

Blackpool Council – Children’s Services

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2017/18 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000
	2018/19					
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - JUL £000	PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000	F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000	
CHILDREN'S SERVICES						
NET EXPENDITURE						
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - ISB	79,443	5,538	73,905	79,443	-	-
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - NON DELEGATED	290	97	193	290	-	-
EDUCATION	20,077	4,435	16,102	20,537	460	-
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	142	47	95	142	-	-
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	8,242	4,032	4,856	8,888	646	-
DEDICATED SCHOOL GRANT	(108,794)	(16,932)	(92,508)	(109,440)	(646)	-
CARRY FORWARD OF DSG UNDER/(OVER) SPEND	(400)	-	(860)	(860)	(460)	-
TOTAL DSG FUNDED SERVICES	(1,000)	(2,783)	1,783	(1,000)	-	-
CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPRECIATION	2,011	-	2,011	2,011	-	-
EDUCATION	3,031	931	2,984	3,915	884	-
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	5,150	(909)	5,991	5,082	(68)	-
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE	28,271	8,694	23,187	31,881	3,610	-
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	837	377	457	834	(3)	-
LOCAL SERVICES SUPPORT GRANT	-	(5)	(15)	(20)	(20)	-
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT	(50)	-	(50)	(50)	-	-
TOTAL COUNCIL FUNDED SERVICES	39,250	9,088	34,565	43,653	4,403	-
TOTALS	38,250	6,305	36,348	42,653	4,403	-

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary – basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the latest outturn projection for each individual service within the Children’s Services Directorate against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 4 months of 2018/19 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with each head of service.

Children’s Social Care

Children’s Social Care is forecasting an overspend of £3,610k due to ongoing demand pressures relating to Looked After Children (LAC) numbers.

When budgets were set, LAC numbers were around 530. Early in the financial year a review of each individual LAC placement was carried out and a plan put in place for every child, which included stepping young people down into lower cost placements, and discharging them from care to be resettled at home with their families, wherever this was appropriate and safe. These plans were reflected in detailed budget forecasts which resulted in an anticipated overspend at the beginning of the financial year of £2.2m.

During the last few months, LAC numbers have increased, and currently stand at 566. This increase has undoubtedly placed the budget under further pressure, but the breakdown of a number of existing placements has also contributed significantly to the higher forecast overspend. Additional costs for the financial year attributable to children with complex needs being moved into more expensive placement categories, requiring additional support or being unable to step down as early as planned, amount to more than £900k.

Work is ongoing to reduce both LAC numbers and placement costs. All new admissions into care require Senior Service Manager approval. There is now a Commissioning role in place, the purpose of which is to scrutinise and challenge the cost of the most expensive external placements, and work is underway to review the sufficiency of placement provision across the town, which is monitored through a monthly meeting chaired by the Director of Children's Services. Since the start of the financial year, savings of almost £700k have been achieved as a result of children being successfully discharged from care, or stepped down into a less costly placement.

The current overspend forecast does not anticipate any further increase in LAC numbers. Although some new admissions into care are inevitable, the assumption is that the management measures being put in place will enable the service to maintain numbers at or below current levels for the remainder of the financial year.

Dedicated Schools Grant Funded Services

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is the funding stream that supports the Schools Budget, which includes amounts that are devolved through the Individual School Budget (ISB), together with centrally-retained pupil-related services as listed in the revenue summary. Any under or overspends against services funded by the DSG will be carried forward to 2019/20 and, in the case of overspends, become the first call on the grant in that year.

Education

The overspend in the Education division relates primarily to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport service and is partly due to demand pressures and partly due to the savings target of £320k that was applied in 2017/18 but not achieved.

Summary of the Children's Services financial position

As at the end of July 2018 the Children's Services Directorate is forecasting an overspend of £4.403m for the financial year to March 2019.

Budget Holder – Mrs D Booth, Director of Children's Services

Children's Social Care Trends

Date	External Placements Projection						Supported Accommodation			Internal Fostering			LAC numbers
	Fostering			Residential			Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	No.
	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement							
Jun-13	72	15%	36,202	41	8%	111,596	16	3%	no data	263	53%	11,887	492
Sep-13	66	14%	35,667	33	7%	111,523	17	4%	no data	272	58%	11,908	472
Dec-13	69	15%	36,560	30	7%	117,073	17	4%	no data	260	57%	11,828	459
Mar-14	64	14%	34,058	27	6%	118,473	15	3%	no data	248	56%	11,757	443
Jun-14	74	16%	35,928	25	5%	102,561	18	4%	no data	250	55%	12,833	457
Sep-14	75	16%	37,655	21	5%	121,210	27	6%	no data	237	51%	12,570	462
Dec-14	70	15%	38,760	18	4%	124,281	23	5%	no data	243	53%	12,474	459
Mar-15	73	16%	40,155	23	5%	128,868	19	4%	no data	244	53%	12,374	463
Jun-15	74	17%	40,625	25	6%	147,777	20	5%	no data	219	50%	12,541	440
Sep-15	73	16%	40,040	25	6%	142,934	16	4%	no data	225	50%	12,549	450
Dec-15	70	16%	41,243	27	6%	145,196	17	4%	no data	217	49%	12,428	442
Mar-16	69	15%	42,215	29	6%	146,120	22	5%	no data	257	56%	12,453	462
Jun-16	77	16%	42,145	34	7%	157,136	28	6%	38,608	259	53%	12,630	493
Sep-16	84	17%	42,750	32	6%	169,996	27	5%	41,376	254	51%	12,688	502
Dec-16	89	18%	43,038	36	7%	175,954	28	6%	41,037	258	52%	12,857	499
Mar-17	103	19%	43,502	44	8%	179,669	26	5%	42,416	269	51%	12,872	529
Jun-17	100	18%	40,933	49	9%	151,450	26	5%	60,946	272	50%	13,227	546
Sep-17	95	18%	40,991	35	7%	161,487	36	7%	57,928	270	51%	13,213	528
Dec-17	103	19%	41,277	43	8%	162,623	36	7%	58,358	272	50%	13,169	539
Mar-18	98	18%	41,099	44	8%	165,935	30	6%	55,728	273	51%	13,116	534
May-18	97	18%	41,186	45	8%	162,220	25	5%	42,496	288	53%	13,767	543
Jun-18	97	18%	40,083	45	8%	164,794	24	4%	48,006	297	54%	13,403	554
Jul-18	99	17%	40,094	46	8%	162,932	24	4%	46,392	301	53%	13,485	566

Note:

The variance between the current total number of Looked After Children (566) and the total internal fostering and external placement numbers (470) is children with care orders, adoption placements etc. They are still classed as LAC but do not incur any commissioned costs.



