

Section 1	Revenue budget position at Outturn
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Section 1 - Overall Revenue Position

Table 1: 2023/24 Revenue budget outturn summary statement

Service Area	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure / (Income)	(Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ Month 9	Variance Month 9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	63,735	340	64,075	67,020	2,945	3,631	(686)
Children & Young People	62,420	37	62,456	62,736	280	411	(131)
Communities & Place	26,427	(1,208)	25,218	25,965	747	1,001	(254)
MonLife	8,188	88	8,276	8,067	(209)	8	(216)
Chief Executives Unit	3,068	(18)	3,050	2,865	(186)	(47)	(139)
Law & Governance	2,656	11	2,667	2,775	108	151	(43)
Resources	7,017	1,483	8,500	8,120	(380)	(144)	(235)
Corporate Costs & Levies	29,344	1,012	30,356	27,136	(3,220)	(3,231)	11
Net Cost of Services	202,854	1,745	204,599	204,685	86	1,781	(1,693)
Treasury & Reserves	5,661	(1,744)	3,916	2,326	(1,591)	(1,118)	(473)
Expenditure to be Financed	208,514	0	208,515	207,011	(1,504)	663	(2,166)
Financing	(208,515)	0	(208,515)	(208,712)	(196)	(350)	154
(Surplus) / Deficit	0	0	0	(1,701)	(1,701)	314	(2,013)

Table 2: 2023/24 Revenue budget outturn detailed statement

Service Area	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure / (Income)	(Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ Month 9	Variance Month 9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Adult Services	38,246	98	38,344	41,343	2,999	3,104	(104)
Children Services	22,209	(34)	22,175	22,356	181	600	(420)
Public Protection	1,790	1	1,791	1,795	4	63	(59)
SCH Support	1,489	276	1,765	1,526	(239)	(136)	(103)
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	63,735	340	64,075	67,020	2,945	3,631	(686)
Emergency Planning	170	12	182	179	(3)	(1)	(2)
Individual Schools Budget	50,423	73	50,496	50,582	85	224	(139)
Resources	1,140	(49)	1,090	720	(370)	(409)	38
Standards	10,686	1	10,687	11,255	567	596	(29)
Children & Young People	62,420	37	62,456	62,736	280	411	(131)
Enterprise, Housing & Community Animation	4,564	(1,084)	3,481	3,674	194	376	(182)
Facilities & Fleet Management	10,805	236	11,041	10,845	(196)	67	(264)
Neighbourhood Services	9,306	19	9,326	10,245	919	782	137
Placemaking, Highways & Flood	1,752	(381)	1,371	1,202	(169)	(225)	55
Communities & Place	26,427	(1,208)	25,218	25,965	747	1,001	(254)
Communications	203	2	205	188	(17)	(21)	5
Countryside & Culture	1,157	17	1,175	1,066	(108)	(83)	(25)
Finance & Business Development	4,170	43	4,213	4,394	181	220	(39)
Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure	2,658	25	2,683	2,418	(265)	(108)	(157)
MonLife	8,188	88	8,276	8,067	(209)	8	(216)
Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Service	1,236	(41)	1,195	1,034	(161)	(11)	(149)

People	1,832	23	1,855	1,830	(25)	(35)	10
Chief Executives	3,068	(18)	3,049	2,865	(186)	(47)	(139)
Democratic Services	1,634	6	1,640	1,775	136	137	(1)
Legal and Land Charges	1,022	5	1,028	1,000	(28)	14	(42)
Law & Governance	2,656	11	2,667	2,775	108	151	(43)
Commercial, Corporate & landlord Services	1,597	141	1,738	1,692	(45)	85	(130)
Corporate Health & Safety	77	11	88	79	(10)	(6)	(4)
Finance	2,505	1,153	3,659	3,337	(322)	(200)	(122)
Information Communication Technology	2,837	178	3,015	3,013	(3)	(23)	21
Resources	7,017	1,483	8,501	8,120	(380)	(144)	(235)
Precepts & Levies	24,578	0	24,578	24,578	0	0	0
Coroner's	171	0	171	275	104	104	0
Archives	213	0	213	213	0	0	0
Corporate Management	355	0	355	122	(233)	(138)	(95)
Non Distributed Costs (NDC)	757	(88)	669	338	(331)	(382)	51
Strategic Initiatives	1,642	1,100	2,742	0	(2,742)	(2,815)	73
Insurance	1,628	0	1,628	1,609	(19)	(0)	(19)
Corporate Costs & Levies	29,344	1,012	30,356	27,136	(3,220)	(3,231)	11
Net Cost of Services	202,854	1,745	204,599	204,685	86	1,781	(1,693)
Interest & Investment Income	(925)	0	(925)	(1,762)	(836)	(576)	(261)
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	6,953	0	6,953	6,622	(331)	(352)	21
Charges Required under Regulation	6,800	(1,007)	5,793	6,006	213	206	7
Other Investment Income	0	0	0	(49)	(49)	(42)	(7)
Borrowing Cost Recoupment	(3,658)	0	(3,658)	(4,244)	(586)	(353)	(233)
Contributions to Reserves	63	1,514	1,577	1,577	(0)	0	(0)

Contributions from reserves	(3,572)	(1,067)	(4,639)	(4,640)	(1)	(0)	(0)
Contribution from Council Fund	0	(1,184)	(1,184)	(1,184)	0	0	0
Treasury & Reserves	5,661	(1,744)	3,916	2,326	(1,591)	(1,118)	(473)
Expenditure to be Financed	208,514	1	208,515	207,011	(1,504)	663	(2,166)
General Government Grants	(91,451)	0	(91,451)	(91,451)	0	0	0
Non Domestic Rates	(31,224)	0	(31,224)	(31,224)	0	0	0
Council tax	(93,642)	0	(93,642)	(93,440)	202	0	202
Council Tax Benefit Support	7,802	0	7,802	7,403	(398)	(350)	(48)
Financing	(208,515)	0	(208,515)	(208,712)	(196)	(350)	154
(Surplus) / Deficit	0	0	0	(1,701)	(1,701)	314	(2,013)

Section 2 - Directorate – Service Variance Comments

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2,830	3,190	3,631	2,945

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY:

During the course of the financial year, the Social Care directorate made in-roads into its identified savings targets; however, a number of key areas, particularly within adults' services, remained a challenge. The service continued to deal with high demand and complexity of people's needs making the balance between reducing costs and ensuring that people have their basic needs met a challenging one. We continue to experience demand led pressures following hospital discharge including new care home placements and high levels of care in the community (including in excess of 50 double-handed calls). There is increased oversight across the system to support practice and decision-making regarding the care and support we provide, which is helping us to ensure that we allocate care in a consistent way according to individual needs and circumstances using the principles of the SSWBA.

Within adults' services effective negotiations with care providers have allowed costs associated with fees and charges to be controlled. However, we have been unable to mitigate entirely the additional cost of care this year which has created a significant pressure.

It is pleasing to note that the work within children's services placement planning delivered good outcomes, and that the overall numbers of children coming into care continues to remain stable with a slight downward trend being maintained over the last 3 years. There are a number of key risks within the service which have an impact on cost including the insufficiency of children's placements, and the complexity of the needs of some of our children. It is good news that Children's Services improved its position compared to the month 9 forecast to reduce its overspend to just £180K, through effective utilisation of grant and external funding opportunities as they arose.

The service is benefitting from a number of Welsh Government grants some of which are known to be short-term and others of which remain uncertain with regards to how long they might be available. Services supported by grants are deeply integrated into the core delivery of the service and contribute heavily to managing demand and supporting the delivery of savings.

ADULT SERVICES

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2,618	3,009	3,104	2,999

There is a £2.999m overspend in Adult Services.

Progress against savings mandates remains challenging particularly regarding safely reducing care at home hours; equally it has not been possible to reduce the number of care home placements which over the year has seen a 16% increase (41 placements).

Following an initial review pilot process in the central area, the final annual savings associated with the reduction of care packages was £38k (part year effect). The work to review packages with individuals is well underway across all of the teams. To monitor this, we are tracking the

total number of people in receipt of care at home against the total number of care hours delivered.

It is also positive to note that the numbers of unmet need care at home hours have continued to show overall reductions (in approximate terms from weekly 850 hours of unmet need to 300).

We continue to show a deficit against saving mandates associated with Continuing Health Care. Some recent cases have been successfully pursued with ABuHB which has allowed us to generate £171k of savings against a target of £550k. Part of the difficulty in achieving savings against CHC, is that ABuHB are equally reviewing their caseloads and vigorously challenging any reviews we put forward to them.

The main pressures are down to the £1.5M provider fees. At the beginning of the year this was calculated at £2M pressure; however, after extensive fair fee negotiations with provider agencies we were able to reduce this by £0.5M.

During the year an additional 41 care home placements have been commissioned, resulting in a pressure overspend of £1.5M together with an increase in the average cost of care home placements. A gatekeeping panel was established to provide oversight to all requests for high-cost care packages including residential placements. Residential placements are now used more frequently in situations where the cost of care at home would exceed the cost of a residential placement, contributing to the continued rise in residential placements.

The non-residential care budgets also overspent by £1.5M and the Regional Integration Fund was insufficient to meet the costs associated resulting in a £0.4M pressure that added to the core Adults budget overspend.

As a region the GWICES pool fund is overspending, of which £179K is attributable to this Authority. External funding has been granted of £500K plus additional slippage at year end being provided to us, leaving at this juncture a net £79K overspend.

The overspend has been assisted by £1M under spends within MDML and Care at Home vacancies, and the £1.1M Social Care Workforce and Sustainability Grant, leading to the true underlying overspend more in the region of £5M.

Debt for care charges still running high at £2.2M, with over 463 clients owing us debt for unpaid care charges which is now a target area for improvement within the service, alongside trying to secure a full time debt recovery officer.

CHILDREN SERVICES

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	211	207	600	181

Children's services have been able to capitalise on their progression planning activity with individual children, bringing children into placements that are closer to home and more in keeping with their care and support needs and longer-term personal outcomes. This has included supporting some children to return home, or, for older children, into more independent

settings. Additional family support services have been put in place to support this endeavour – with the service benefitting from Welsh Government grants to achieve this.

The outturn position is a pleasing one and cements all the hard work undertaken by the service and finance, along with taking the opportunities that arose in the last quarter of the financial year to utilise grant and external funding.

The service continues to have an over-reliance on agency staff working in critical areas of the service particularly child-protection. The service is reviewing all agency assignments and accelerating agency exit plans wherever possible to contribute to budget recovery measures. The service is working in accordance with the All Wales pledge to control the costs associated with agency-worker fees.

PUBLIC PROTECTION

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	63	63	63	4

The deficit results from the staff restructuring saving mandate not being delivered, as a consequence of the Head of Public Protection post being retained. A vacant EHO post has been deleted, along with utilisation of grant funding with Trading Standards to offset core staff costs has mainly mitigated this budget pressure.

SCH SUPPORT

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(62)	(89)	(136)	(239)

Due to vacancy savings within the directorate finance team coupled with increased Deputyship fee income.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	331	340	411	280

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY:

The Directorate's outturn position is an overspend of £280k, which is a decrease of £131k on the Month 9 forecast. The overspend is due to increased ALN Transport costs, which have been mitigated by savings in other areas.

We have been able to offset a large proportion of our overspend by successfully developing our in county ALN provision, which has resulted in a reduction of the number of ALN pupils attending Out of County or Independent placements. Further savings have been made by using grant income to offset staff costs and by holding vacancies across the Directorate.

Emergency Planning

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	(1)	(1)	(1)	(3)

The division is reporting to budget

Individual Schools Budget

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	134	176	224	85

The month 9 overspend included an increase in transport costs, which has since reduced, as we did not incur costs for Post-16 Transport (£56k).

The outturn overspend is due to the following:

- £46k due to the 2022-23 Pay Award, which has caused the SRS costs to increase for all schools. This pressure was not known at the time of agreeing the Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and so it could not be passed onto the schools
- £38.6k Prudential Borrowing Charge
- £67k ILW costs
- £17.7k Mounton House costs

However, we have been able to partly offset the costs above with additional grant income received.

Resources

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(388)	(400)	(409)	(370)

The under spend of £370,321 is due to the following:

- £225k – releasing reserve and in year income from the Photovoltaic Recharges cost centre (solar panel income). The month 9 saving had been forecast as £270k, but the recharges were not as much as previously forecast.
- £45k – staff cost savings through vacancies
- £45k – grant offsetting staff costs
- £25k - savings on ICT, as budgeted costs for SIMS Centralisation costs not incurred and Address Cleaning will now take place in 24-25
- £14k – grant offsetting ALN licencing costs
- £10k - releasing remainder of 22-23 accrual for unspent School Essentials grant, as we have now paid this back to WG
- £6k - did not incur Missing Persons charge

Standards

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	585	566	596	567

The overspend of £567,046 is due to the following:

- £732k ALN Transport – a slight saving of £5k on the month 9 forecast of £737k
- £496k reduction in ALN Recoupment – with the recent changes in ALN formula for schools, all out of county recoupment for mainstream schools will be delegated to support pupils. An increase of £45k on the month 9 forecast
- £98k Breakfast clubs – increase in catering and staff costs and reduction in income
- £14k - ALN Administration Service – Deri View SRB costs and unable to currently make the employee related savings. A reduction of £15k on the month 9 forecast due to savings on staff costs/vacancy
- £20k ALN Management – unexpected pension costs, as a member of staff was automatically opted in and has not re-claimed their pension payments, after opting out again. An increase in staff costs and unable to make the employee related savings
- £15k ALN Equipment Budget – not able to capitalise as much as we had thought

Offset by:

- -£587k saving on ALN Out of County – reduction in number of pupils in out of county schools has resulted in a saving. An increase of £129k on the month 9 forecast, as we disputed increased charges, which we had not previously agreed
- -£69k saving in independent schools – reduction in the number of pupils requiring places. A reduction of £82k on the month 9 forecast due to recharges from the PRU being higher than expected
- -£10k saving in Education Psychology – due to staff savings and additional income received. A reduction of £17k on the month 9 forecast due to the Soulbury Pay Awards for 22-23 and 23-24 being more than expected
- -£118k grants used to offset staff costs. An increase of £20k on month 9
- -£23k saving on Expansion of Early Years grant due to the take up of early education funding being less than anticipated

COMMUNITIES & PLACE DIRECTORATE	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	959	896	1,001	747

COMMUNITIES & PLACE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The Communities and Place Directorate outturn position is £747k deficit at year end. Whilst this remains a significant deficit for the Directorate, this is an improved position since Month 9 and the details of these changes are provided within the next sections of this report. The pressures and demand within Housing and Homelessness continued to have a significant impact throughout 2023/24 and changes in service delivery in 2024/25 should help to mitigate this pressure going forward.

The impact of inflation can be seen across a number of service areas and in particular within Fleet Management and within these areas that are sensitive to inflationary pressures for example Waste Services adverse variances continue to present.

Across all Services, all eligible additional costs and income losses have been claimed against any funding that has been made available. In addition, service areas have been successful in securing grant funding which has enabled us to passport core costs to grant funding activity. Since month 9 a number of service areas have been able to report a significantly improved position as income has been higher than anticipated, grant funding has increased or has been provided beyond what was anticipated and costs have been managed where possible.

Enterprise, Housing & Community Animation

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	524	264	376	194

Enterprise & Community Animation has returned a £194k overspend in 23-24, this is mainly due to: -

- **Enterprise Mgt** - £20k over spent – our partner contribution towards City Deal has increased over and above available budget by £13k, on top of this senior management costs have exceeded budget due to the inability to make vacancy factor savings and an over spend in subscription and software costs. This is a £15k improvement from M9 as a result of a senior staff vacancy that was not known in December.
- **Community & Partnership Development** - £61k underspent – savings generated from being able to pay for core staff costs through grant funding.
- **Housing** - £422k over spent, this can be broken down into these main areas: -
 - **Homelessness** – £75k over spent – final spend on B&B accommodation for 23-24 was £2.144m with a further £686k on ancillary spend including security, storage and damage repairs. These costs have been covered by Housing Prevention grant of £495k, Housing Benefit of £1.557m and WG discretionary Housing grant of £237k to leave an underspend against budget of £252k. This underspend within Housing has been offset by an overspend in our Benefits service relating to B&B placements due to a funding subsidy gap between what has been paid in Housing benefit and what can be claimed back from the DWP, at year end this shortfall was £328k over available budget. When you add this against the underspend in Housing the overall authority overspend relating to Homelessness is £75k.

- **Shared Housing & Private Leasing** - £263k over spent – operating costs and in particular damage repair & maintenance have increased over available budgets across our hostels and leased accommodation, it has impacted more in 23-24 as we did not receive as much additional HPG grant as in previous years so were unable to call on it to offset overspend.
- **Strategic Services** – £40k over spent – mainly due to the costs incurred in relation to the Gypsy & Romany Traveller surveys.
- **Business Growth & Enterprise** – £194k under spent – due to managed staff savings through the funding of core staff costs in Economic development (£154k) by grant to aid in year budget recovery and part year vacancy savings in the Strategic Operations Team due to the implementation of a new structure (£40k).

Facilities & Fleet Management

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	220	190	66	(196)

Facilities, Fleet & De-carbonisation has under spent by £196k, due to-

- **Schools Catering** – £251k underspend – The outturn position has greatly improved since Month 9 and can be attributed to the following :-
 - This year the service has transitioned from a budget model that relied on the authority to subsidise the shortfall between the cost of producing the meal and the price we charged the parents to a cost recovery model that assumed all our costs would be met by the £3.20 rate provided by WG. Due to the phased implementation of the UFSM policy it was difficult to predict in the early part of the year the impact it would have on our meal numbers and the subsequent effect on our operating costs, this meant we were unable to identify if the £3.20 per meal would be sufficient to cover all our outgoings until the end of the financial year. Now we have a complete picture of income and expenditure for the year it is apparent that we did not require all of our base budget subsidy which has resulted in an underspend against budget.
 - There was a switch in year to the use of packet mixes for things such as cake and pizza bases to save money as part of the in-year budget recovery plan, this has helped towards the 23-24 saving. Note, this was a temporary measure and has now been reversed in 24-25.
 - As mentioned at Month 9 we were awaiting news of our share of a £3.3m additional grant, this has since been confirmed as £111k and has helped offset any one-off set-up costs that had been incurred during the year.
- **Passenger Transport** – £83k under spent – Improved private hire income, savings from staff vacancies and additional bus operator support grant funding has helped offset an overspend in external commissioning due to increased pupil numbers.

- **Regional Transport Team** - £51k under spent – Underspend due to staff being funded 50% from capitalisation directive and core costs being funded from transport grants.
- **Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme** – £45k over spent – £14k adverse swing from M9, member numbers continue to drop resulting in savings falling £45k below budgeted levels.
- **Fleet maintenance** - £396k over spent – We have seen the cost of running and maintaining our vehicle fleet increase significantly in 23-24. The overspend can be attributed to these main issues :-
 - The effect of inflation has driven up the cost of vehicle parts, external repair costs and fuel.
 - Supply chain issues have impacted the budget in 2 ways, 1) the non-availability of spare parts in-house has meant that we have to send vehicles to external repair shops rather than repair in house to guarantee the vehicle is back in use as soon as possible 2) in some instances the wait for parts has resulted in a vehicle being off the road for a number of months, this means we have to hire in a replacement which increases our hire costs over available budget.
 - Borrowing costs – prices of new (and in particular EV) vehicles have increased considerably in the last few years, where we are now looking to replace old stock we are finding that our borrowing budget is insufficient to cover these increased costs.

Officers are continually reviewing our vehicle portfolio, a Fleet Management Board has been set-up with the objective not only to rationalise and reduce costs but to ensure that our fleet is sufficient to meet the operational needs of the authority.

- **Building Cleaning & Public Conveniences** - £116k under spent – improvement of £28k since Month 9 mainly down to part year staff vacancy savings, improved income from an increase in customers and the managed reduction in non-essential spend.
- **Solar Farm & Sustainability** - £92k under spent – improved income mainly from our PV installations due to the increased market rates for energy.
- **De-Carbonisation Team** - £44k under spent – we have seen significant staff savings (£190k) in 23-24 as a result of 4 vacancies within the team (posts are currently advertised to be filled in May/June) and we have also received grant funding of £26k which helped offset core costs. These underspends have been offset by a £172k shortfall in our corporate savings targets where we were unable to make any of the £100k mileage saving and failed to find £72k of the £532k corporate energy target, although in December we were projecting a shortfall of £177k on corporate energy so we have seen an improvement in position since M9 and is the reason for the swing to outturn.

Neighbourhood Services

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
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Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	500	667	782	919
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Neighbourhood Services has over spent by £919k in 23-24, this is due to-

- **Streetlighting** – £21k over spent – Position has changed since Month 9 where we were projecting a £50k under spend, this is due to maintenance costs exceeding original projections due to contract inflation and increased demand, the extent of which was not known at Month 9.
- **Highways Operations & SWTRA** – £209k under spent – this is due to savings driven by the rationalisation of our sweeping function as agreed in the authority's budget recovery plan, improved income from external client and capital programme work and staff vacancy savings within office services. The work undertaken for SWTRA (South Wales Trunk Road Agency) has come in on budget.
- **Waste Services** - £1.129m over spent – The volatility of the recycling market continued to impact negatively over the last quarter. The implementation of Workplace Recycling Regulations and increased receptacle costs will not play through in income until 2024/25. Delays in transition to new fleet and depot improvements delayed roll-out of polypropylene sacks incurring additional costs on single use bags.
- **Grounds Maintenance** – £93k under spent - Additional external contractual work and playgrounds installation boosted income significantly. A reduction in shelf stock and auction sales of refurbished plant machinery created one-off income opportunity.

Placemaking, Highways & Flood				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(286)	(224)	(225)	(169)

Placemaking, Highways & Flood has under spent by £169k, this is as a result of -

- **Building Control** – £93k over spent – this can be attributed to 2 main areas 1) applications have reduced significantly in 23-24 due to the uncertainty around the economy, this has had an adverse impact on fee income resulting in a shortfall against budget. 2) the increased statutory requirements brought in with the introduction of the Building Safety Act 2022 has meant an increase in the amount of non-chargeable work the service has to undertake impacting on staff and income budgets.
- **Planning & Development Control** - £38k over spent – we have seen a reduction in application income in 23-24, in particular the fees generated from the large development sites. Income levels are influenced by the amount of potential development opportunities and the adoption of the Replacement Local Development Plan will address this current deficit in land availability. Councils are also currently lobbying WG to increase planning fees given that they have not risen with inflation and have remained fixed since 2020. WG are currently reviewing this matter.

- **Planning Policy & LDP** – On budget.
- **Car Parks & Civil Parking Enforcement** - £41k under spent – a positive swing of £50k since month 9 and can be attributed to an improvement in Pay & Display income received in the last 3 months of the year that has helped offset a shortfall in PCN income of £27k, in addition the outturn has been helped by a rates refund on one of our car parks and employee savings due to part year vacancies.
- **Highways management & flooding** - £196k under spent – mainly due to income exceeding budgets in road closure fees and SABs fees. In addition, we have seen an employee underspend as vacant posts were frozen as part of the in-year recruitment freeze. This is a £165k adverse swing from what we reported in December and is due to a delay in the receipt of developer fees that we originally anticipated to come in before March but will now come into the authority in 24/25.
- **Regeneration** - £62k under spent – Employee underspend as we have been able to passport core staff costs to grant funding, the extent of which was not known in December and is the reason for the £62k improvement since month 9.

MONLIFE DIRECTORATE	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	344	8	8	(209)

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY:

The directorate has underspent by £209k. The primary areas of pressure within the directorate remain, with the Borough Theatre, Attractions, Contact Centre and Hubs overspending. Inflation rises, market instability and a post-covid environment has continued to impact on the cost of delivering these key services. The Borough Theatre has only re-opened this year and is still recovering from the impact of the covid pandemic; this year's adverse weather has been detrimental to income delivery at our attractions; and, the Contact Centre and Hubs remain under pressure due to increased demands and increased essential software costs.

We continue to see improvements and increased usage of our outdoor adventure facilities and membership numbers continue to grow within our leisure sites, we continue to monitor these services closely due to the significant income targets.

The significant improvement from month 9 to outturn is mainly due to additional grant opportunities, with the section utilising grants to offset core staffing costs which has reduced the forecast costs of delivering these services. We have seen improved income at our attractions due to opening earlier this season to take advantage of the timing of the Easter Holidays and improved usage at our outdoor adventure facilities which continue to provide a multi-use facility for the authority.

(Monlife) Countryside & Culture				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(83)	(83)	(108)

Countryside and Culture have under spent by £108k due to higher than anticipated grant income, which has supported core staffing costs.

(MonLife) Communications

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	5	(25)	(21)	(17)

Central communications have under spend by £17k due to the secondment of the Central Communications Manager.

(Monlife) Finance & Business Development

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	339	250	220	181

Finance and Business Development have overspent by £181k, the primary areas of significant pressure are:

- **Borough Theatre** has overspent by £175k due to lower than anticipated income levels. The section is still recovering and full growth is not expected for another 12 months. Service improvement relates to utilisation of grants to fund core staff as agreed in the budget recovery plan.
- **Attractions** have overspent by £67k due to lower than expected income. Visitor numbers to all our attractions have been significantly impacted by the adverse weather conditions. The improvement from month 9 relates to increased income from grants which have supported core staffing costs and opening our attractions earlier to take advantage of the timing of the Easter holidays.
- **Contact Centre and hubs** have overspent by £90k due to higher than anticipated staffing levels to cover long term sick, delays in implementing the restructure which has impacted on the forecast savings, and failure to meet employee related savings along with inflation on existing essential contracts.
- These pressures are offset by; a £30k under spend within museums which includes one off additional income from grants which has offset core staffing costs as per the budget recovery plan; £70k reduction in service management which aligns with delay in non-essential spend; and, £40k saving in community education due to the freezing of the lead tutor post as agreed in the budget recovery plan along with £11k underspend in Markets due to additional income.

The improvement from month 9 to outturn mainly relates to additional income within our attractions and Markets along with additional grant income which has supported core staffing costs.

(Monlife) Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(134)	(108)	(265)

Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure have under spent by £265k, with the variance from month 9 to outturn relating to improved positions in both outdoor adventure and youth service where additional income has offset previously predicted overspends, and higher than budgeted grant income in sports development.

We continue to see improvements in this area with continued growth in our leisure memberships and improved usage of our outdoor facilities, however, continued close monitoring will be required in 24-25 due to the significant income targets.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT DIRECTORATE	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(52)	(45)	(46)	(186)

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY:

Chief Executives has returned a £186k under spend in 23-24. This has been achieved primarily by holding a number of posts vacant to assist with the in-year recovery position. This has not been without cost. Existing staff have picked up additional work and progress in some areas has been delayed as a result. We've also seen a growth in income and grant funding on some areas. However, the positive bottom-line masks overspends in some areas such as Welsh language translation and fees paid to third parties.

Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Experience

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(11)	(11)	(11)	(161)

Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Experience is forecasting to under spend by £161k, the outturn position is made up of a number of under and over spends across the division with the main variances being :-

- **Corporate** - £25k under spent – originally reporting an over spend due to staff cost pressures but we have now been able to fund an element of senior staff costs via the Ukraine grant which has pushed the budget into an underspend as has resulted in a £70k improvement since month 9.
- **Scrutiny** - £6k over spent – staff costs have exceeded budget mainly due the inability to make vacancy factor savings.
- **Customer Relations** - £14k under spent – mainly due to an under spend against professional fees.
- **Policy & Partnerships** – £127k under spent – mainly because of staff savings across the section due to the delay in filling the Equality and Welsh Language Manager post, where we have held posts vacant within the Community Safety & CCTV teams to aid the in-year budget recovery and underspends in the GIS team as we have been able to passport core staff costs to capital. These have been offset by a £20k over spend on membership subscriptions to external bodies such as the WLGA and LGA and a £108k over spend on Welsh translation due to both volume and price increases driving costs up over available budget.

People (CEO)				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(41)	(34)	(35)	(25)

People Services is forecasting to under spend by £25k, the main variances are as follows:

- **Payroll & HR** - £18k under spent – Since month 9 there has been a realignment of budgets within the department and the majority of the surplus budget (£94k) reported within Corporate Training has now been moved to Payroll & HR which has helped offset the reported system and staffing pressures.
- **Corporate Training** - £27k under spent – as per above, budgets have been moved which explains the swing from Month 9 projection, in addition we have seen an improvement in training income between month 9 and outturn.
- **Occupational Health** – £13k over spent – £13k adverse variance from Month 9 as demand for services have exceeded original month 9 projections.

LAW & GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE (PG)	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	119	115	151	108

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY:

The £110k overspend in Democratic Services relates to increased pressure on the budget allocated for members. This is primarily due to increase in members salaries, superannuation and an increase in co-opted members.

The underspend in Legal is a result of vacancies in the team which are in the process of being filled. As a result, these savings will not be on-going.

In relation to Land Charges, the £7k overspend relates to a drop in income which correlates directly with the activity in the housing market. As the housing market has become more buoyant, we have seen an increase in fee income more recently which is in excess of monthly projections.

Democratic Services				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	137	137	137	136

Democratic Services has over spent by £136k in 23-24, this is due to:

- **Members** - £110k overspend – an improvement since Month 9 of £14k. As reported previously the cost of our elected members has increased over available budget in 23-24. We have seen the main pressure fall against pay where the members pay award was

agreed at 4.75% for 23-24 against a budget provision of 4.25%, we have seen a higher uptake in members joining the Superannuation scheme than in previous years and the service has been unable to meet it's vacancy factor savings. In addition the number of co-opted members has gone up increasing allowances although this is not as high as we thought at M9 and is the reason for the improvement in over spend at outturn.

- **Democratic Services** - £26k over spent – An increase from Month 9 of £13k – this is mainly due to an increase in the cost of our ModGov support package within our committee section and an overspend in Elections due to a shortfall in expected grant funding, this was not anticipated at Month 9 and is the main reason for the variance.

Legal and Land Charges

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	(22)	(22)	14	(28)

Legal and Land charges has under spent by £28k :

- **Legal** - £34k under spent – this is due a net staff saving caused by the delay in recruiting into the Head of Governance post, the decision not to fill a paralegal post in line with the recruitment freeze offset by additional honoraria payments to staff covering the deputy monitoring role. We have seen an improvement in court fees and income since January and this is the main reason for the £31k improvement from what we reported at month 9.
- **Land Charges** - £7k over spent – Search fees have been impacted by the downturn in the housing market resulting in a budget pressure in income, this has been part offset by a saving in staffing due to a vacant post and an underspend in supplies & services. The final income figures exceeded our projections at Month 9 and is the reason for the £10k improvement in position at outturn.

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(196)	(178)	(144)	(380)

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY:

The Directorate, along with the wider organisation, has maintained a focus to not only manage within budget for the year but also contribute to the wider budget recovery efforts and to deliver an under spend and to support the overall Council objective of ensuring a balanced budget position is achieved or out performed by year-end. The directorate has forecast an under spend throughout the year and this has increased further at outturn, with a £380k under spend being delivered against budget. It is pleasing to see that the continued efforts of leadership and staff has led to this positive outcome.

The positive movement on the under spend from month 9 to outturn is £236k. Finance saw a positive movement of £122k and through the ability to recharge additional eligible staff costs against grants and external bodies, along with a provision in place for additional postage and

printing costs not being required. Landlord Services also had a positive movement of £130k, principally and significantly as a result of negotiations being positively concluded with regards to the Cattle Market lease, offset by over spends with corporate building maintenance and cleaning costs, as well as reductions from month 9 in income and rentals across cemeteries, county farms, industrial units and commercial investments. A late swing and additional pressure resulted within ICT and resulting from an increase in the SRS contribution caused by increased PSBA line costs and a reduction in SLA income.

The outturn position will inform, and to the extent that it provides further insights beyond that captured in the 2024/25 budget, in-year forecasting and in ensuring that the increased budgetary discipline introduced in the current year continues into 2024/25.

Finance				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(243)	(242)	(200)	(322)

Finance has returned a £322k underspend, this is mainly due to -

- **Revenues** - £53k under spent - due to :-
 - **Benefits** - £2k over spent – due to extra annual software costs for the Revenues & Benefits system, although these were part offset by one off grant income received from the DWP.
 - **Council Tax & NNDR** - £18k under spent – A number of factors contribute to the net under spend of £18k. Firstly there are budget pressures totalling £53k. These are made up of a £24k shortfall in summons income received, a £16k residual budget pressure from the Finance restructure and a £13k top up of the bad debt provision for court costs, reflecting the debt position at year end. These pressures have however been offset this year by £27k one off administration grant income from Welsh Government and £44k of savings against the non pay budget. This saving is largely attributable to a provision for post and printing services that has been carried over for the last couple of years which are now unlikely to be incurred. The £60k swing since month 9 is largely due to this post and printing provision, plus an adjustment to the bad debt provision and a lower than expected contribution to the non pay costs incurred by the Revenues Shared Service.
 - **Debtors & Charity relief** – £37k under spent – due to one off burden funding for administering the Energy schemes on behalf of UK Govt, savings from a part year vacancy and a managed underspend in supplies and services.
- **Finance** - £214k under spent – staff savings due to vacant posts within the team, these will now be filled in the coming months as the finance structure has been approved. In addition income has increased due to the ability to recharge staff time to grants and external bodies as part of an admin/project mgt fee, the extent of which was not known at month 9 and is the reason for the £56k improvement in position.

- **Audit** – £9k under spent due to staff savings from vacant posts.
- **Systems & Exchequer** – £46k under spent – a net under spend within the section due to a staff vacancy in Cashiers that was not filled in line with the 23-24 recruitment freeze and a reduction in software costs as system development was paused to help in-year budget recovery and to help fund increasing system contract costs. In addition, extra income was received from school recharges, Ukraine funding and capitalisation.

Corporate Health & Safety

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	(6)	(10)

Corporate Health & Safety is forecasting a £6k under spend for 23-24, this is down to a managed saving within Supplies & Services.

Information, Communication & Technology

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(4)	(4)	(23)	(3)

- **ICT** - £3k under spent at outturn, this is due to :-
 - **Digital Programme Office** - £25k under spent - mainly due to savings in materials and equipment purchases.
 - **SRS Contribution** - £39k over spent – We indicated at month 9 that our contribution to SRS would exceed our available budget and this has now been confirmed by SRS as a £27k increase for 23-24 mainly due to an increase in PSBA line costs and reduced SLA income. In addition to this there has been additional spending on a CUCM system upgrade of £2k and a £10k contribution for Information Security support that did not have budget and was not factored in at Month 9.
 - **Digital Design & Innovation** - £18.5k underspent - staff vacancy savings.
 - **Cyber Security Team** - £3.6k underspent - due to a managed reduction in non-essential spend as per authority budget recovery plan.
 - **Telephony** - £5k over spent - A reduction in telephone call charges have been offset by a small overspend in mobile phones relating to the costs of mobile internet hubs that could not be recharged to services.

Commercial & Corporate Landlord

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	51	67	85	(45)

Commercial & Corporate Landlord services has under spent by £45k, due to :-

- **Investment Properties** - £201k over spent, due to –
 - **Newport Leisure Park** - £91k over spent – NLP is expected to generate a £29k surplus after loan repayments, however this falls short of the £120k budget target

for 23-24. The £91K shortfall relates to unbudgeted rates on vacant units and rent-free periods for new tenants reducing turnover in 23-24. The variance from month 9 to outturn relates to additional fees associated with new lettings. In 24-25 we will see these unexpected expenses reduce and income increase as the rent-free period ends.

- **Castlegate Business Park** - £109k over spent – Castlegate has overspent by £109k, this relates to the unbudgeted premises costs associated with our vacant units, the section continues to work on improving the vacancy rate. The variance from month 9 to outturn relates to higher than anticipated fees associated with new lettings, a number of flexible leases have been agreed but due to rent free periods the associated benefits will be seen in 2024-25.
- **Landlord Services** - £261k under spent – since month 9 we have had confirmation of an agreement being reached with Raglan cattle market for outstanding rent owing. Even though we had included estimated figures within the accounts the final rental figure agreed was more than projected providing an in-year benefit of £317k. This is the main reason for the £327k improvement in position from Month 9. The 23-24 budget included a £215k saving from the rationalisation of our property portfolio but we have struggled to find any of this in 23-24, this shortfall has been part offset by improved rental income, salary savings due to the freezing of a vacant post and a one-off grant to cover the Ukrainian welcome centre.
- **Shared Accommodation** - £9k under spent – mainly due to the receipt of grant funding to cover works undertaken at Hanbury House that were not factored in at Month 9 and is the main reason for the improvement in outturn position.
- **County Farms & Industrial Units** - net £4k over spent – rental income for the year has come in below projections due to a number of vacant properties, it was assumed in our forecast at month 9 that some of these would be filled and is the main reason for the £57k adverse swing at outturn.
- **Cemeteries** - £42k under spent – mainly due to burial income exceeding budget.
- **Property Services** - £69k over spent – this is an adverse swing of £79k since Month 9 and is mainly due to overspends in our Corporate Building maintenance and Accommodation budgets where maintenance and cleaning costs have exceeded projections, this has been part offset by vacancy savings and increased fee income within Resources.

CORPORATE COSTS & LEVIES	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(2,139)	(2,146)	(3,231)	(3,220)
Coroners Services				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	18	18	104	104

The Coroner Service has over spent due to the urgent restructuring of the service as required by the Chief Coroner of England and Wales.

Corporate Management				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(116)	(116)	(138)	(233)
Increased income due to favourable rateable value adjustments on Council owned properties.				
Non-Distributed Costs				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	(382)	(331)
Pension strain costs relating to the costs of reorganisation are being met from capitalisation direction.				
Strategic Initiatives				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(2,040)	(2,040)	(2,815)	(2,742)
Unallocated reserve funded budgets that are mitigating cost pressures within the Authority.				
Insurance				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(7)	0	(19)
The Council has been out to tender for its insurance cover which resulted in premiums payable for 2023/24 being slightly less than anticipated and reflective of a very competitive insurance market.				
TREASURY & RESERVES				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(251)	(730)	(1,118)	(1,591)
Interest & Investment Income				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(111)	(550)	(576)	(836)
The performance of investments in money market funds and DMO deposits continued to improve with rising interest rates. Since Month 9 there has been further improvement as invested balances have been higher than anticipated.				
Interest Payable & Similar Charges				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	12	(8)	(352)	(331)
The interest payable position has improved due to lower-than-expected temporary loan requirements combined with forward starting loans locking into beneficial rates. Interest rates available have reduced from their peak lowering the costs of borrowing even further.				
Charges Required Under Regulation				

Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	124	223	206	213
This budget covers the statutory amount the Council is obliged to set aside to fund future loan repayments (Minimum revenue provision – MRP) and is slightly higher than the £6.7m budget due to higher spend than anticipated in the 2022/23 capital programme that was funded from borrowing (MRP costs start the year after the corresponding expenditure). Additional charges have been made for vehicles disposed/written off. This movement is matched by and under spend in Borrowing Cost Recoupment.				
Other Investment Income				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(24)	(42)	(42)	(49)
Unexpected income related to discharge of SRS business capital advance and interest relating to the late payment on the balance of Hilston Park disposal.				
Borrowing Cost Recoupment				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(252)	(353)	(353)	(586)
This budget represents a technical accounting adjustment where borrowing costs relating to the purchase of capital assets is repatriated from service budgets to ensure that the full life cost of assets is borne by the end user. The variance to budget relates to vehicles purchased at the end of 2022/23 which were originally anticipated to be financed through a sale and leaseback arrangement. However, following an options appraisal it was more cost effective to be purchased outright and financed from borrowing.				
FINANCING				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(460)	(430)	(350)	(196)
Council Tax Benefit Support				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(260)	(280)	(350)	(398)
Case load for the scheme appears to be stabilising. As a result an under spend has been made against this budget.				
Council Tax				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(200)	(150)	0	202
Generally the tax base remains strong. We continue to see the base grow as new properties come into the council tax list. However at the same time we are also seeing an increase in the number of discounts and exemptions awarded which has both a negative impact on the tax base and on the outturn position. We are also seeing a slowing down in collection rates as households struggle with the cost of living crisis. Combined, this has eroded any anticipated				

surplus this year and by year end income collected has failed to meet the budget set for the year.

General Government Grants				
Outturn Forecast	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	0
Income received to budget.				

2. Section 3 – School Balances

2.1. A Board of Governors, who are responsible for managing the school's finances, directly governs each of the Authority's Schools. However, the Authority also holds a key responsibility for monitoring the overall financial performance of schools. Below is a table showing the Schools' Outturn position for 2023-24 for each Educational Cluster.

School Balances Summary outturn position	(A) Opening Reserves (Surplus) / Deficit Position 2023/24	(B) Draw / (Contribution) from / (to) School Balances @ Month 5	(C) Draw / (Contribution) from / (to) School Balances @ Month 6	(D) Draw / (Contribution) from / (to) School Balances @ Month 9	(E) Draw/ (Contribution) to Reserves at Outturn	(A+E) 2023/24 Reserves at Outturn
	£000's	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cluster						
Abergavenny	(1,598)	1,059	1,119	1,776	1,742	143

Caldicot	(1,151)	915	991	1,559	1,064	(87)
Chepstow	(112)	180	159	383	770	658
Monmouth	(1,425)	1,032	1,016	1,317	873	(552)
Special	29	478	478	572	711	741
Total	(4,257)	3,663	3,763	5,607	5,161	904

2.2. Collective School Balances at the beginning of the Financial Year amounted to £4,257,000 surplus. At month 9, schools were forecasting a draw on reserves of £5,607,000, resulting in a forecast deficit balance of £1,350,000 by year end. At outturn, the actual draw on reserves has reduced slightly resulting in an outturn position of £904,000 deficit. The improved position since Month 9 was due to schools receiving a Revenue Maintenance Grant of £244k and interest on School Balances of £227k.

2.3. Grants awarded to schools at 2020/21 and 2021/22 year-ends resulted in a large increase in overall school balances and schools developed grant investment plans in line with the terms and conditions of these grants, hence the large draw on reserves during 2022/23 and 2023/24.

2.4. The movement of individual schools in deficit at the end of the year is shown below:

Start of year	Month 5	Month 6	Month 9	End of year
Total: 5	Total: 11	Total: 15	Total: 16	Total: 13
Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive
Llandogo	Llandogo	Llandogo	Llandogo	
Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service
The Dell	The Dell	The Dell	The Dell	The Dell
Our Lady & St Michael's RC Primary School (VA)		Our Lady & St Michael's RC Primary School (VA)	Our Lady & St Michael's RC Primary School (VA)	Our Lady & St Michael's RC Primary School (VA)
	Deri View	Deri View	Deri View	*Balance amalgamated into King Henry V111 3-19 School
	Ysgol y Fenni	Ysgol y Fenni	Ysgol y Fenni	Ysgol y Fenni
	Caldicot School	Caldicot School	Caldicot School	Caldicot School
	Archbishop Rowan Williams	Archbishop Rowan Williams	Archbishop Rowan Williams	
	Ysgol Y Ffin	Ysgol Y Ffin	Ysgol Y Ffin	Ysgol Y Ffin

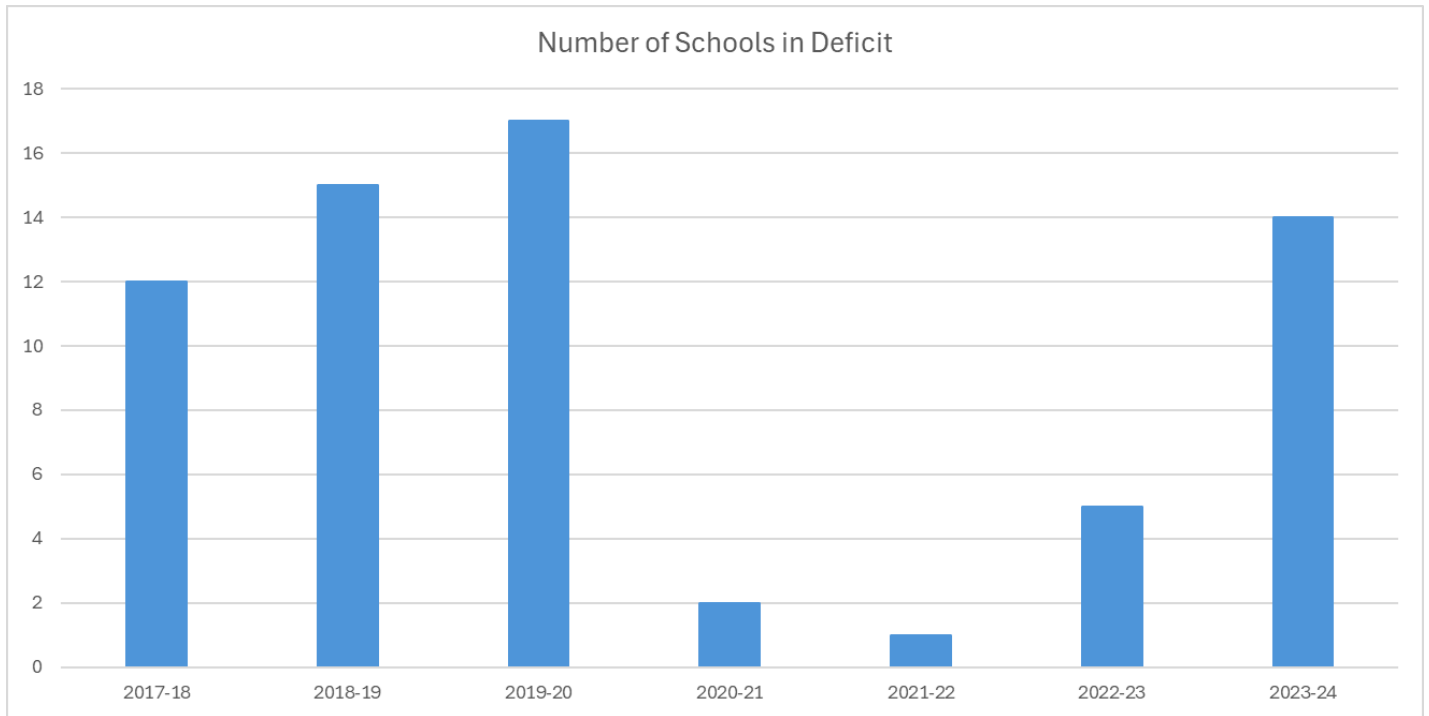
	Osbaston	Osbaston	Osbaston	Osbaston
	Overmonnow	Overmonnow	Overmonnow	Overmonnow
		Gilwern	Gilwern	Gilwern
		Rogiet	Rogiet	Rogiet
		Thornwell	Thornwell	Thornwell
			King Henry V111 3-19 School	King Henry V111 3-19 School

- 2.5. There is a significant movement in cumulative School balances for the year, moving from a surplus of £4.25m to a deficit of £904k at year-end. Fourteen schools are now in deficit.
- 2.6. There isn't a consistent picture of schools' balances. There has been a fluctuating trend for some time with some schools showing a continuing reduction in schools balances, which is of concern, and others a more stable trend.
- 2.7. Grants awarded to schools at 2020/21 and 2021/22 year-ends to manage the impact of the pandemic on education resulted in a large increase in overall school balances, which has somewhat masked inherent structural budget deficits across some schools.
- 2.8. The legacy impact of the pandemic continues within the school environment, particularly in respect of attendance, behaviours and increased additional learning needs. This has required increased staff and specialist resources to tackle the issues presenting and increased overall costs of provision. Higher than budgeted pay awards have also impacted upon budgets.
- 2.9. All schools that register a deficit balance at the end of a financial year are required to bring forward budget recovery plans. These recovery plans will be confirmed with both the Local Education Authority and each School's Governing Body. Once finalised, the schools with significant deficits will be monitored by the Cabinet member for both Children and Young People and Resources on a termly basis.

Financial Year-end	Net level of School Balances (Surplus) / Deficit in £000's
2014-15	(1,140)
2015-16	(1,156)
2016-17	(269)
2017-18	(175)
2018-19	232
2019-20	435
2020-21	(3,418)

2021-22	(6,956)
2022-23	(4,257)
2023-24	904

2.10. The increase in school balances during 2020/21 and 2021/22 resulted in a reduction in the number of schools in deficit, as illustrated in the following table. Unfortunately, fourteen schools have returned to a deficit balance.



3. Section 4 – Capital budget Outturn

3.1 The summary Capital position at Outturn is as follows:

Category	Slippage B/F	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Slippage to 2024/25	Revised Budget 2023/24	Actual Outturn	Over / (Under) spend
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Expenditure							
Capitalisation Directive	0	3,008	0	(387)	2,621	3,621	1,000
Development Schemes Over £250k	12,042	603	2,203	(8,222)	6,625	6,618	(7)
Development Schemes Under £250k	2,527	360	72	(2,013)	946	946	0
School modernisation programme	6,265	29,375	(63)	(8,604)	26,972	26,972	0
Infrastructure	2,455	6,823	150	(3,250)	6,178	6,178	0
ICT Schemes	866	413	0	(765)	514	514	0
Property Maintenance	2,027	2,190	110	(1,279)	3,048	3,048	0
Renovation Grants	0	900	275	(110)	1,065	1,065	0
LCHO	0	0	191	(27)	164	164	0
Section 106	828	0	453	(1,160)	121	125	4
Regeneration - Specific Grant Funded	6,089	500	10,827	(2,791)	14,626	14,613	(12)
Vehicles	0	1,500	208	0	1,708	1,209	(499)
Other	0	0	103	0	103	103	0
Total Expenditure	33,098	45,671	14,529	(28,606)	64,691	65,176	485
Financing							
Supported Borrowing	0	(2,430)	0	0	(2,430)	(2,430)	0
General Capital Grant	0	(2,495)	0	0	(2,495)	(2,495)	0
Grants and Contributions	(8,446)	(19,061)	(19,451)	3,596	(43,362)	(43,362)	0
S106 Contributions	(917)	0	(426)	1,121	(222)	(225)	(3)
Unsupported Borrowing	(20,865)	(15,787)	5,643	22,325	(8,684)	(9,665)	(981)
Earmarked Reserve & Revenue Funding	(305)	(103)	(103)	148	(363)	(363)	(0)
Capital Receipts	(2,565)	(4,295)	(191)	1,415	(5,636)	(6,636)	(1,000)
Leasing	0	(1,500)	0	0	(1,500)	0	1,500
Total Financing	(33,098)	(45,671)	(14,529)	28,606	(64,691)	(65,176)	(485)

3.2 The capital expenditure at outturn demonstrating a net underspend £485k, primarily due to the following variances identified:

Scheme	Budget £000's	Over / (Under) spend £000's	Comment
Capitalisation directive	2,621	1,000	A call on a further £1m headroom that was built into the 2023/24 revenue budget to fund the cost of redundancy and associated pension costs upon service reorganisation.
Vehicle acquisition	1,708	(499)	The level of vehicle acquisition during the year was below budget reflective of the actual requirement for replacement across Council services. Vehicle purchases for the year were financed by unsupported borrowing instead of leasing as overall lifetime costs were lower under borrowing.

3.3 Capital Slippage

3.4 Capital slippage for the year was £28.606m. The principal schemes reporting slippage are:

Scheme Category	Scheme Name	Slippage £000's	Comment
Schools & Education	King Henry VIII - Future Schools Tranche B	8,562	Scheme had been front loaded in 2023-24, as due for completion in 2024-25
Infrastructure	Wye Bridge Monmouth	2,175	Scheme delayed to 2024/25 because there are environmental constraints due to Licences / permits and working with NRW. Costs currently estimated to remain as budgeted.
Economic Development	Capital Region City Deal	1,948	Re-profiling of contributions required by the Cardiff Capital Region board
Children's Services	Property Acquisition for Children and Young People with Complex Needs	1,875	Delays to the acquisition of suitable properties identified
Housing	Housing Provision Borrowing Headroom	1,767	Acquisition strategy in development to formalise arrangements in respect of buying properties to address homeless issue & support the implementation of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2024-25
Economic Development	Grant –Match Funding Support Allocation	877	Progress dependent upon identifying suitable grant streams, so reliant upon third parties.
Schools & Education	School Refurbishment	816	Delays in contractor engagement for urgent essential maintenance
Schools & Education	Archbishop Rowan Williams Nursery	640	In addition to this funding there is further S106 funding to improve / expand classrooms. The project is currently on-going with final surveys being completed before construction begins.
Schools & Education	Trellech Primary Nursery Childcare Scheme	620	Completion of Nursery scheme to be completed in 2024-25, as improvement works have commenced

Scheme Category	Scheme Name	Slippage £000's	Comment
Economic Development	Placemaking programme	608	Placemaking Plans scheme where local priorities for placemaking interventions have been agreed by steering groups
Maintenance Schemes	Property Maintenance	502	Required for essential schemes delayed by contractor engagement
Infrastructure	Wye Bridge Chepstow	468	Scheme delayed to 2024/25 – Further Investigatory works are required to be completed (traffic data etc), which have been commissioned to support the remedial decisions before the employment of a contractor.
Infrastructure	Reconstruction of Bridges and walls	464	Re-surfacing works delayed on Wye Bridge project. No compliant bids were received in the first tender process so have to go back out to tender and this will take us into the 2024/25 financial year.
Schools & Education	Welsh Medium School and Nursery	392	Project started in 2023-24 and due for completion in 2024-25, after initial delays.
Capitalisation	Capitalisation Directive	387	Support Service Transformation in 2024/25
Environmental	Flood Recovery Grant	379	Multi-year flood management projects
Economic Development	RE:FIT Programme	292	Multi-year investment project funding required to continue projects
Infrastructure	ATF Schemes	280	Schemes due for completion early 24-25 due to slight delays out of Council control
IT Schemes	ICT Desktop replacement budget	230	Delay in identifying required hardware
Infrastructure	Various small schemes	190	Small PROW schemes, Sewage treatment, infrastructure, LCHO and broadband schemes which have been delayed due to external factors
Economic Development	Shire Hall/Monmouth Museum Move	187	This is a multi-year project that involves considerable planning and logistical complexities
Schools & Education	Safer Route to Schools Investment	185	Further development of safer routes infrastructure which has had slight delays due to third parties
Economic Development	MUCH Project (Magor with Undy Community Hall)	150	Final fitting out stage to be completed in 2024-25
IT Schemes	Network Estate replacement budget	150	Awaiting infrastructure implementation programme from our Network Provider
IT Schemes	SRS Data Hall Migration	149	Decommissioning costs will now arise in 24/25 as advised by our Network provider
IT Schemes	Sharepoint Online Implementation	135	Project to be completed in 2024-25 following some technical delays
Sustainability	Decarbonisation Investment	134	Continuation in 24 -25 of Investments in Decarbonisation projects as identified
Community Development	Projects to Safely and Effectively Open Schools to the Community Outside Traditional Hours	123	Projects started and will be completed in 2024-25 as opportunities allow
Renovation Grants	Disabled Facilities Grants (Private)	109	To be utilised in Social Care situations in 2024-25

Scheme Category	Scheme Name	Slippage £000's	Comment
Grant Schemes	Small grant schemes	133	Small schemes for Waste, Housing, Leisure and Nature
Adult Services	Mardy Park Minor Works - ABUHB	90	Awaiting authorisation in regard to progressing the scheme with a partner organisation
Economic Development	County Farms Maintenance & Reinvestment	86	Relating to works required to comply with The Water Resources (Control of Agriculture Pollution) Regs 2021 that are now monitored and enforced by NRW
Infrastructure	Ash Dieback/Dangerous Trees works	70	This 3 year scheme will be completed in 2024-25 as affected woodland is identified
Schools & Education	Capital Support for Learners with ALN	65	Capital projects will be completed in 2024-25
IT Schemes	Upgrade of CAPITA 1 system CYP	55	Delay in updating system as exact requirements have not yet been identified.
Community Development	Abergavenny Community Hub Development	45	Project for completion in 2024-25
Economic Development	Fixed Asset disposal costs	37	Reflects slight delay in progressing some asset disposals
Economic Development	Brilliant Basics Fund – WG- Tintern Welcome	34	Scheme due for completion 2024-25
IT Schemes	CCTV for bus fleet	25	Funding required in 24/25 for specialist equipment for a vehicle for a specific pupil that is currently under construction.
Economic Development	Old Station Tintern Investment	22	Required for completion of disability access around the station
IT Schemes	Revenue Systems update	13	Delay in updating system as exact requirements have not yet been identified that enables an integrated solution
S106	S106 Schemes	1,160	Delays in planning / public consultations and contractor engagement, have led to delays on various schemes

3.5 Useable Capital Receipts Available

3.6 The table below outlines the latest forecast of capital receipts balances available to meet future capital commitments. Whilst overall balances remain healthy, it should be noted that all banked capital receipts have been committed to funding the indicative forward capital programme. Therefore any further use will be dependent upon forecast capital receipts being realised.

Capital receipt balances	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Balance as at 1st April	12,446	9,984	7,840	5,034	2,669	1,304
Capital receipts used for financing	(2,851)	(1,792)	(460)	(460)	(460)	(460)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(3,008)	(3,358)	(3,008)	(2,008)	(1,008)	0
Capital receipts to meet redundancy costs	(613)	(387)				

Capital receipts Received	4,010					
Capital receipts Forecast	0	3,393	663	103	103	103
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	9,984	7,840	5,034	2,669	1,304	947