

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 10 - 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	18.803	17.644	-1.159	-1.078	Residential and Nursing Care is projecting a £0.626m underspend due to fluctuation in demand for residential and nursing care placements and increases to capital limits. Staff budgets are underspending within Intake/First Contact and Localities Teams, not all staff are top of grade and there are in-year savings due to short term vacancies. One off funding for Winter Pressures Grant from Welsh Government (WG) totalling £0.320m.	
Resources & Regulated Services	7.155	7.531	0.376	0.393	Council provided residential care is expected to be £0.388m overspent mostly due to relief and agency cover. Relief and agency staff are required 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 to cover sickness absences. There are also pressures from buildings expenditure such as repairs and maintenance. Council provided homecare is projected to be £0.138m overspent due to demand. Extra care is reporting an underspend of £0.143m as the extra care facility in Holywell opened part way through the year so full year costs have not been incurred.	
Minor Variances	1.224	27.559	26.334	-0.028		
Adults of Working Age						
Resources & Regulated Services	24.170	23.976	-0.194	-0.247	The outturn represents the current cost of care packages until the end of the financial year.	The service is subject to changes in demand for services. There are always a number of potential service users which may require services in the future. Although these service users are known to us at present, 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.
Disability Services	0.648	0.564	-0.084	-0.085	The outturn represents the current cost of care packages and contributions from Welsh Government.	
Residential Placements	1.241	1.929	0.688	0.660	The overspend is due to the number of residential placements based on service demand.	This service is demand led and can experience volatility in terms of new service users entering the service.
Professional Support	0.821	0.761	-0.060	-0.044	There exists a number of in-year vacancies and not all staff are top of scale.	
Minor Variances	3.010	2.872	-0.138	-0.121		

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Children's Services						
Family Placement	2.564	2.870	0.306	0.313	The overspend is due to current demands on the service from the number of fostering placements, which in some instances avoid making an Out of County placement which would be more expensive. The main pressure areas are payments for foster carers, foster agencies and special guardianship payments.	
Family Support	0.371	0.513	0.143	0.146	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 increased to a level whereby, under employment regulations, sessional workers are required to be issued fixed term contracts.	
Legal & Third Party	0.178	0.456	0.278	0.301	Legal costs are overspent due to the number of cases going through the courts and the use of external legal professionals. Direct payments have also increased in demand.	
Professional Support	5.237	5.373	0.137	0.126	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 agency costs as agency rates are 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	1.132	1.140	0.008	0.024		
Safeguarding & Commissioning						
Business Support Service	1.202	1.129	-0.073	-0.072	The underspend is due to a number of short term vacancy savings and some posts are occupied by staff who are not paid at top of grade.	
Commissioning	0.624	0.563	-0.061	-0.059	One off external funding has been used to fund posts on a temporary basis.	
Management & Support	-1.929	-1.720	0.209	0.209	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	-0.007	-0.231	-0.224	-0.224	Short term vacancy savings transferred from across the portfolio.	
Minor Variances	-0.501	-0.625	-0.123	-0.093		
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	65.944	65.940	-0.004	0.120		
Out of County						

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Children's Services	5.288	6.803	1.515	1.522	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	4.286	0.541	0.533	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	11.089	2.056	2.055		
Education & Youth						
Inclusion & Progression	4.094	3.995	-0.099	-0.082	Savings identified as part of in year spend review - Education Welfare Service due to delay in recruitment and PRU Management saving on training and capitation.	
Integrated Youth Provision	1.290	1.194	-0.097	-0.111	Underspends across the whole of the service identified through the challenge of non-essential spend	
School Improvement Systems	1.702	1.596	-0.106	-0.112	In year savings identified through the challenge of non-essential spend across School Improvement and Early Entitlement. A significant majority of the underspend relates solely to Early Entitlement due to demography and a reduction in the number of settings requiring funding.	
Minor Variances	1.447	1.403	-0.044	-0.027		
Total Education & Youth	8.533	8.188	-0.345	-0.331		
Schools	91.942	91.942	0.000	0.000		
Streetscene & Transportation						

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Service Delivery	8.558	8.874	0.316	0.289	The service has incurred additional revenue pressures from responding to and resolving flooding issues across the County. The impact of this has been previously reported in detail. The costs include the additional staffing costs towards responding to, and repairing the highway along with costs of plant and materials. 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. Previously reported pressures due to vandalism at Household Recycling Centres continues to be of concern and costs are now over £0.050m. The current cost incurred is running at around £0.005m each month and is ongoing. Managers are actively working to support the staff operating the sites and taking action to ensure the safety of the sites and the additional security has been provided at a cost of £0.007m per month. The levels of sickness absence experienced across the portfolio have not abated through January and has resulted in overall increased staffing costs of £0.095m.	
Highways Network	8.473	8.485	0.011	-0.022	Minor movements across the service.	
Transportation	8.598	9.574	0.976	0.979	The pressure in school transport costs are as a result of several factors across the service which have been previously reported in detail. Unfortunately, the commencement of new solo routes during December and January have resulted in an increase in costs offsetting the benefit of retendering routes. Increased transport provision to Social Services of £0.048m.	The Transportation service are looking to mitigate this pressure through a route optimisation exercise.
Regulatory Services	4.838	4.962	0.124	0.160	Car Parking Income continues to cause a pressure as income is not achieving budgeted levels by £0.200m. The waste strategy service is currently subject to review in respect of the seamless operation of disposals to Parc Adfer. Additional costs have been incurred in relation to the movement to full operation of the site. A tariff change by a third party purchaser in respect of recycling income has resulted in an additional pressure of £0.043m which was only notified at very short notice in December. Reduced staffing costs in the Business and Strategy team have assisted in moving the position positively at Month 10.	
Total Streetscene & Transportation	30.467	31.894	1.427	1.406		
Planning, Environment & Economy						
Business	1.582	1.638	0.056	0.048	Increasing service demands and expectations in relation to unlicensed and unsafe residential properties. Minor variances across the service.	

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Development	0.030	0.010	-0.020	-0.065	Lower than expected levels of Planning Fee Income received in the during the month of January resulting in a reduced projected outturn, albeit it still remains in an over recovery position. The projection is dependant on the number and value of the applications received, resulting in a changeable outturn to ensure an accurate reflection.	
Access	1.337	1.407	0.071	0.063	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 Minor Variances £0.016m	
Management & Strategy	1.421	2.711	1.291	-0.072	Vacant posts across the service: Land Drainage and Planning Policy	
Minor Variances	1.528	0.175	-1.353	0.022		
Total Planning & Environment	5.897	5.941	0.044	-0.004		
People & Resources						
HR & OD	2.367	2.389	0.022	0.032	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.	
Corporate Finance	2.073	2.081	0.009	0.014		
Total People & Resources	4.439	4.470	0.031	0.046		
Governance						
Legal Services	0.723	0.890	0.166	0.172	Overspend as a result of employing locums to March, 2020 covering absence to ensure continuing client service delivery in the area of child protection £0.146m; together with 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 £0.091m. Total overspend is mitigated by higher than expected fee income and commitment challenge across the service £0.065m	
Internal Audit	0.834	0.787	-0.047	-0.049	Vacancy Savings	
Customer Services	0.726	0.672	-0.054	-0.039	Higher levels than anticipated for Citizenship Registration fees over recovery by £0.018m. Minor variances across the service £0.036m	

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Revenues	0.197	-0.103	-0.300	-0.317	An early indication of a potential surplus on the Council Tax Fund, Revenues is projecting a favourable variance as a direct result of the ongoing review of council tax single person discount entitlements and the removal of discounts where taxpayers are determined as not entitled to the 25% discount. The review is still ongoing and the efficiency savings projection is based on current information at the time of reporting.	
Minor Variances	6.722	6.749	0.026	-0.000		
Total Governance	9.203	8.995	-0.208	-0.234		
Strategic Programmes						
Minor Variances	5.272	5.272	0.000	-0.000		
Total Strategic Programmes	5.272	5.272	0.000	-0.000		
Housing & Assets						
Property Asset And Development	0.443	0.378	-0.066	-0.042	Savings on salaries which are partly offset by provision for professional services	
Caretaking & Security	0.263	0.212	-0.051	-0.050	Savings identified arising from the review and challenge of non-essential spend, of which £0.034m relates to staff cost savings 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, with the remaining £0.001m relating to other minor savings.	Continue to review and challenge all non essential spend in future months.
CPM & Design Services	0.673	0.594	-0.079	-0.079	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.
Centralised Costs	2.668	2.598	-0.070	0.000	One-off benefit of part occupation relief for NDR at County Hall, Mold following full vacation of Phases 3 and 4	
Benefits	11.566	11.242	-0.324	-0.328	Projected underspend on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) of -£0.480m, which is partly offset by other service pressures including Postages (+£0.050m) and Discretionary Housing Payments (+£0.058m) and other minor variances amounting to a net +£0.048m.	
Housing Solutions	1.044	0.965	-0.079	-0.188	Management savings due to ongoing vacancies and savings on Bed and Breakfast accommodation charges due to the success and effectiveness of use of temporary accommodation.	Continue to monitor and review
Minor Variances	-1.485	-1.437	0.049	0.072		
Total Housing & Assets	15.171	14.551	-0.620	-0.615		
Chief Executive's	2.760	2.634	-0.126	-0.129	Vacant Posts across the service	

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Central & Corporate Finance	22.688	22.060	-0.628	-0.648	Over recovery of planned pension contributions recouped against actuarial projections due to pay award increase, mitigated by the under achievement of Income efficiencies and Workforce efficiencies.	
Grand Total	271.350	272.975	1.625	1.666		