories as per previous years budget report – why is this?		
3.0	<u>Efficiencies</u>		
3.1	VFM efficiency of £50k within the Youth Justice Service. If it has an adverse affect on the service, will it be able to be put back?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members would need to decide if they wanted to put more money into the service. Flintshire are still providing a significant contribution to funding within the Youth Justice Service. The level of efficiency can be met without an impact and nothing can be exempt from the budget review. 	

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3.2	Can we guarantee level of efficiencies will not impact adversely on services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The aim is to protect services but also to improve, where possible, to be more efficient and to improve outcomes for service users.
3.3	In relation to the efficiency from moving Estuary Crafts to be co located with Tri Ffordd, this is a small efficiency of £24k but what about the cost of changing the building, and the transport costs for service users who will now need to go to a new location?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capital investment to refurbish the building has been provided from funding within the service. The move provides a better and more appropriate environment for service users. The £24k is as a result of a reduction in management costs due to the co location. There may be an impact on transport costs but these will only be minor and service users will be supported.
3.4	Agreement that Estuary Crafts needs to be moved, but why Tri Ffordd and not site in Flint near to Castle Connections?	Further information to be provided
3.5	Within the Learning Disability service, there are efficiencies of an unprecedented scale with reduction in Management. Is the efficiency "Structural Management" also to do with Short Term Care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No
3.6	Will the efficiencies in the Short Term Care service have an impact on the number of service users receiving the service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, the efficiency is about changes to rotas and the way the service is managed.
3.7	Can we be assured that the efficiency of £822k which is related to transitional services will have no impact on individuals moving from Children's to Adult Services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The efficiency has already been achieved in 2013/14 by doing things differently. Future year's forecasts for transition clients are built into the next three years projections

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3.8	Why is there no procurement efficiencies listed under Social Care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care does make savings on commissioning eg Learning Disability Services and Dementia and Mental Health approaches through the North Wales commissioning hub. In Social Care the main expenditure is on delivering services through the purchase of care.
3.9	Is the efficiency linked to Connahs Quay offices for staffing or building costs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing costs only.
3.10	There are many efficiencies that relate to management cuts with the blithe assumption that this means there is no disruption in service. How can that be the case?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to ensure adequate capacity but the efficiency enable us to gain some cross service benefits. There is a need to look at the spans of control and better use of I.T. to ensure we are being as efficient as possible.
3.11	Need an explanation of “rightsizing”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This involves a thorough review of outcomes for service users. A balance between ensuring independence for the person involving social workers and specialist nurses and utilising opportunities such as telecare to maintain their safety are taken as part of this process.
3.12	Development and Resources income – Deputyships. Not clear what is being suggested here?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This relates to weekly charging of £5 per week for the service.