

Blackpool Council – Children’s Services

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000
	2020/21					
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - JAN £000	PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000	F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000	
CHILDREN'S SERVICES						
NET EXPENDITURE						
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - ISB	18,999	13,907	5,092	18,999	-	-
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - NON DELEGATED	1,178	269	1,007	1,276	98	-
EDUCATION	20,012	16,051	6,023	22,074	2,062	-
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	982	819	(570)	249	(733)	-
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	8,752	6,693	2,059	8,752	-	-
DEDICATED SCHOOL GRANT	(48,692)	(40,537)	(8,295)	(48,832)	(140)	-
CARRY FORWARD OF DSG UNDER/(OVER) SPEND	(1,231)	-	(2,518)	(2,518)	(1,287)	-
TOTAL DSG FUNDED SERVICES	-	(2,798)	2,798	-	-	-
CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPRECIATION	2,213	-	2,213	2,213	-	-
EDUCATION	3,445	1,993	1,999	3,992	547	-
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	6,172	1,755	3,732	5,487	(685)	-
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE	50,785	42,699	9,894	52,593	1,808	-
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	1,089	1,382	(301)	1,081	(8)	-
LOCAL SERVICES SUPPORT GRANT	(18)	-	(18)	(18)	-	-
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT	(161)	-	(161)	(161)	-	-
TOTAL COUNCIL FUNDED SERVICES	63,525	47,829	17,358	65,187	1,662	-
TOTALS	63,525	45,031	20,156	65,187	1,662	-

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 10 months of 2020/21 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

The Children’s Social Care budget was increased by £8.173m in August 2020 following the approval of the refreshed Children’s Services Medium Term Financial Strategy (CSMTFS). The additional investment was required to cover the increase in numbers and unit costs of Looked After Children (LAC) between budget setting and 31st May 2020 and also to develop the placements market and increase the capacity within internal fostering. The CSMTFS aims to reverse the current trend and this investment alongside other service improvements should ensure the service can live within the current budget by 2022/23.

However, the Children's Social Care division is still forecasting an in-year overspend due to the worsening position since May 2020 of £1,808k, mainly due to the additional support required following the break-down of high cost placements. An additional work stream has been set up to review, understand the issues and mitigate against the additional costs, wherever possible. This time last year there were 58 placements over £3k, with an average cost of £4,189 per week. The current number of placements over £3k is 66, with an average cost of £4,690 per week. That's a 14% increase in numbers and a 12% increase in average cost.

The External Legal Fees budget has also been transferred from Governance & Partnership Services to Children's Social Care, including an overspend of £124k.

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 2021/22 and, in the case of overspends, become the first call on the grant in that year.

Education

The £547k 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 a historical savings target that wasn't achieved.

Early Help

The Early Help Service is expected to underspend by £685k due to vacant posts across the service.

Covid

Children's Services has a gross pressure of £3,052k relating to Covid. Following the reallocation of Covid funding relating to government grants tranches 1-4, and sales, fees and charges compensation claims amounting to £2,988k, the net Covid pressure is £64k, which is included in the above table. Nationally, there is an expected increase in demand for children's social care services post-Covid that could see an additional pressure.

Summary of the Children's Services financial position

As at the end of January 2021 the Children's Services Directorate is forecasting an overspend of £1,662k for the financial year to March 2021.

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

Children's Social Care Trends

Date	External Placements Projection						Supported Accommodation			Internal Fostering			LAC number	SGO	
	Fostering inc M&B			Residential											
	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	No.	Number	£ per placement
Jun-13	72	15%	36,202	41	8%	111,596	16	3%	no data	263	53%	11,887	492		no data
Sep-13	66	14%	35,667	33	7%	111,523	17	4%	no data	272	58%	11,908	472		no data
Dec-13	69	15%	36,560	30	7%	117,073	17	4%	no data	260	57%	11,828	459		no data
Mar-14	64	14%	34,058	27	6%	118,473	15	3%	no data	248	56%	11,757	443		no data
Jun-14	74	16%	35,928	25	5%	102,561	18	4%	no data	250	55%	12,833	457		no data
Sep-14	75	16%	37,655	21	5%	121,210	27	6%	no data	237	51%	12,570	462		no data
Dec-14	70	15%	38,760	18	4%	124,281	23	5%	no data	243	53%	12,474	459		no data
Mar-15	73	16%	40,155	23	5%	128,868	19	4%	no data	244	53%	12,374	463		no data
Jun-15	74	17%	40,625	25	6%	147,777	20	5%	no data	219	50%	12,541	440		no data
Sep-15	73	16%	40,040	25	6%	142,934	16	4%	no data	225	50%	12,549	450		no data
Dec-15	70	16%	41,243	27	6%	145,196	17	4%	no data	217	49%	12,428	442		no data
Mar-16	69	15%	42,215	29	6%	146,120	22	5%	no data	257	56%	12,453	462		no data
Jun-16	77	16%	42,145	34	7%	157,136	28	6%	38,608	259	53%	12,630	493	230	5,472
Sep-16	84	17%	42,750	32	6%	169,996	27	5%	41,376	254	51%	12,688	502	240	5,582
Dec-16	89	18%	43,038	36	7%	175,954	28	6%	41,037	258	52%	12,857	499	245	5,562
Mar-17	103	19%	43,502	44	8%	179,669	26	5%	42,416	269	51%	12,872	529	249	5,555
Jun-17	100	18%	40,933	49	9%	151,450	26	5%	60,946	272	50%	13,227	546	258	5,576
Sep-17	95	18%	40,991	35	7%	161,487	36	7%	57,928	270	51%	13,213	528	267	5,383
Dec-17	103	19%	41,277	43	8%	162,623	36	7%	58,358	272	50%	13,169	539	277	5,281
Mar-18	98	18%	41,099	44	8%	165,935	30	6%	55,728	273	51%	13,116	534	286	5,109
Jun-18	97	18%	40,083	45	8%	164,794	24	4%	48,006	297	54%	13,403	554	320	5,512
Sep-18	97	17%	40,425	45	8%	159,388	28	5%	46,073	302	54%	13,441	557	308	5,294
Dec-18	99	17%	40,227	47	8%	169,287	33	6%	46,167	305	53%	13,430	572	332	5,175
Mar-19	94	17%	39,536	53	9%	177,477	23	4%	45,845	306	54%	13,289	565	317	5,238
Jun-19	107	18%	42,426	53	9%	172,929	26	4%	68,367	305	53%	13,014	580	318	5,988
Sep-19	116	20%	43,981	58	10%	180,014	32	5%	56,148	294	50%	12,649	592	315	5,693
Dec-19	145	23%	45,812	62	10%	184,396	31	5%	60,289	300	48%	12,854	628	334	5,670
Mar-20	167	26%	45,201	65	10%	183,892	33	5%	61,076	292	45%	13,166	653	339	5,624
Jun-20	175	27%	47,565	69	10%	207,288	32	5%	92,575	284	43%	12,877	659	357	5,882
Sep-20	173	27%	47,125	75	12%	211,328	30	5%	97,225	277	43%	12,979	644	376	6,056
Dec-20	178	29%	47,361	72	12%	209,062	32	5%	105,274	248	41%	14,343	610	410	6,551
Jan-21	183	30%	47,417	70	11%	209,884	29	5%	107,051	250	41%	14,312	615	415	6,566

Note:

The variance between the current total number of Looked After Children (615) and the total internal fostering and external placement numbers (532) is children with care orders, adoption placements etc. They are still classed as LAC but do not incur any commissioned costs.



