

Budget Monitoring Report - Month 6

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	In-year Moratorium (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Social Services							
Older People							
Localities	23.196	23.002	-0.194	-0.243		The Older People residential care budget is projecting an underspend of £0.222m, due to client income from property recharges and expected reimbursements where we are waiting on decisions for deputyships and assets held in trust . Homecare is £0.040m overspent. Locality workforce and professional support budgets are overspent by £0.015m and day care is underspending by £0.027m.	
Minor Variances	10.794	10.817	0.023	0.095			
Adults of Working Age							
Resources & Regulated Services	33.469	33.324	-0.145	-0.154		The PDSI (Physically Disabled and Sensory Impaired) budget is reporting a £0.307m overspend due to the net costs of care packages. The in-house Supported Living Service is £0.134m overspent due to care hours and agency costs, a £0.350m contribution from reserves is offsetting further costs. The care package costs for independently provided care for Learning Disability Services is £0.507m underspent. The Learning Disability day provision budget is £0.078m underspent.	
Children to Adult Transition Services	1.001	0.892	-0.109	-0.066		This is the cost of care packages for young adults transferring from Childrens Services to Adult Social Services. Care packages are usually new within this financial year and frequently have to be estimated in the first instance, this can result in projected costs changing during the year as service costs are finalised.	
Professional and Administrative Support	0.421	0.371	-0.050	-0.009		Vacancies within this service are resulting in the in-year underspend.	
Residential Placements	2.607	2.893	0.286	0.284		This is the overall cost of mental health care packages for adults. This is a volatile service and additional service needs can be identified throughout the year leading to increased costs.	
Minor Variances	3.596	3.496	-0.101	-0.054			
Children's Services							
Family Group Meetings	0.122	0.175	0.053	0.053		Demand for this service is resulting in increased sessional worker hours	
Family Placement	3.175	3.011	-0.164	-0.148		This underspend is due to the number of in-house foster carers within the service being less than the number we have historically had.	
Integrated Working	0.206	0.264	0.059	0.059		Cost pressures are due to contributions towards the Integrated Family Support Service and a shortfall in Supported People Funding	
Legal & Third Party	0.262	0.531	0.269	0.278		Legal costs are overspent by £0.136m due to the number of cases going through the courts and some use of external professionals. Client support and Section 17 costs are overspent by £0.121m. Direct Payments are overspending by £0.012m due to demand.	
Residential Placements	1.595	1.307	-0.288	-0.398		The in-house residential care provision continues to expand with an additional group home planned to open this financial year. Some in-year costs for the service are being offset by a significant Welsh Government grant. The grant has been confirmed for 2023/24 and 2024/25, but is not expected to be extended beyond this time.	

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Professional Support	5.824	6.680	0.856	0.821		To support adequate levels of child protection, the established staffing structure needs to be at a sufficient level to meet mandatory safeguarding standards. Vacancies are minimised and additional temporary posts are sometimes required to meet the challenges and demands of the service, the resulting overspend from such arrangements is £0.176m. Two managed agency teams are currently being contracted to support the service, reserves are being used to mitigate most of the costs but there is a projected overspend of £0.454m as a result, costs may change if there is a requirement to extend the contracts further. The Leaving Care budget, which supports young people who were Looked After Children, is overspending by £0.114m due to increasing numbers of care leavers. The cost of some external service contracts are £0.080m overspent due to inflationary pressures. Cost of Direct Payments to provide support to children with disabilities is £0.032m overspent due to demand for services.	
Minor Variances	0.694	0.718	0.024	0.026			
Safeguarding & Commissioning							
Business Systems & Financial Assessments	0.937	1.026	0.089	0.078		A new social service IT system is being implemented which requires additional project management and development costs.	
Charging Policy income	-3.321	-3.476	-0.155	-0.143		This is the income from service users who are charged a contribution towards the care they receive	
Minor Variances	2.226	2.302	0.076	0.033			
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	86.803	87.333	0.530	0.512	0.000		
Out of County							
Children's Services	12.281	13.352	1.070	0.811		The service is facing continued high demand for placements together with supply market challenges and inflationary pressures with 26 new placements made in the year to date and contingency provision of £0.250m for new placements.	
Education & Youth	5.004	5.227	0.223	0.267		The service is facing continued high demand for placements together with supply market challenges and inflationary pressures with 17 new placements made in the year to date and contingency provision of £0.250m for new placements.	
Total Out of County	17.285	18.579	1.293	1.078	0.000		
Education & Youth							
Integrated Youth Provision	0.947	0.879	-0.068	-0.059		Mainly due to staff vacancies	
School Improvement Systems	1.836	1.743	-0.093	-0.084		There has been a projected reduction in the Early Entitlement service in payments to settings due to demography. Top up subsidy continuing and other Welsh Government grants, allowing core budget to be released within the Service. There is also a reported £0.022m underspend within Schools Improvement Service. This is an underspend on the £0.028m pressure for the Digital Advisor post. The role has been appointed to, but did not start until September, 2023, creating a saving against the additional budget received.	
Minor Variances	7.118	7.143	0.025	0.078			
Total Education & Youth	9.902	9.765	-0.136	-0.065	0.000		

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Schools	114.081	114.273	0.193	0.000	0.000	The variance relates to redundancy costs being £0.250m over budget after also taking account of reserves carried forward. Free School Meals increase in both price and take up results in a £0.126m variance. This is mitigated by a (£0.100m) underspend on added years and a combination of smaller underspends each below (£0.050m).	
Streetscene & Transportation							
Service Delivery	9.808	10.028	0.220	0.297	-0.077	Service Delivery have implemented tight controls to the allocation of PPE, materials and receptacles through the in-house stores. Changes to the security provision in the Alltami Depot, Greenfield transfer station and HRC sites have generated savings as per the 2023/24 moratorium, following a review of the service needs. Cleaning costs have also been reviewed and reduced. The service is subject to increasing inflationary pressures and demand for temporary repairs on the road network, largely due to a lack of funding and investment in the highway network and fluctuating costs of tar and traffic management for repairs. Any overall overspend, is partly offset by the performance of the in-house construction team delivering work in-house more cost effectively rather than contracting the work externally.	
Highways Network	8.514	9.248	0.734	0.710		The renewal of the fleet contract through contract extension from October 2023 has realised an in-year overspend of £0.658m. The remaining variance of £0.170m is attributable to increases in costs on road fuel and streetlighting energy, plus increased insurance premiums, and defective highway network infrastructure repairs that are necessary.	Further year increases on the Fleet Contract are being considered within the MTFs and 2024/25 budget.
Regulatory Services	11.305	11.525	0.220	0.199		The overspend variance is due to sustained high volumes of residual black waste being collected, together with the reduction in income levels for both recyclable materials and a reducing return on electricity generation from gas and solar at the former landfill sites.	
Other Minor Variances	11.118	11.100	-0.018	-0.025			
Total Streetscene & Transportation	40.745	41.901	1.155	1.181	-0.077		
Planning, Environment & Economy							
Development	0.024	-0.305	-0.328	-0.308		Receipt of a one-off high value Planning Fee (£0.300m for Northern Gateway)	
Access	1.544	1.706	0.162	0.142		Variance relates to estimated costs for Ash Die Back Tree works to March, 2024	
Climate Change	0.165	0.102	-0.062	-0.062		Staff savings from vacant posts	
Regeneration	0.846	0.796	-0.050	-0.050		Staff savings from vacant posts and Wales Rally GB Budget not required	
Management & Strategy	1.354	1.148	-0.206	-0.220		Staff savings from vacant posts	
Minor Variances	3.125	3.197	0.072	0.063			
Total Planning & Environment	7.057	6.645	-0.412	-0.435	0.000		
People & Resources							
HR & OD	2.257	2.199	-0.058	-0.048		Staff savings from vacant posts	
Corporate Finance	2.082	2.068	-0.014	-0.019			
Total People & Resources	4.339	4.267	-0.072	-0.067	0.000		
Governance							
Legal Services	0.942	1.143	0.201	0.200		Additional costs for locum services covering vacant posts	

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Democratic Services	2.411	2.480	0.069	0.069		Backdated Superannuation costs and current level of Members Allowances	
ICT	5.168	5.235	0.067	0.064		In year pressure following the delay in Agile Apps Project requiring additional funding	
Customer Services	1.040	0.897	-0.143	-0.128		Staff savings from vacant posts and higher than anticipated fee income levels	
Revenues	0.566	0.374	-0.192	-0.194		Projected surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund	
Minor Variances	1.333	1.321	-0.012	-0.010			
Total Governance	11.460	11.450	-0.011	0.003	0.000		
Assets							
CPM & Design Services	0.674	0.581	-0.093	-0.093		Due to increased fee income	
Minor Variances	-0.674	-0.581	-0.114	-0.034			
Total Assets	11.045	10.838	-0.208	-0.128	0.000		
Housing and Community							
Housing Solutions	2.232	4.980	2.748	2.763		The Housing Solutions service is currently reflecting a net projected overspend of £2.748m. This is mainly due to a projected overspend of £3.547m on temporary accommodation within Hotels and B and B provision, which is being offset by additional Housing Benefit income of (£0.470m). There are also other projected underspends and mitigation impacts within the wider Housing Solutions service amounting to a net figure of £0.329m, including use of reserves, minor salary savings due to vacancies and use of WG grant income. The service are actively exploring a number of mitigation measures, some of which may have operational impacts on other parts of the wider Housing service, which when approved will be incorporated within an action plan to reduce the current level of projected overspend within the Homelessness service.	
Minor Variances	13.466	13.488	0.022	0.018			
Total Housing and Community	15.698	18.468	2.770	2.782	0.000		
Chief Executive's							
	1.608	1.617	0.008	-0.001	0.000		
Central & Corporate Finance							
	32.096	30.545	-1.551	-1.198	0.000	The projection on the Central Loans and Investment Account (CLIA) at Month 4 was an underspend of (£1m) which was further increased by £0.250m at Month 5 and by a further £0.300m again at Month 6 where the Council has not taken out any new short or long term borrowing and continues to invest a significant amount of funds. This pattern has continued from the previous financial year resulting in no short term borrowing costs being incurred and the Council generating increased income from investments, which have increased in line with bank interest rates. The favourable variance has increased further following the benefit of a £0.048m NDR windfall.	
Grand Total	352.121	355.680	3.559	3.660	-0.077		