

CHILDREN'S WELLBEING APPENDIX C
BUDGET CONTROL MEETING UPDATE REPORT
OCTOBER

MEETING DATE:

27TH NOVEMBER 2013

Purpose

To provide the Chief Officer Finance with assurance on:

- the robustness of budget control and monitoring within Children's Services,
- to highlight key risks within the directorate
- to identify any mitigation which can be achieved to reduce the impact on the overall Council budget for 2013/14.

1. Key Messages

1. The latest projected outturn is a net underspend of £180k. An improvement of £219k since the September position, which is mostly attributable to reduced cost of hold on vacancies £250k, home to school transport of £129k and the receipt of a one-off grant within Additional Needs of £75k and reduction on court costs of £20k. This has been offset by Increase in agency staff of £116k, additional placement costs of £104k and other pressures of £35k.
2. The service continues to hold vacant posts where possible.
3. Detailed work has been carried out on school transport costs and this has led to a reduction of £67k on contract costs and a £62k increase in income. Pressures remain with the social work teams leading to increased agency costs of £116k. All interims are now forecast to remain in post until the end of March. There has been some success within the latest recruitment campaign and the affect in included within the forecast.
4. Agency fostering placements have been forecast to the end of March. The teams are currently working with circa four children to look at permanency within the next few months.

1.1. Current Status – Revenue Budget by Service

Service	Annual budget			October Forecast Outturn	Oct OT Variance	Sept FC Variance	Change to forecast
	Budget Expend	Budget (Income)	Net Budget				
	£000's	£000's	£000's				
Directorate Costs	2,310	(318)	1,992	1,931	61	42	19
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Service Management	127	0	127	145	(18)	(27)	9
Children's Safeguarding *	13,571	(283)	13,288	14,355	(1,067)	(921)	(146)
Locality Services	2,909	(395)	2,514	2,280	234	185	50
Safeguarding and Early Help	16,607	(678)	15,929	16,780	(851)	(763)	(88)
Service Management	507	0	507	451	56	17	39
Additional Needs	6,356	(4,004)	2,352	2,323	29	(39)	67
Education Improvement	1,413	(958)	455	292	163	152	11
Youth Services	563	(168)	395	310	85	90	(4)
Children's commissioning	1,811		1,811	1,770	41	39	2
Sufficiency and Capital	13,578	(8,531)	5,047	5,351	(304)	(478)	174
Education and Commissioning	24,228	(13,661)	10,567	10,497	70	(218)	288
Education Support Grant				(900)	900	900	0
Children's Wellbeing Directorate	43,145	(14,657)	28,488	28,308	180	(39)	219

The above figures do not include £100m of school budgets funded from Dedicated Schools Grant

*Education Support Grant - £1m for Safeguarding and £0.2m for Transport within Learning and Achievement.

2. Headlines by Service Area

2.1. Safeguarding and Early Help – overspend £851k

Key Points

Locality Services

1. Underspend of £233k Due to hold on vacant posts. within locality services due to new re-structure and not filling vacant posts for the remainder of the financial year.

Safeguarding

2. External placement pressure currently stands at a gross pressure of £336k, reduced to £111k after offsetting by grant funding. This is as a direct result of increased referrals and case numbers following the Ofsted inspection in September 2012.
3. There are now two ordered remand placements. The pressure is £221k reduced to £61k after offsetting grant funding.
4. Increased agency fostering placements which have all been assumed to be in place until 31st March give a pressure of £91k. Working is on-going to find permanency for these children.

5. The current agency staff forecast within looked after children and fieldwork is an overspend is £884k
6. Court costs currently predicting an, overspend of £315k, which is in part due to the requirement for specialist legal advice on two complex cases. During October there was a loss of two cases and the HoS in taking a robust approach to reduce costs where possible.
7. The current vacancy within the advanced practitioner service and delay in the newly qualified social workers starting have given a £68k underspend.

2.2. Education and Commissioning – underspend £70k

Key Points

8. School transport has pressures have been reduced to £329k after a review of the number of riders per term by contract and the impact of the number of riders paying the increased fee from September is now known. Projections are based on the riders expected during each term using previous years trends.
9. There is an, underspend within early years of £176k due to vacancies.
10. Youth Services currently shows a £84k underspend due to staff vacancies and closure of the service.
11. The one-off receipt of the non-pathfinders grant of £75k as a result of the Children and Families Bill within Additional Needs.
12. There are pressures within Complex Needs with an impact of £55k.
13. There is a remaining net underspend, within Education and Commissioning of £151k, arising from staff vacancies and contract spend. offset by shortfall in Service level Agreement income.

Budget Changes during October

Transfer from Corporate Redundancy Reserve	£86k
Net increase of	£86k