

Budget Monitoring Report
Council Fund Variances

MONTH 11 - SUMMARY

Service	Approved Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	Annual Variance (£m)	Impact of Covid-19 (£m)	Last Month Variance (£m)	Cause of Major Variances greater than £0.050m	Action Required
Social Services							
Older People							
Localities	19.096	18.491	-0.605		-0.549	The net cost of residential care is £0.507m underspent. This includes the cost of residential care placements net of income received such as property charges and contributions from health. There is a decline in the demand for residential care placements due to Covid 19. Day care is £0.058m under budget, this service is currently closed and will be reopened only when it is safe to do so. Domiciliary and Direct Payments are reporting a combined overspend of £0.202m and are projected based on recent levels of care provision. The Localities Team staff budget is underspending by £0.173m due to a number of staff not yet on top of scale, some temporary reduced hours and in-year savings on travel costs. The minor adaptations budget is £0.057m underspent based on expected activity and there is a small underspend on service level agreements paid to the third sector.	
Resources & Regulated Services	8.027	7.548	-0.478		-0.385	The Councils in-house care provision is reporting an underspend of £0.478m. Day care is reporting an overspend of £0.005m, day centres are currently closed and assumed to be so until it is safe to reopen. The day centre staff are deployed to residential care to assist in delivering care, however the staff costs are still recorded against the day-care budget. Homecare is underspent by £0.037m. Staff costs are incurred as a result of the amount of homecare delivered and projected forward based on estimated activity. Residential care is underspent by £0.003m due to a number of small variances. Extracare is underspending by £0.472m. The opening of Plas Yr Ywern in Holywell was delayed and a full complement of staff had not been recruited, however the care staff employed were redeployed to alternate in-house care services which has meant additional costs due to Covid 19 were avoided.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.000		
Minor Variances	1.224	1.241	0.017		-0.033		
Adults of Working Age							
Resources & Regulated Services	25.464	25.379	-0.085		-0.058	The outturn represents the current cost of care packages projected to the end of the financial year.	
Disability Services	0.657	0.738	0.082		0.092	The overspend is due to the costs of care packages net of contributions from Welsh Government and health.	
Administrative Support	0.328	0.256	-0.072		-0.075	Not all staff are currently paid at top of grade and there are also some staff seconded from this service. There have also been in-year savings on staff travel costs.	
Residential Placements	1.297	2.001	0.704		0.712	The overspend is the cost of social care for people within the Mental Health service. These costs include nursing and residential care, domiciliary care and Direct Payments. Care needs for individuals within this service vary over time, sometimes suddenly, and the corresponding costs are subject to the same changes.	
Minor Variances	3.463	3.236	-0.227		-0.232		

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Children's Services							
Flintshire Independent Co-Ordinator	0.112	0.031	-0.082		-0.041	Eligibility criteria for the Flying Start grant has been adjusted to allow for some costs, normally funded from the Councils budget, to be funded by the grant. The underspend is due to these costs transferring to the grant.	
Family Placement	2.621	2.759	0.138		0.149	The overspend is a result of the current demands on the service from the number of fostering placements, which in some instance 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.	
Legal & Third Party	0.225	0.518	0.293		0.313	Legal costs are overspent due to the number of cases going through the courts and the use of some external legal professionals. Direct Payments have also increased in demand.	
Professional Support	5.346	5.421	0.075		0.199	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 therefore minimised and additional temporary posts are sometimes required.	
Minor Variances	1.370	1.363	-0.007		0.012		
Safeguarding & Commissioning							
Charging Policy income	-3.060	-2.546	0.513		0.503	A misinterpretation of complex financial assessment rules has been detected. This has resulted in a number of service users being overcharged over a number of years. The overspend is due to cost to reimburse service users of any overcharges. This is being partially offset by by recoupment of Direct Payments.	
Business Support Service	1.224	1.151	-0.073		-0.066	This variance is on salaries and due to some staff not yet paid top of scale and some staff opting out of the pension scheme.	

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Management & Support	-2.057	-2.114	-0.058		-0.136	The underspend is due to not having to contribute towards the Regional Collaboration unit in 2020/21. Some additional training costs are requested to be carried forward for Social Worker qualification costs. This is offsetting some of the saving.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	-0.400	-0.400	-0.400	-0.380	This underspend is due to hardship funding received from Welsh Government to support the Councils in-house care provision. Most additional costs incurred due to Covid are staff costs which are reported within their respective service areas.	
Minor Variances	3.128	3.090	-0.038		-0.019		
Total Social Services (excl Out of County)	68.463	68.167	-0.296	-0.394	0.005		
Out of County							
Children's Services	7.437	8.296	0.860		0.778	The pressure reflects the current cohort of placements with significant numbers of new placements in recent months together with a number of placement changes at higher cost due to breakdowns of placements	Continue to robustly challenge placement proposals presented to the Out of County panel and explore opportunities for cost reductions across the whole of the current cohort.
Education & Youth	4.504	4.440	-0.064		-0.151	The projected underspend reflects the current cohort of Education placements with demand for new placements still being maintained	Continue to robustly challenge placement proposals presented to the Out of County panel and explore opportunities for cost reductions across the whole of the current cohort.
Total Out of County	11.940	12.737	0.796	0.000	0.627		
Education & Youth							
Integrated Youth Provision	1.353	1.120	-0.234	-0.122	-0.234	Includes a projected underspend of -£0.122m on Youth Centres due to closures arising from COVID-19 safety measures producing savings on building cleaning and some relief staffing costs. Also includes a total saving of -£0.104m on the Youth Justice Service mainly due to a delay in recruitment to a new post and savings on equipment purchase and training.	
School Improvement Systems	1.709	1.370	-0.339		-0.254	Savings arising from the challenge of non-essential spend. Early Entitlement savings due to demography and reduced number of settings requiring funding. Covid has caused a significant reduction of non-maintained settings requiring funding. WG recently announced top-up funding to support payments to Non-maintained settings	

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School Planning & Provision	0.676	0.620	-0.056		-0.053	Mainly a saving against the provision for third party/public liability insurance claims	
Minor Variances	5.051	5.042	-0.010		-0.083		
Total Education & Youth	8.790	8.152	-0.638	-0.122	-0.624		

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Schools	98.709	98.709	-0.000		-0.000		
Streetscene & Transportation							
Service Delivery	8.839	9.261	0.422		0.334	The service has incurred additional revenue pressure of £0.068m security costs following vandalism at the Household Recycling Centres. There has been additional overspend of £0.057m in JCB purchases that were not covered by capital grant and additional £0.180m of hire and repairs in Waste Operations. Streetlighting is also incurring a £0.080m pressure on Community Income Budget which has been highlighted since earlier in the financial year.	
Highways Network	7.764	8.137	0.373		0.005	Highways network incurred this variance as a result of a carry forward request being required in relation to a match funding contribution on electric recycling vehicles following grant funding being confirmed by WG on 15th March 2021. The Council has ordered the vehicles and they are due to be delivered in September 2021 and this contribution will meet the terms and conditions of the grant funding.	
Transportation	9.366	8.679	-0.687		-0.499	School Transport operators have been supported during school closures by receiving 75% of their contracted values. In addition, a number of school routes have been re-procured to reflect current arrangements for operation in the school year. This has resulted in a projected net underspend in School Transport of £0.499m. It should be noted however that the improvement from the 75% will only impact during COVID-19 circumstances. There are increased cost pressures for Social Services and Childrens Services transport totalling £0.080m. In addition transportation Strategy is £0.1m underspent due to delay in SCPs recruitment due to Covid 19. There are also risks around Post 16 transport and the College meeting the agreement to support this to the sum of £0.600m. However, if this additional income of £0.200m income is not realised in full, the position will be impacted accordingly.	
Regulatory Services	4.681	4.897	0.215		0.398	This service has experienced a downturn in the levels of income generated by sales of Electricity and this is currently anticipated to reach a level of some £0.140m during the year. The variance also reflects the projected loss of car park income of £0.200m following amendments to WG Income Loss Funding eligibility criteria. Training is currently showing £0.04m underspend due to delay in training facilities development. To support overall overspend we received higher Income in burial fees of £0.04m due to higher death rates.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.157	Following a full reconciliation and review of Streetscene expenditure and income loss relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic, all relevant details are consolidated in one code. This has been done to facilitate enhanced reporting and monitoring of the impact. All risks identified are now recorded in this forecast and at month 11 include £0.065m for residual waste tonnages.	

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Other Minor Variances	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000		
Total Streetscene & Transportation	30.650	31.039	0.389	0.065	0.395		
Planning, Environment & Economy							
Community	0.847	0.930	0.083		0.071	At month 11 revised projections on Licensing Income, lower than anticipated fee levels	
Development	0.023	-0.049	-0.072		0.165	Welsh Government Hardship Funding Fee Income Loss for Planning, Building Control, Land Charges agreed Q1 - 4	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.000		
Minor Variances	4.919	4.979	0.060		0.091	Cumulative minor variances across the portfolio	
Total Planning & Environment	5.789	5.860	0.071	0.044	0.326		
People & Resources							
HR & OD	2.398	2.293	-0.104		-0.117	Favourable variance due to the agreed recharge for overheads claimed for the TTP project for hosting the service on behalf of the region	
Corporate Finance	2.062	2.029	-0.033		-0.046		
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
Total People & Resources	4.459	4.322	-0.137	0.000	-0.163		

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Governance							
Legal Services	0.736	0.865	0.129		0.135	Overspend as a result of employing locums covering absence to ensure continuing client service delivery in the area of child protection £0.197m. Historical 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 vacant posts, expected fee income and commitment challenge across the service.	
Democratic Services	2.098	2.000	-0.098	0.010	-0.093	Favourable variance following reduced take up of Members Allowances £0.057m and savings from travelling expenses due to remote working £0.016m, non requirement to resource Electoral Canvassers £0.020m Commitment challenge and minor variances across the service.	
Internal Audit	0.826	0.772	-0.055		-0.058	Vacant post within Internal Audit (£0.049m); reduced expenditure on postage within Central Despatch	
ICT	4.445	4.385	-0.060	0.150	-0.063	Reduced expenditure on Records Management costs £0.020m together with minor variances across the Service	
Customer Services	0.731	0.677	-0.054		0.026	Favourable variance following receipt of Welsh Government Hardship Funding Income Loss claim Q1-4	
Revenues	0.037	-0.341	-0.377		-0.079	Favourable variance as a result of projected surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund £0.209m; Revenues £0.100m Welsh Government Lockdown Grant Admin Fee, Vacant Posts and minor variances across the service.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000		
Minor Variances	0.320	0.282	-0.038		-0.027		
Total Governance	9.193	8.640	-0.553	0.160	-0.159		
Strategic Programmes							
Strategic Programmes	4.943	4.567	-0.376		-0.296	The Climate Change Levy (formerly the Carbon Reduction Levy) was in prior years paid as a separate one off charge. However from 2019 the energy provider changed the way they issued costs for CCL and these charges are now included in service specific utility bills within the centralised budgets.	
Minor Variances	0.000	0.030	0.030		0.030		
Total Strategic Programmes	4.943	4.596	-0.346	0.000	-0.266		

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Housing & Assets							
Enterprise Centres	-0.217	-0.118	0.099		0.098	Pressure due to loss of income in respect of void units	
Caretaking & Security	0.262	0.196	-0.066		-0.066	Mainly staffing cost savings due to vacancies	
CPM & Design Services	0.681	0.751	0.070		-0.000	The pressure of £0.070m is due to a shortfall of fee income recovered by the Design Services team following impacts of a change to the way fees are charged for their work supporting the Council's capital programme. This has been partly mitigated by an allocation from a reserve earmarked for this purpose.	
Centralised Costs	3.353	2.342	-1.011		-0.943	£1.011m positive variance across all utilities. NDR reduced due to the savings from County Hall Phase 3&4 demolition. Electric and Gas also reduced due to a combination of a reduction in rates and reduced usage.	
Benefits	11.665	11.800	0.135	0.119	0.154	A pressure of up to £0.750m on the Council Tax reduction scheme due to additional take up arising from the COVID-19 pandemic impact on employment. This figure takes account of £0.147m of WG emergency funding support in respect of the April to September element of the overall pressure but the £0.750m is not included in the variance figures. Funding support has also now been confirmed for the remainder of 2020/21. Variance includes pressure of £0.077m on overpayments due to the suspension of recovery action caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which we are currently pursuing with WG with a view to inclusion of this within the final COVID-19 Hardship Fund claim for 2020/21 covering March when the year-end figure has been finalised. Staffing cost pressure are also in the main being funded by WG through the COVID-19 Hardship Fund.	
Housing Solutions	1.091	0.905	-0.186		-0.090	Savings on Bed and Breakfast accommodation due to managing demand through use of temporary accommodation	
Council Fund Housing	-0.324	-0.163	0.161		0.125	Reduction of internal Housing Support grant allocation due to eligibility issues and pressure arising from new service contract for Carelink with additional increase in pressure arising from charges from the outgoing contractor.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.011	0.011	0.011	-0.010		
Minor Variances	-1.039	-1.169	-0.130		0.015		
Total Housing & Assets	16.154	15.376	-0.777	0.130	-0.718		
Chief Executive's	2.750	2.432	-0.318		-0.322	Vacant Posts across the service; commitment challenge	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.000		
Central & Corporate Finance	24.147	24.044	-0.102		-0.024	Over recovery of planned pension contributions recoupment against actuarial projections based on the level of contributions received to date and forecast to the end of the financial year. Final outturn agreed for Support Services recharge.	
Impact of Covid-19	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.000		

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Grand Total	285.986	284.074	-1.912	-0.109	-0.924		