

Budget Monitoring Report

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	23.247	23.310	0.063	-0.075	-0.111	The Older People residential care budget is projecting and underspend of £0.063m, due to service demand net of client income from property recharges and expected reimbursements where we are waiting on decisions for deputyships and assets held in trust. Homecare is £0.224m overspent. Locality workforce and professional support budgets are underspent by £0.076m and day care is underspending by £0.022m.	
Minor Variances	11.633	11.549	-0.084	0.056	0.000		
Adults of Working Age					0.000		
Children to Adult Transition Services	1.001	0.799	-0.202	-0.168	0.000	This is the cost of care packages for young adults transferring from Childrens Services to Adult Social Care. Care packages are new this financial year and very often need to be estimated in the first instance, meaning costs can change throughout the year as service costs are finalised.	
Professional and Administrative Support	0.468	0.382	-0.086	-0.055	0.000	In-year vacancies are the cause of this underspend.	
Transition & Disability Services Team	0.818	0.764	-0.054	-0.034	0.000	There are vacancies within this service and recruitment is being delayed resulting in increased underspend.	
Residential Placements	2.607	2.921	0.314	0.335	0.000	This is the overall cost of care packages for people with mental ill health. This is a volatile service and additional service needs can be identified throughout the year leading to increased costs.	
Professional Support	0.859	0.801	-0.058	-0.049	-0.100	The underspend is due to in-year vacancies,	
Minor Variances	35.769	35.679	-0.090	-0.124	0.000		
Children's Services					0.000		
Family Group Meetings	0.126	0.198	0.072	0.061	-0.005	Demand for this service is resulting in increased sessional worker hours.	
Family Placement	3.175	2.953	-0.222	-0.203	0.000	The number of in-house foster carers is lower than those which we have historically had.	
Integrated Working	0.210	0.272	0.062	0.057	0.000	Pressures are due to contributions toward the Integrated Family Support Service and a shortfall in Supported People Funding	
Family Support	0.416	0.465	0.050	0.045	-0.020	Demand is high for this service which has resulted in additional sessional staff hours	
Legal & Third Party	0.262	0.597	0.336	0.280	0.000	Legal costs are overspent by £0.194m due to the number of cases going through the courts and some use of external legal professionals. Client support and Section 17 costs are overspent by £0.136m. Direct Payments are overspending by £0.006m due to demand.	
Residential Placements	1.669	1.326	-0.343	-0.348	0.000	Welsh Government grant The in-house residential care provision is in receipt of a significant Welsh Government Grant which is offsetting in-year costs	

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Professional Support	6.128	7.086	0.958	0.909	0.000	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 where possible and additional temporary posts are sometimes required to be able to meet the challenges and demands of Childrens Services. Two managed agency teams are currently being contracted to support the service reserves are being used to mitigate these costs as much as possible but there is a projected overspend of £0.610m as a result, these costs may increase if a requirement to extend these contracts further. The Leaving Care budget, which supports young people who are looked after children, is overspending £0.170m due to increasing numbers of care leavers which includes unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The costs for some external service contracts are £0.084m overspent due to inflationary pressures. Cost of Direct Payments to provide support to children with disabilities is £0.105m overspent due to service demand. Smaller variance across this service are £0.011m underspent.	
Minor Variances	0.361	0.373	0.013	0.013	0.000		
Safeguarding & Commissioning					0.000		
Business Systems & Financial Assessments	0.988	1.078	0.089	0.089	-0.032	A new social services IT system is being implemented which requires additional project management and development costs.	
Charging Policy income	-3.385	-3.535	-0.150	-0.157	0.000	This is the income from service users who are charged a contribution towards the care they receive.	
Minor Variances	2.883	2.885	0.002	0.046	0.000		
Total Social Services	89.235	89.905	0.670	0.678	-0.268		
Out of County Placements							
Children's Services	12.281	13.619	1.338	1.107	0.000	The service is facing continued high demand for placements together with supply market challenges and inflationary pressures with 37 new placements made in the year to date and reduced contingency provision of £0.100m now as we approach the final quarter of the year.	
Education & Youth	5.004	5.192	0.188	0.230	0.000	The service is facing continued high demand for placements together with supply market challenges and inflationary pressures with 24 new placements made in the year to date and reduced contingency provision of £0.100m now as we approach the final quarter of the year.	
Total Out of County Placements	17.285	18.811	1.526	1.337	0.000		
Education & Youth (Non-Schools)							
Inclusion & Progression	5.569	5.428	-0.142	-0.032	-0.110	Further in year savings have been identified within the ALN service and EAL/Travellers service. Previously committed expenditure of £50k to offset Primary School ALN Band C overspend has now been funded with the Local Authority Education Grant ALN Learner Recovery funding. A further £60k has been identified within the EAL/Traveller service from the 2022-23 £95k budget carry forward balance committed for Trauma Training. One course has been run to date at a cost of £35k. The service have decided not to run anymore courses in 2023-24, therefore releasing the balance of £60k as a saving.	
Integrated Youth Provision	0.959	0.853	-0.106	-0.085	-0.030	Savings from staff vacancies	

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School Improvement Systems	1.836	1.674	-0.163	-0.118	0.000	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. The School Improvement Service have reported an underspend relating to the Digital Advisor post. This role was not appointed to until September, 2023, therefore creating a saving. Other underspends relate to income from several grants around ACL to offset manager time. A further £0.034m has been identified within School Improvement from additional grants. £0.027m from the Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply project, £0.003m from the Citizens Curriculum grant and £0.004m for the secondment work to Estyn.	
Minor Variances	1.925	1.968	0.043	0.049	0.000		
Total Education & Youth (Non-Schools)	10.289	9.923	-0.367	-0.186	-0.140		
Schools	114.081	114.313	0.232	0.232	0.000	Redundancy costs £0.290m over budget after taking account of reserves carried forward, Free School Meals price increase and take up totalling £0.126m, mitigated by (£0.100m) underspend in pension added years and a number of minor variances totalling (£0.084m) but each below (£0.025m).	
Streetscene & Transportation							
Service Delivery	10.843	11.079	0.236	0.231	-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 MTFs 2023/24, 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 performance of the in-house construction team delivering work such as 20mph scheme rather than contracting the work externally.	
Highways Network	8.594	9.860	1.266	1.239	0.000	The renewal of the fleet contract through contract extension from October 2023 has realised an in-year overspend of £0.658m. A variance of £0.170m is attributable to cost increases for both road fuel and streetlighting energy, increased insurance premiums, and defective highway network infrastructure repairs. Additional costs of £1m are projected in relation to the clean up and reinstatement works required following Storm Babet and more recently Storm Ciaran. It is anticipated that some Emergency Financial Assistance Funding (EFAS) from WG can be claimed alongside utilisation of the Severe Weather Reserve, bringing the net cost down to a projected £0.500m.	Further increases on the Fleet Contract in 2024/25 are being considered within the MTFs.
Transportation	11.350	11.163	-0.187	-0.098	-0.169	Vacancies within Transport Strategy and moratorium on recruitment are contributing to the overall underspend.	

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Regulatory Services	11.440	11.592	0.152	0.225	-0.072	The overspend variance is due to sustained high volumes of residual 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. Positive impacts from the moratorium on spend at Month 8.	
Other Minor Variances	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000	0.000	0.000		
Total Streetscene & Transportation	42.227	43.694	1.467	1.597	-0.318		
Planning, Environment & Economy							
Development	0.138	-0.198	-0.336	-0.314	-0.021	Receipt of a one-off high value Planning Fee (£0.300m for Northern Gateway)	
Access	1.618	1.683	0.065	0.122	-0.047	Projected cost of Ash Die Back works projected to March, 2024 mitigated by savings from vacant posts and Countryside grant maximisation	
Climate Change	0.183	0.113	-0.070	-0.062	-0.007	Staff savings from vacant posts	
Regeneration	0.813	0.704	-0.109	-0.109	-0.020	Staff savings from vacant posts, Wales Rally GB budget saving, maximisation of grant income	
Management & Strategy	1.409	1.203	-0.206	-0.203	-0.004	Staff savings from vacant posts	
Minor Variances	3.396	3.374	-0.022	0.043	-0.082		
Total Planning & Environment	7.557	6.880	-0.678	-0.524	-0.181		
People & Resources							
HR & OD	2.419	2.315	-0.104	-0.087	-0.046	Staff savings from vacant posts	
Corporate Finance	2.277	2.186	-0.092	-0.067	-0.087	Staff savings from vacant posts, revised projection for Feasibility Studies	
Total People & Resources	4.697	4.501	-0.195	-0.154	-0.133		
Governance							
Legal Services	0.992	1.197	0.205	0.206	0.000	Additional costs for locum services covering vacant posts	
Democratic Services	2.468	2.517	0.049	0.069	0.000	Backdated Superannuation costs and current level of Members Allowances	
Internal Audit	1.051	1.020	-0.031	-0.000	0.000	Reduced Postage costs projected	
ICT	5.328	5.255	-0.074	-0.051	-0.138	Estimated cost for packaged software application (Flare) lower than previously anticipated (£0.076m), delayed project savings £0.030m Moratorium, minor variances across the Service	
Customer Services	1.146	0.936	-0.210	-0.167	-0.060	Staff savings from previous vacancies, higher than previously anticipated fee income Registrars, commitment challenge across the Service contributing to the Moratorium	
Revenues	0.637	0.495	-0.142	-0.173	0.000	Projected surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund £0.150m reduced at Month 7 due to potential exemptions following the recent storms	
Minor Variances	0.320	0.298	-0.022	-0.022	-0.005		
Total Governance	11.943	11.718	-0.225	-0.139	-0.203		
Assets							
CPM & Design Services	0.713	0.522	-0.191	-0.093	0.000	Due to increased fee income	
Minor Variances	10.428	10.295	-0.133	-0.116	-0.020		
Total Assets	11.141	10.817	-0.324	-0.210	-0.020		

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Housing and Community							
Housing Solutions	2.334	5.054	2.719	2.649	0.000	The Housing Solutions service is currently reflecting a net projected overspend of £2.719m. This is mainly due to a projected overspend of £3.632m on temporary accommodation within Hotels and B and B provision, which is being offset by additional Housing Benefit income of (£0.447m). There are also other projected underspends and mitigation impacts within the wider Housing Solutions service amounting to a net figure of £0.466m, including additional internal allocation of HSG to fund salary costs, use of reserves, minor salary savings due to vacancies and use of WG grant income. The service are actively implementing a number of mitigation measures, some of which may have operational impacts on other parts of the wider Housing service, which will be incorporated within an action plan to reduce the current level of projected overspend within the Homelessness service.	
Minor Variances	13.656	13.660	0.005	0.024	-0.030		
Total Housing and Community	15.990	18.714	2.724	2.673	-0.030		
Chief Executive's	1.672	1.667	-0.005	0.009	0.000		
Central & Corporate Finance	26.003	24.120	-1.882	-1.644		The projection on the Central Loans and Investment Account (CLIA) was reported as an underspend of (£1.550m) due to the Council having 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 increased further following the benefit of a £0.048m NDR windfall at Month 6. The variance has improved further following a review of the CLIA forecast underspend, with an improvement of £0.100m in October. At Month 8 following an update on the CLIA forecast, with continuing increased income from investments/reduced borrowing, there has been a further favourable movement of £0.250m.	
Grand Total	352.121	355.063	2.942	3.671	-1.293		