



Oversight and Governance

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EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – SUPPLEMENT PACK

Friday 9 December 2022

11.00 am

Warspite Room, Council House

Members:

Councillor Laing, Chair

Councillor Mrs Pengelly, Vice Chair

Councillors Allen, Mrs Beer, Briars-Delve, Cree, Cresswell, Deacon, Harrison, Loveridge,
Partridge, Poyser and Tofan.

Please find additional information relating to items 13 and 15.

Tracey Lee

Chief Executive

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 13. Financial Monitoring Report - Month 7: (Pages 1 - 12)**
- 15. School Uniform - Presented by Plymouth's Youth Parliament: (Pages 13 - 16)**

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	09 December 2022
Title of Report:	Finance Monitoring Report October 2022
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Shayer (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Economy)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey, (Interim Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Stephen Coker Interim Finance Business Partner (CEO & C&CS)
Contact Email:	David.northey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the revenue monitoring position of the Council forecast to the end of the financial year 2022/23 at Period 7.

Recommendations and Reasons

That the Education and Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes:

1. The forecast revenue monitoring position at Period 7 as set out in this report in the sum of £4.104m.

Reason: controlling the outturn within budget is essential to maintain financial control.

Alternative options considered and rejected

There are no alternative options – our Financial Regulations require us to produce regular monitoring of our finance resources.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The report is fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan. Allocating limited resources to key priorities will maximise the benefits to the residents of Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Robust and accurate financial monitoring underpins the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Council's MTFP is updated based on on-going monitoring information, both on a local and national context. Any adverse variations from the annual budget will place pressure on the MTFP going forward and require additional savings to be generated in future years.

Financial Risks:

Financial risks concerning period 7 reporting are discussed in the body of the report and relate to the attainment of a balanced budget position in financial year 2022/23.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No impacts directly arising from this report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

The reducing revenue and capital resources across the public sector has been identified as a key risk within our Strategic Risk register. The ability to deliver spending plans within budget is paramount to ensuring the Council can achieve its objectives

Appendices

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	2022/23 Savings status							
B	Non Controllable expenditure							
C	Gross to Net Pressures							

Background papers:

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 22.23. 308	Leg	EJ/38 851/1 .12.22	Mon Off	EJ/38 851/1 .12.22	HR		Assets		Strat roc	
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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance)

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 24/11/2022

Cabinet Member approval: Deputy Leader and Cabinet member of Finance, after discussion with Cabinet colleagues

Date approved: 30/11/2022

SECTION A: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table I: End of year revenue forecast

	Budget £m	Net Forecast Outturn £m	Variance £m
Total General Fund Budget	197.750	201.854	4.104

1. This report highlights a revised monitoring position at Month 7 (October 2022) of £4.104m over budget, which is a variance of +2.0% against the net budget. This is set out in Appendix C.
2. This represents an improvement of £1.887m on the previous position at Month 6 (September 2022) which reported a net forecast overspend of £5.991m.
3. The movement represents additional savings:
 - a. Additional fees and charges as a result of increases due to inflationary pressures £0.287m
 - b. In year adjustments including additional Council Tax and Business Rates £1.6m
4. The current position again includes c. £6m of non-controllable costs which could not have been foreseen at the time of Budget setting; of this £3.3m relates to energy price inflation. This covers:
 - The Life Centre additional costs of £0.575m.
 - Street Lighting costs have increased by £0.898m
 - The two crematoria have increased costs of £0.345m
 - Corporate estate & car parking £1.455m
5. Aside from energy, the ongoing impact of the pandemic remains evident in terms of demand pressures and other changes which have seen a persistent increase in volumes of domestic waste and reductions in parking revenues as employees generally maintain homeworking. In adult social care and following the dislocation of the pandemic the numbers of people presenting as homeless has become more costly. The Council is not able to influence such demand pressures in the short term.
6. The Council's Children, Young People and Families Directorate is currently facing additional gross costs of £4.4 million regarding specialist residential placements for vulnerable children and other demand pressures – part of a national trend.
7. The national agreement for pay in Local Government in 2022/23 has resulted in an additional £2.9m increase on top of the 2% provision set aside in the Budget. This is a national issue.
8. For the reasons described the variance is still higher than would normally be expected at this point of the financial year and in response management will continue with a financial recovery plan with the aim of eliminating the forecast overspend. The plan includes:

- Full review of payroll and pension costs, including the use of temporary agency staff
 - Continued management of vacant posts
 - Further review of the capital programme and the impact on in-year borrowing costs
 - Grant funding maximisation
 - Reduced running costs associated with an early exit from both Windsor and Midland House
 - Further review of all reserves and provisions and
 - Deferring all spend where appropriate
9. As shown in Appendix A, the planned in-year savings targets amount to £11.245m, of which £8.275m are reported as on track or scheduled for delivery. Officers will continue to pursue these savings to ensure full delivery by the end of the financial year.

SECTION B: Directorate Review**Table 2: End of year revenue forecast by Directorate**

Directorate	Budget £m	Forecast £m	Forecast Net Variance £m	Status
Executive Office	5.398	5.650	0.252	over
Customer and Corporate Services	45.664	47.290	1.626	over
Children's Directorate	61.092	63.309	2.217	over
People Directorate	94.486	94.588	0.102	over
Public Health	(0.297)	(0.559)	(0.262)	under
Place Directorate	25.670	27.722	2.052	over
Corporate Account & Council wide items	(34.263)	(36.146)	(1.883)	under
Total	197.750	201.854	4.104	over

Executive Office

10. The Executive Office is reporting a gross pressure of £0.383m which is no change on month 6. To date pressures include additional member allowances, plus savings target set for 2022/23 not on track due to service demand. Mitigations of £0.131m have been identified leading to a net variance of £0.252m.

Customer and Corporate Services Directorate (CCS)

11. The CCS Directorate is forecasting a small decrease in pressure due to increased fees and charges leading to a net overspend of £1.626m. The overspend is significantly driven by energy supply and unmet licence fee savings due to maintained levels of recruitment, other inflationary pressures and demand pressures on business support services and library income. To mitigate these pressures recruitment and all non-essential spend has been delayed or frozen.

Children's Directorate

12. For period 7 there has been no change to the reported gross pressure of £4.421m. The principal variations are; £1.806m relating to new exceptionally high cost bespoke and residential placement above previous growth assumptions, legal costs, specialist assessments, pressures within EP&S relating to SEND Short Breaks and School Transport. There is also a level of savings which appears undeliverable at this juncture.
13. In response to this the directorate has identified mitigations of £2.204m leading to a net variance of £2.217m.

People Directorate

14. The People Directorate forecast remains unchanged with an overspend of £0.102m.
15. The Department has challenging in year savings of £2.937m and whilst actions and plans are in progress a further stocktake as to progress will be made.

Office of the Director of Public Health (ODPH)

16. Services within the Public Health office are reporting an under spend of £0.262m which has contributed to the Period 7 net position.

Place Directorate

17. The directorate is continuing to report a significant gross overspend of £3.860m. This is due to the impact of rising utility costs; lost income and increased domestic waste disposal costs. The net pressure is down on Period 6 by £0.090m due to a increases to fees and charges from 1st December 2022. The overall pressure is due to a combination of factors including utility costs and expenditures due to the Pandemic.
18. There are £1.808m of savings in place to reduce this to a net variance of £2.052m.

Corporate Items & Council wide

19. The overall position shows a net underspend of £1.883m. Adjustments including Council Tax surplus and business rates pool totalling £1.6m have been made in month 7.

Appendix A 2022/23 Savings status (I) Summary

	Total	Achieved savings	On track for delivery	Working on for delivery	Planned, internal/external actions required to deliver
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children's	3.942	2.073	0.956	0.467	0.446
People	2.937	1.392	1.545	0.000	0.000
ODPH	0.037	0.037	0.000	0.000	0.000
Customer & Corporate	3.015	0.407	0.000	0.494	2.114
Place	0.964	0.175	0.308	0.071	0.410
Corporate Items	0.350	0.000	0.350	0.000	0.000
2022/23 Savings	11.245	4.047	3.196	1.097	2.970

Appendix A 2022/23 Savings status (2) Detail

Directorate / Plans	Target Savings	MTFS Savings	Achieved savings	Plans on track for delivery	Plans worked on for delivery	Planned, internal/external actions required to deliver
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children's						
Placement Review	1.400	1.400	0.510	0.423	0.467	
AST	0.500	0.500	0.407	0.093		
Fostering	0.450	0.450	0.450	0.000	0.000	
Supporting Families	0.650	0.650	0.435	0.215		
Management Actions - CYPF	0.225	0.225		0.225		
Management Actions - EPS	0.717	0.717	0.271			0.446
Children - Savings	3.942	3.942	2.073	0.956	0.467	0.446
People						
Care Package Reviews	0.750	0.750		0.750		
Place Holder 1- reviews	0.430	0.430		0.430		
CES catalogue review	0.100	0.100	0.100			
Service Reviews	0.300	0.300		0.300		
Grant Maximisation	0.600	0.600	0.600			
Management Actions	0.100	0.100	0.100			
Advice / Information / Advocacy	0.050	0.050	0.050			
Social Inclusion	0.180	0.180	0.180			
Housing Services	0.250	0.250	0.250			
Alarms	0.112	0.112	0.112			
Leisure Management	0.065	0.065		0.065		
People – savings	2.937	2.937	1.392	1.545	0.000	0.000
ODPH						
Additional Income	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.000	0.000	
ODPH – savings	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.000	0.000	0.000

CCS and Chief Exec						
Efficiency	0.956	0.758				0.956
Soft FM Income	0.020	0.020	0.020			
Digital	0.025	0.025	0.025			
SLAs	0.040	0.040			0.040	
Fees and charges Review	0.016	0.016	0.016			
Coroner	0.070	0.030			0.070	
Public Conveniences	0.100	0.100			0.100	
ICT (c/fwd 21/22)	0.691	0.000	0.346		0.184	0.161
Hard FM (c/fwd 21/22)	0.550	0.000				0.550
IT Service (Unitary) Charge reduction	0.300	0.000				0.300
CEX	0.100	0.100			0.100	
CEX Review and Scrutiny Panels	0.147	0.147				0.147
Cust. & Corp. Services and CEX savings	3.015	1.236	0.407	0.000	0.494	2.114
Place						
ED - Trust Lease review	0.075	0.075	0.075			
ED - TIC 3 year plan to break even	0.013	0.013			0.013	
ED - Theatre Royal SLA	0.100	0.100	0.100			
ED – Mt Edgcumbe break even position	0.045	0.045		0.045		
SPI - Capitalisation (Environmental Planning)	0.050	0.050		0.050		
SPI - Capitalisation (Strategic Transport)	0.030	0.030		0.030		
SPI – Planning Fee increase (pre-app, S38)	0.058	0.058			0.058	
SPI – Bus Shelter Advertising	0.075	0.075				0.075
SPI - Concessionary fares	0.183	0.183		0.183		
Highways – Invest To Save	0.230	0.230				0.230
Highways – Street Lighting	0.105	0.105				0.105
Place savings	0.964	0.964	0.175	0.308	0.071	0.410
Corporate Items						
Change Reserve	0.350	0.350	0.350			
Corporate savings	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.000	0.000	0.000
Overall Total savings	11.245	9.466	2.655	3.043	2.577	2.970

Appendix B Non Controllable Expenditure

The table shows the level of non-controllable pressures within the Gross overspend as shown in Appendix D.

Non Controllable Budget Pressures	£m
Corporate Estate energy costs	2.243
2022/23 Pay award	2.592
Street Lighting energy costs	0.898
Off Street Parking energy costs	0.132
Streets Services – Fuel / other	0.641
Total	6.496

Appendix C Gross to Net Pressures Month 7

Directorate	Gross Pressures Month 7 £m	Month 6 Savings £m	Month 7 Savings £m	Net Pressures £m
Executive Office	0.383	(0.131)	0.000	0.252
Customer and Corporate Services	2.754	(1.093)	(0.035)	1.626
Children's Directorate	4.421	(2.204)	0.000	2.217
People Directorate	1.382	(1.280)	0.000	0.102
Public Health	0.150	(0.250)	(0.162)	(0.262)
Place Directorate	3.860	(1.718)	(0.090)	2.052
Corporate Account & Council wide items	2.582	(2.865)	(1.600)	(1.883)
Total	15.532	(9.541)	(1.887)	4.104

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PLYMOUTH YOUTH CABINET

Views on Schools Uniform Policies, December 2022



The following information has been provided by Scarlet who was elected to Youth Parliament by her peers across Plymouth on the follow election campaign.

Uniforms in Schools- Dress Code

- Schools are so strict with dress codes we need to challenge the rules and try and allow for a more relaxed approach
- Allow more freedom for young people to be comfortable and able to express themselves
- Allowing students to try a relaxed approach would improve mental health and self-esteem

My name is Scarlet and I was elected in February 2021. At Plymouth Youth Parliament, our youth council were given copies of local school uniform policies and asked questions based on these policies. This was for my campaign on 'Uniforms on school and changing rules'.

This report is meant as an insight of what young people in Plymouth think of school uniform policies overall and we have made some suggestions on how to change them. The baseline uniform policies have not been updated for many years and I think they should be changed.

Earlier this year Plymouth Youth Parliament sent a questionnaire to teachers in secondary schools asking for views on the uniform policy at schools but we only had 24 replies and it seemed some teachers seemed hesitant to put the information down because of concerns about how it might be used. We therefore had to look at other ways in which to work to gather information on school uniform policies. We decided as a youth cabinet to review the answers and all of the school uniform policies that we could access online. We then had our own discussions and have highlighted key points below from each question we had asked.

1. Does this policy allow students to wear any optional uniform?

In our first question, many of our youth parliament members said that most of the policies we reviewed did have optional uniforms that could be worn by most students; however, personal belongings were not permitted. This can cause many issues to arise with young people. One of our members said "This policy restricts personal belongings or any optional uniform. Freedom of expression is limited, mental health in youth?" This quote shows me how young people value their self expression and individuality in school. We think that as schools, you could promote individuality with the uniform more. For example, less strictness on how uniforms could be worn or having more options for students to wear with their uniforms.

2. Does this policy provide any leeway on how its uniform should be worn?

In our second question, many of us said that there is no leeway on how the uniform should be worn. People said things like "no leeway on policy, could be sent home if standards are not met" and "no, the uniform policy has strict standards on how it should be worn." This shows that our young people want to be provided with opportunities to transgress from the typical cohesion you find when students wear the same items in the same way as one another. As schools, we think there should be allowances on how uniforms should be worn. For example, the length of ties or the colour of socks. As much as professionalism is required in a school environment, these examples shouldn't be met with after school detentions or temporary exclusion.

3. How much of this uniform could be bought in shops?

When we asked our young people our third question, many replied with the same answer “shirts and shoes can be bought from local supermarkets”. To me, this shows how schools are making an effort to support the working class/poorer families. However, this is the first of many steps schools need to take in order for those students to be able to afford uniforms. For example, blazers and skirts cost a lot, meaning that when a child moves up to secondary school they will not be met with the same treatment primary schools provided. To help tackle this, we suggest making skirts and blazers cheaper or allow students to purchase them from generic shops.

4. Does this uniform policy allow anything to be removed with permission? E.g blazers, jumpers

When faced with our fourth question, a lot of our young people revealed to us that schools do not allow for blazers/ jumpers to be removed without permission. This may not be a concern in the winter, however temperatures can rise to at least 30 degrees Celsius and students who do not remove blazers and/or jumpers can risk severe dehydration and possibly fainting. We believe there is a simple solution to this, all schools should allow students to take off removable layers of clothing in hot conditions. If necessary, set a certain temperature it has to be over for it to be considered “hot” to implement this plan of action with teachers and staff. Students will feel safer coming into school in the summertime.

5. Other than the official uniform, what (if anything) can students wear with their uniforms?

Our young people commented on our fifth question that there was “no mention of being able to wear anything personal belongings” on many of the uniform policies we looked at. Many students have jewellery they feel connected to in some ways so having this uncertainty can leave students with anxiety about taking it off. Many of our young people reported that staff members “take our belongings away aggressively” which is not the way these situations should be approached. The solution to this is:

- a.) Provide detail on online websites about whether jewellery is allowed or not
- b.) Approach situations where students are seen wearing jewellery more calmly and efficiently.

This will provide students with certainty and relieves anxiety about getting things broken or stolen.

6. Is there anything about this uniform policy you think could be improved on?

Many of our young people raised concerns with our sixth question. They mentioned how schools should “provide more leeway with piercings and coloured hair”. Our young people raised their concerns about being treated unfairly in their school due to the colour of their hair or the piercings they have. This usually happens after a school holiday or time off. A simple way to solve this problem is to allow more opportunities for students to take piercings out or to re-dye hair back to its original colour. Or you could accept it and promote diversity in your school.

7. Would you consider this policy to be gender neutral?

There were very mixed reviews about our seventh question. Some of our young people stated that the uniform provided by their school doesn't change for different genders. However, most of our young people said the opposite and uniforms were gender specific. They said that they feel like implementation of the dress code is targeted towards females and the males get off freely. The solution to this could be providing gender-neutral uniforms in school with some flexibility.

8. Is there any optional PE kit (if any) that students can wear?

Our eighth question was about PE kits. Many of our young people said they felt the kit sexualises the girls and think that male teachers often stare at them which makes them feel uncomfortable. They also stated they consider it very sexist and is very revealing. They also stated that in most cases you aren't allowed to wear your own jacket unless it is provided by the school. A solution to this could be making the PE kits more gender neutral so women and girls don't feel uncomfortable doing sports.

9. Does this uniform policy include sixth form students?

We asked our sixth form students for their take on their uniform for the ninth question. They said that they have a uniform very similar to that of the regular uniform and it's difficult to differentiate between the two. This can cause a lot of problems in the school environment. Despite this, some of our students claimed that their sixth form dress code was just "smart-casual" and didn't require uniforms. A solution to this problem would be setting a separate uniform policy for sixth form students so they don't look like the rest of the students.

10. Is there anything you would change about your policy (if it includes sixth form)?

Our final question asked what young people would change about their uniform. Many of them stated that there were lots they would change whilst others stated that it was fine but could do with one or two adjustments. Most students said the rules on hair colour and piercings should change and there should also be more leniency in how things should be worn.

Overall, I can infer that students are unhappy with their uniform policies and that they need to be changed/updated. Please follow the tips and solutions provided to help your students feel happy and safe in their school uniform.

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