

# Public Document Pack



The following reports are Information Items for the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

- 1 2023/24 Budget Monitoring Report (Month 5).
- 2 Education Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Period 5).
- 3 Caerphilly Cares Support Package for Families eligible for Free School Meals.



## EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 28TH NOVEMBER 2023

**SUBJECT: 2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (MONTH 5)**

**REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To inform Members of projected revenue expenditure for Social Services for the 2023/24 financial year and its implications for future financial years.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 The report will identify the reasons behind a projected underspend of £3,147k for Social Services in 2023/24, inclusive of transport costs.

2.2 It will also consider the implications of this projected underspend on Social Services reserve balances and for future financial years.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 Members are asked to note the projected underspend of £3,147k along with its implications on reserve balances and future financial years.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To ensure Members are apprised of the latest financial position for Social Services.

### **5. THE REPORT**

#### **5.1 Social Services Overview**

5.1.1 On 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the Social Services Scrutiny Committee received the 2023/24 Social Services Revenue Budget report, which identified a total budget for Social Services of £127,137,247. There have been no budget virements approved across service areas since that date so the revised 2023/24 budget for Social Services remains unchanged.

5.1.2 Information available as at 31st August 2023 suggests a potential underspend of £2,796k against the revised budget identified above. Details of this potential spend are provided in sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 of this report and in appendix 1.

5.1.3 In addition to the revised budget for Social Services identified above, a further £1,753,733 is

included in the Economy & Environment Directorate budget in respect of transport costs for Social Services. Current information suggests a potential underspend of £351k against this budget as a result of reduced costs of transport to day centres.

- 5.1.4 This potential underspend in respect of transport costs would add to the potential underspend against the Social Services revised budget, resulting in a net underspend of £3,147k as summarised below:-

<b>Division</b>	<b>Revised Budget (£000's)</b>	<b>Projection/ Commitment (£000's)</b>	<b>(Over)/Under Spend (£000's)</b>
Children's Services	35,943	35,661	282
Adult Services	87,487	85,232	2,255
Service Strategy & Business Support	3,707	3,448	259
<b>Sub-Total Directorate of Social Services</b>	<b>127,137</b>	<b>124,341</b>	<b>2,796</b>
Transport Costs	1,754	1,403	351
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>128,891</b>	<b>125,744</b>	<b>3,147</b>

## 5.2 Children's Services

- 5.2.1 The Children's Services Division is currently projected to underspend its budget by £282k as summarised in the following table: -

	<b>Revised Budget (£000's)</b>	<b>Projection/ Commitment (£000's)</b>	<b>(Over)/Under Spend (£000's)</b>
Management, Fieldwork & Administration	11,771	11,078	693
Residential Care Incl. Secure Accommodation	12,627	12,572	55
Fostering & Adoption	9,753	10,069	(316)
Youth Offending	478	435	43
Families First	4	4	0
After Care Support	771	1,078	(307)
Other Costs	539	425	114
<b>Totals: -</b>	<b>35,943</b>	<b>35,661</b>	<b>282</b>

### *Management, Fieldwork and Administration*

- 5.2.2 Continuing recruitment difficulties have contributed to a potential underspend of £693k in respect of Children's Services management, administration and social work staff.

### *Residential Care Including Secure Accommodation*

- 5.2.3 At their meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> October, Scrutiny Members were informed of a potential overspend of £111k in respect of residential care for children, due to the additional cost of staff recruited in readiness for the opening of up to 4 new in-house residential homes over the forthcoming year. Since then one young person has moved on from a temporary high cost placement in to a lower cost secure placement. As a result we are now forecasting a potential underspend of £55k in respect of residential care for children.

### *Fostering and Adoption*

- 5.2.4 Members will be aware of the 11.5% increase in the number of children with Special Guardianship Orders during the first quarter of the current financial year which resulted in a

potential overspend of £324k. There has been little change in the position over the last 2 months with the potential overspend reducing slightly to £316k.

#### *Youth Offending*

- 5.2.5 Following a freeze in contributions in to the Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Offending Service over several years, the Local Management Board (LMB) agreed to uplift contributions by 10% annually commencing in 2022/23, in order to keep pace with increasing costs. However, in light of the financial pressures faced by partner organisations in 2023/24, the LMB subsequently agreed a one-off reimbursement to partners from service reserves to mitigate the 10% increase in contributions required in 2023/24. This has resulted in a £43k underspend in respect of Caerphilly Children's Services contribution to the YOS partnership.

#### *Aftercare and Other Children Looked After Services*

- 5.2.6 The number of care leavers with continuing support packages has continued to increase since the month 3 position was reported to members, with support being provided for longer periods. This has resulted in an increase in the potential overspend to £307k

#### *Other Costs*

- 5.2.7 The demand for advocacy and family support services funded through spot purchase arrangements has proved to be much lower than originally anticipated, as has the contribution expected from Caerphilly to support the Gwent Missing Children Project. This has contributed to an underspend of around £193k. However, this has been partially offset by a £79k increase in the cost of supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children, resulting in a net underspend of £114k in respect of Children's Services other costs.

### 5.3 **Adult Services**

- 5.3.1 The Adult Services Division is currently projected to underspend its budget by £2,255k as summarised in the following table: -

	<b>Revised Budget (£000's)</b>	<b>Projection/ Commitment (£000's)</b>	<b>(Over)/Under Spend (£000's)</b>
Management, Fieldwork & Administration	10,041	9,764	277
Own Residential Care and Supported Living	9,329	8,272	1,057
Own Day Care	4,787	4,121	666
Supported Employment	77	70	7
Aid and Adaptations	865	875	(10)
Gwent Frailty Programme	2,750	2,505	245
External Residential Care	22,266	23,631	(1,365)
External Day Care	979	808	171
Home Care	12,496	10,495	2,001
Other Domiciliary Care	21,561	21,697	(136)
Resettlement	(1,020)	(1,020)	0
Services for Children with Disabilities	2,256	2,912	(656)
Other Costs	1,100	1,102	(2)
<b>Totals: -</b>	<b>87,487</b>	<b>85,232</b>	<b>2,255</b>

### *Management, Fieldwork and Administration*

- 5.3.2 Continuing vacancies throughout July and August have increased the potential underspend in respect of management, fieldwork and administration posts within Adult Services to around £277k.

### *Own Residential Care and Supported Living*

- 5.3.3 The £1,057k underspend forecast in respect of our own residential care and supported living homes, includes around £385k additional service user contributions, following a recovery in occupancy levels in our residential homes, post-pandemic. A further £141k of the underspend stems from the closure of South View residential home for people with learning disabilities at Graig Road, Hengoed, which was formerly occupied by service users from Rhondda Cynon Taff. The remaining underspend can largely be attributed to staff recruitment difficulties.

### *Own Day Care*

- 5.3.4 Alternative service provision within our own day opportunities is expected to result in an underspend of £666k. However, the service area continues to face recruitment difficulties so the underspend could increase by the end of the financial year.

### *Aids and Adaptations*

- 5.3.5 There has been a £50k increase in the management charge for the Gwent Integrated Community Equipment Service compared with 2022/23, in response to the inflationary pressures associated with operating the service. However, this has been partially offset by a reduction in demand for specialist equipment for children with disabilities and a reduction in the number of funded telephone lines for vulnerable adults.

### *Gwent Frailty Programme*

- 5.3.6 The underspend of £245k in respect of the Gwent Frailty Programme reflects the continued difficulties faced in recruiting both Health Care and Social Care staff.

### *External Residential Care*

- 5.3.7 On 17<sup>th</sup> October, Scrutiny Members were informed of a potential overspend of £111k in respect of residential and nursing care for vulnerable adults, due to increasing occupancy within residential and nursing homes. Since then, demand for placements has continued to grow, which in turn has increased the potential overspend in this area by £171k to £1,365k.

### *External Day Care*

- 5.3.8 A greater take up of direct payments over recent years has led to a reduction in demand for external day care provision resulting in a projected underspend of £171k.

### *Home Care (In-House and Independent Sector)*

- 5.3.9 Since the month 3 position was reported to Members, the Adult Services division has made some progress in reducing the level of unmet need for domiciliary care from 330 hours per week to 117 hours per week. This has in turn reduced the potential underspend in respect of home care services by £452k to £2,001k. Of this amount, £1,837k relates to in-house service provision and £164k to external provision.

### *Other Domiciliary Care*

- 5.3.10 Increased demand for supported living and extra care since 2022/23 have largely been offset by a drop-off in shared lives provision and direct payments. However, the underspend in

respect of home care service provision identified in paragraph 5.3.9 has impacted on the level of income receivable from service users, resulting in a potential net overspend of around £136k in respect of other domiciliary care.

*Children with Disabilities*

5.3.11 The £656k overspend predicted in respect of Children with disabilities, can largely be attributed to increased demand for residential care placements and additional staffing required at Ty Hapus respite home.

*Other Costs*

5.3.12 An overspend of £74k is projected in respect of additional staffing cover for the Telecare help line. However, this has been largely offset by limited demand for services purchased through spot contract arrangements in other areas, resulting in a net overspend of £2k in respect of other costs for adult services.

**5.4 Service Strategy and Business Support**

5.4.1 The service area is currently projected to underspend by £259k as summarised in the following table: -

	<b>Revised Budget (£000's)</b>	<b>Projection/ Commitment (£000's)</b>	<b>(Over)/Under Spend (£000's)</b>
Management and Administration	2,299	2,088	211
Office Accommodation	331	385	(54)
Office Expenses	133	106	27
Other Costs	944	869	75
<b>Totals: -</b>	<b>3,707</b>	<b>3,448</b>	<b>259</b>

*Management and Administration*

5.4.2 The underspend of £211k in respect of management and administration includes £94k as a result of the vacant director's post. The remaining £117k can largely be attributed to delays in filling newly created posts within the Caerphilly Cares Service.

*Office Accommodation*

5.4.3 £28k of the overspend projected in this area relates to a loss of income from room rentals since Corporate Property Services took on the running of Atlee Court and Graig y Rhacca Hubs from the Caerphilly Cares Team. The remainder of the £54k overspend is largely attributable to increased energy costs at the North Resource Centre and Ty Graddfa offices.

*Office Expenses*

5.4.4 The underspend of £27k in this area can be attributed to reduced printing costs as a result of a growth in virtual meetings and home working.

*Other Costs*

5.4.5 The £75k potential underspend in this area includes £38k in respect of the Joint Workforce Development Team administered by Blaenau Gwent Local Authority and £27k in respect of the Regional Partnership Support Team administered by Torfaen Local Authority. The

remaining £10k underspend relates to miscellaneous IT expenditure as a result of service reserves being used to fund most of the recent expenditure.

## 5.5 **Impact of the Potential Underspend on Service Reserve Balances and Future Financial Years**

5.5.1 The projected in-year underspend of £3,147k could increase the Social Services general reserve balance by £1,573k to £4,286k and increase corporate reserve balances by the same amount. These additional reserve balances could provide some temporary breathing space within the corporate medium-term financial plan for 2024/25.

5.5.2 However, if the recruitment issues faced during 2023/24 can be resolved then the underspends achieved in 2023/24 will not be realised in future years. Conversely, the increased demands experienced during 2023/24 in respect of special guardianships, aftercare services, residential and nursing care, supported living and children with disabilities are all likely to translate in to on-going financial pressures for future years. Furthermore, the increasing costs faced by social care providers is likely to translate into demands for significant fee increases in 2024/25. The anticipated increase in Social Services reserves could help mitigate the impact of these additional pressures, in the short-term only.

## 5.6 **Conclusion**

5.6.1 Despite a number of areas where sizeable cost pressures are being experienced, staffing shortages across the social care market have led to projected in-year underspend of £3,147k for Social Services in 2023/24. If those staffing shortages can be resolved then the increase in service reserves that would result from the 2023/24 underspend could help to balance the Social Services budget in 2024/25.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 The projections within this report assume that any impact of the outstanding pay award for 2023/24 in excess of 5% will be corporately funded.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is not needed because the issues covered are for information purposes only.

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 As detailed throughout the report.

## 9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

## 10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 All consultation responses have been incorporated into this report.

## 11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Social Services Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 (Month 5)



## **APPENDIX 1 - Social Services Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 (Month 5)**

	Revised Budget 2023/24	Projection	(Over)/ Under Spend
	£	£	£
<b><u>SUMMARY</u></b>			
CHILDREN'S SERVICES	£35,942,914	£35,661,098	£281,816
ADULT SERVICES	£87,487,295	£85,232,106	£2,255,189
RESOURCING AND PERFORMANCE	£3,707,038	£3,447,812	£259,226
<b>SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL</b>	<b>£127,137,247</b>	<b>£124,341,016</b>	<b>£2,796,231</b>

	Revised Budget 2023/24	Projection	(Over)/ Under Spend
	£	£	£
<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>			
<b>Management, Fieldwork and Administration</b>			
Children's Management, Fieldwork and Administration	£13,535,801	£12,774,008	£761,793
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	(£876,424)	(£807,694)	(£68,730)
Less Wanless Income	(£51,115)	(£51,115)	£0
Performance & Improvement Grant	(£40,000)	(£40,000)	£0
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£797,575)	(£797,575)	£0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£11,770,687</b>	<b>£11,077,624</b>	<b>£693,063</b>
<b>Residential Care Including Secure Accommodation</b>			
Own Residential Homes	£2,784,544	£2,774,199	£10,345
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	(£401,525)	(£401,525)	£0
Welsh Government Grants	(£637,848)	(£637,848)	£0
Gross Cost of Placements	£10,965,812	£10,917,837	£47,975
Contributions from Education	(£84,162)	(£80,154)	(£4,008)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£12,626,821</b>	<b>£12,572,509</b>	<b>£54,312</b>
<b>Fostering and Adoption</b>			
Gross Cost of Placements	£8,615,585	£8,761,515	(£145,930)
Other Fostering Costs	£91,006	£103,585	(£12,579)
Adoption Allowances	£64,246	£62,590	£1,656
Other Adoption Costs	£403,004	£403,004	£0
Professional Fees Inc. Legal Fees	£578,899	£738,546	(£159,647)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£9,752,740</b>	<b>£10,069,240</b>	<b>(£316,500)</b>
<b>Youth Offending</b>			
Youth Offending Team	£478,133	£434,666	£43,467
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£478,133</b>	<b>£434,666</b>	<b>£43,467</b>
<b>Families First</b>			
Families First Team	£266,484	£251,463	£15,021
Other Families First Contracts	£2,909,565	£2,924,586	(£15,021)
Grant Income	(£3,171,546)	(£3,171,546)	£0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£4,503</b>	<b>£4,503</b>	<b>(£0)</b>
<b>Other Costs</b>			
Preventative and Support - (Section 17 & Childminding)	£35,000	£35,000	£0
Aftercare	£770,814	£1,077,716	(£306,902)
Agreements with Voluntary Organisations	£617,130	£424,188	£192,942
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£100,000)	(£100,000)	£0
Other	(£12,914)	£65,652	(£78,566)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£1,310,030</b>	<b>£1,502,557</b>	<b>(£192,527)</b>
<b>TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>	<b>£35,942,914</b>	<b>£35,661,098</b>	<b>£281,816</b>

	Revised Budget 2023/24	Projection	(Over)/ Under Spend
	£	£	£
<b><u>ADULT SERVICES</u></b>			
<b>Management, Fieldwork and Administration</b>			
Management	£148,171	£146,513	£1,658
Protection of Vulnerable Adults	£462,746	£452,927	£9,819
OLA and Client Income from Client Finances	(£385,279)	(£367,141)	(£18,138)
Commissioning	£564,680	£593,832	(£29,152)
Section 28a Income Joint Commissioning Post	(£17,175)	(£17,175)	£0
Older People	£2,661,135	£2,593,251	£67,884
Less Wanless Income	(£44,747)	(£44,747)	£0
Promoting Independence	£3,284,480	£3,342,863	(£58,383)
Provider Services	£614,295	£609,332	£4,963
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£282,079)	(£328,110)	£46,031
Learning Disabilities	£883,233	£836,467	£46,766
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	(£171,259)	(£129,291)	(£41,968)
MCA/LPS/DoLS grant	£0	(£62,387)	£62,387
Contribution from Health and Other Partners	(£44,253)	(£43,452)	(£801)
Mental Health	£1,619,523	£1,734,238	(£114,715)
Section 28a Income Assertive Outreach	(£94,769)	(£94,769)	£0
Drug & Alcohol Services	£439,418	£442,791	(£3,373)
Emergency Duty Team	£402,585	£373,171	£29,414
Further Vacancy Savings	£0	(£274,132)	£274,132
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£10,040,705</b>	<b>£9,764,181</b>	<b>£276,524</b>
<b>Own Residential Care</b>			
Residential Homes for the Elderly	£9,090,388	£8,436,391	£653,997
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	(£435,597)	(£178,597)	(£257,000)
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£92,563)	(£92,563)	£0
-Less Client Contributions	(£2,230,000)	(£2,615,509)	£385,509
-Less Section 28a Income (Ty Iscoed)	(£115,350)	(£115,350)	£0
-Less Inter-Authority Income	(£55,161)	(£47,999)	(£7,162)
Net Cost	£6,161,717	£5,386,373	£775,344
Accommodation for People with Learning Disabilities	£3,804,414	£3,197,004	£607,410
-Less Client Contributions	(£89,641)	(£61,000)	(£28,641)
-Less Inter-Authority Income	(£546,971)	(£249,972)	(£296,999)
Net Cost	£3,167,802	£2,886,033	£281,769
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£9,329,519</b>	<b>£8,272,406</b>	<b>£1,057,113</b>

	Revised Budget 2023/24	Projection	(Over)/ Under Spend
	£	£	£
<b>External Residential Care</b>			
Long Term Placements			
Older People	£16,096,581	£17,201,331	(£1,104,750)
Less Wanless Income	(£303,428)	(£303,428)	£0
Less Section 28a Income - Allt yr yn	(£151,063)	(£151,063)	£0
Physically Disabled	£1,059,617	£1,560,265	(£500,648)
Learning Disabilities	£5,000,538	£4,700,247	£300,291
Mental Health	£1,135,777	£1,189,145	(£53,368)
Substance Misuse Placements	£42,487	£42,487	£0
Social Care Workforce & Sustainability Grant	(£1,032,639)	(£1,032,639)	£0
Energy Grants	£0	£520,750	(£520,750)
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	£0	(£520,750)	£520,750
<b>Net Cost</b>	<b>£21,847,870</b>	<b>£23,206,345</b>	<b>(£1,358,475)</b>
Short Term Placements			
Older People	£237,321	£237,321	£0
Carers Respite Arrangements	£45,063	£45,063	£0
Physical Disabilities	£17,146	£17,146	£0
Learning Disabilities	£118,634	£125,496	(£6,862)
<b>Net Cost</b>	<b>£418,164</b>	<b>£425,026</b>	<b>(£6,862)</b>
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£22,266,034</b>	<b>£23,631,371</b>	<b>(£1,365,337)</b>
<b>Own Day Care</b>			
Own Day Opportunities	£4,121,996	£3,383,232	£738,764
-Less Attendance Contributions	(£37,560)	£0	(£37,560)
-Less Inter-Authority Income	(£24,986)	£0	(£24,986)
Mental Health Community Support	£917,187	£927,344	(£10,157)
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	(£21,186)	(£21,186)	£0
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£87,100)	(£87,100)	£0
-Less Section 28a Income (Pentrebane Street)	(£81,366)	(£81,366)	£0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£4,786,985</b>	<b>£4,120,924</b>	<b>£666,061</b>
<b>External Day Care</b>			
Elderly	£43,830	£32,310	£11,520
Physically Disabled	£153,843	£122,561	£31,282
Learning Disabilities	£848,914	£704,914	£144,000
Section 28a Income	(£72,659)	(£72,659)	£0
Mental Health	£5,010	£21,004	(£15,994)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£978,938</b>	<b>£808,130</b>	<b>£170,808</b>
<b>Supported Employment</b>			
Mental Health	£77,465	£69,550	£7,915
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£77,465</b>	<b>£69,550</b>	<b>£7,915</b>
<b>Aids and Adaptations</b>			
Disability Living Equipment	£613,706	£629,506	(£15,800)
Adaptations	£243,370	£243,370	£0
Chronically Sick and Disabled Telephones	£7,887	£2,358	£5,529
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£864,963</b>	<b>£875,234</b>	<b>(£10,271)</b>

	Revised Budget 2023/24	Projection	(Over)/ Under Spend
	£	£	£
<b>Home Assistance and Reablement</b>			
Home Assistance and Reablement Team			
Home Assistance and Reablement Team (H.A.R.T.)	£6,139,346	£4,304,310	£1,835,036
Wanless Funding	(£67,959)	(£67,959)	£0
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£32,306)	(£32,306)	£0
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£159,452)	(£161,020)	£1,568
Independent Sector Domiciliary Care			
Elderly	£6,589,493	£6,206,498	£382,995
Physical Disabilities	£889,412	£1,099,069	(£209,657)
Learning Disabilities (excluding Resettlement)	£290,640	£242,194	£48,446
Mental Health	£82,397	£139,834	(£57,437)
Social Care Workforce & Sustainability Grant	(£1,235,943)	(£1,235,943)	£0
Gwent Frailty Programme	£2,749,903	£2,505,032	£244,871
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£15,245,531</b>	<b>£12,999,708</b>	<b>£2,245,823</b>
<b>Other Domiciliary Care</b>			
Shared Lives			
Shared Lives Scheme	£1,681,470	£1,560,783	£120,687
Regional Integration Fund Grant	(£173,790)	(£173,790)	£0
Net Cost	£1,507,680	£1,386,993	£120,687
Supported Living			
Older People	£267,923	£342,528	(£74,605)
Physical Disabilities	£1,970,993	£1,755,693	£215,300
Learning Disabilities	£14,989,169	£15,459,917	(£470,748)
Less Section 28a Income Joint Tenancy	(£28,987)	(£28,987)	£0
Mental Health	£2,387,097	£2,246,680	£140,417
Social Care Workforce & Sustainability Grant	(£408,304)	(£408,304)	£0
Net Cost	£19,177,891	£19,367,528	(£189,637)
Direct Payment			
Elderly People	£117,541	£101,492	£16,049
Physical Disabilities	£1,004,667	£907,747	£96,920
Learning Disabilities	£782,286	£777,424	£4,862
Section 28a Income Learning Disabilities	(£20,808)	(£20,808)	£0
Mental Health	£4,339	£4,277	£62
Net Cost	£1,888,025	£1,770,132	£117,893
Other			
Extra Care Sheltered Housing	£745,323	£780,008	(£34,685)
Net Cost	£745,323	£780,008	(£34,685)
Total Home Care Client Contributions	(£1,757,767)	(£1,607,908)	(£149,859)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£21,561,152</b>	<b>£21,696,753</b>	<b>(£135,601)</b>
<b>Resettlement</b>			
External Funding			
Section 28a Income	(£1,020,410)	(£1,020,410)	£0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>(£1,020,410)</b>	<b>(£1,020,410)</b>	<b>£0</b>

	Revised Budget 2023/24	Projection	(Over)/ Under Spend
	£	£	£
<b>Services for Children with Disabilities</b>			
Ty Hapus	£526,314	£600,594	(£74,280)
Residential Care	£910,745	£1,471,956	(£561,211)
Foster Care	£517,101	£544,808	(£27,707)
Preventative and Support - (Section 17 & Childminding)	£10,596	£10,596	£0
Respite Care	£99,421	£66,536	£32,885
Direct Payments	£192,402	£218,177	(£25,775)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£2,256,579</b>	<b>£2,912,666</b>	<b>(£656,087)</b>
<b>Other Costs</b>			
Telecare Gross Cost	£876,579	£951,066	(£74,487)
Section 28a Income	(£6,866)	(£6,866)	£0
Less Client and Agency Income	(£417,555)	(£417,555)	£0
Agreements with Voluntary Organisations			
Children with Disabilities	£320,536	£264,366	£56,170
Elderly	£77,270	£89,000	(£11,730)
Learning Difficulties	£67,006	£78,404	(£11,398)
Section 28a Income	(£52,020)	(£52,020)	£0
Mental Health & Substance Misuse	£48,651	£8,964	£39,687
MH Capacity Act / Deprivation of Libert Safeguards	£124,534	£124,534	£0
Other	£61,699	£61,699	£0
Gwent Enhanced Dementia Care Expenditure	£152,106	£114,080	£38,027
Gwent Enhanced Dementia Care Grant	(£152,106)	(£114,080)	(£38,027)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£1,099,834</b>	<b>£1,101,591</b>	<b>(£1,757)</b>
<b>TOTAL ADULT SERVICES</b>	<b>£87,487,295</b>	<b>£85,232,106</b>	<b>£2,255,189</b>

	Revised Budget 2023/24	Projection	(Over)/ Under Spend
	£	£	£
<b><u>SERVICE STRATEGY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT</u></b>			
<b>Management and Administration</b>			
Policy Development and Strategy	£198,181	£104,082	£94,099
Financial Services	£983,158	£928,477	£54,681
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	(£120,632)	(£68,187)	(£52,445)
Caerphilly Cares	£2,407,620	£2,241,212	£166,408
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	(£1,169,203)	(£1,117,184)	(£52,019)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£2,299,124</b>	<b>£2,088,401</b>	<b>£210,723</b>
<b>Office Accommodation</b>			
All Offices	£437,926	£447,520	(£9,594)
Less Office Accommodation Recharge to HRA	(£106,654)	(£62,654)	(£44,000)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£331,272</b>	<b>£384,866</b>	<b>(£53,594)</b>
<b>Office Expenses</b>			
All Offices	£132,662	£105,817	£26,845
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£132,662</b>	<b>£105,817</b>	<b>£26,845</b>
<b>Other Costs</b>			
Training	£370,143	£331,744	£38,399
Staff Support/Protection	£10,519	£10,519	£0
Information Technology	£64,549	£171,955	(£107,406)
Appropriations from Earmarked Reserves	£0	(£117,259)	£117,259
Management Fees for Consortia	(£56,330)	(£56,330)	£0
Insurances	£277,770	£277,770	£0
Other Costs	£277,329	£250,329	£27,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£943,980</b>	<b>£868,728</b>	<b>£75,252</b>
<b>TOTAL SERVICE STRATEGY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT</b>	<b>£3,707,038</b>	<b>£3,447,812</b>	<b>£259,226</b>



## **INFORMATION REPORT FOR EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 (PERIOD 5)**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND  
CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To inform Members of the projected 2023-24 outturn position for the Directorate of Education based on the most recent information available.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 The report identifies projected under / (overspends) currently forecast for 2023-24 (full details attached in Appendix 1).

2.2 In summary the current projected outturn position for Education is an overspend of £340k.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 Members are requested to note the contents of this report.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To ensure that Members are fully informed with regards to the 2023-24 projected revenue spends position for Education.

4.2 The Council Budget is based on the achievement of both expenditure and income targets. To ensure that these are met, and that the Council's financial integrity is maintained Directors are required to review income and expenditure trends.



## 5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The report deals with the budget monitoring information for the Education Directorate. The revenue position is summarised in Appendix 1, with a breakdown split across 3 areas, Schools Related, Education Related and Lifelong Learning (LL) related respectively.
- 5.2 The projected outturn position is based on actual income and expenditure details to the end of August 2023, together with data used to forecast income and expenditure. Account is also taken of the outturn position for previous years and information available following discussions with Managers.
- 5.3 A net overspend of £340k is currently forecast for Education, details are outlined below.
- 5.4 The larger variances in Education relate to the following:

	£'000 (Under / (Over))
Home to School / College Transport	(1,008)
Pension Costs School Based Staff	198
Management & Support Service Costs	138
Behaviour Support Services	56
Early Years Central Team	264
Adult Education	73
Youth Service	(63)
Net Other (Details in Appendix 1)	2
<hr/>	
Total	(340) Overspend

- 5.4.1 The projected outturn position for Home to School Transport represents the worse case scenario based on current contracts. The expectation is that there is likely to be a reduction in demand across the academic year as transport needs change. The projected position will be updated in 2 further budget monitoring reports in the financial year. A significant pressure within this overspend position relates to special education transport provision across all sectors of education.
- 5.4.2 Over the last 2 financial years there has been an underspend on the budget for the Authority's on-going pension liability linked to pension costs for school-based staff. This position is linked to budget growth for schools as part of the Authority's budget planning and additional grant funding from Welsh Government. Whilst this underspend position is expected to continue in this current financial year, it is expected that this budget is unlikely to be sufficient as we move into future financial years and the number of posts in schools reduce. Any reductions in staffing numbers would be linked to reducing pupil numbers and or budget pressures.
- 5.4.3 The variance against Management and Support Services relates to circa £95k of in year salary savings, one linked to a secondment to the end of the financial year and one due to a delay in recruitment as the requirements of the post were reviewed. Additional grant income of £42k has also been received to support work linked to the ALN Reform, this funding ends in 2023-24.

- 5.4.3 The variance in relation to the Behaviour Support Team relates to in-year staff vacancy gaps. This budget is part of the capacity required to support our vulnerable learners through our EOTAS (Education Other Than at School) Strategy going forwards.
- 5.4.4 The underspend in our Early Years Team is directly linked to staff time supporting the grant funded areas of Flying Start, Early Years Expansion and the Childcare Offer. This variance relates to an opportunity to fund some of our staff costs from these grants in 2023-24.
- 5.4.5 In reference to the variance on our Adult Education provision, this is largely due to capacity through in year grant funding and some small savings across the service.
- 5.4.6 The projected overspend with regards to the Youth Service relates primarily to costs associated with Crumlin Institute. Members will recall that the Youth Service vacated this premise in December 2021, however Caerphilly County Borough Council currently remains contractually bound by the terms of the lease until a surrender is agreed with the landlord and legally executed.
- 5.4.7 It is important to note that the financial projections in this report exclude a forecast outturn position for our schools. The impact of the 5% Teachers pay award September 2023 (1.5% above the budgeted inflationary uplift) and the APT&C pay award 2023 (not yet confirmed) are cost pressures that will require consideration by the Authority.

## 5.5 **Conclusion**

- 5.5.1 The projected outturn position for Education is currently an overspend in 2023-24 of £340k.
- 5.5.2 Full details are contained in the body of this Report.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 The projected outturn position is based on actual income and expenditure details to the end of August 2023, together with data used to forecast future income and expenditure. Account is also taken of the outturn position for previous years and information available following discussions with Managers.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An IIA is not necessary for this Information Only Report.

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 In summary, based on information currently available there is projected revenue overspend for Education of £340k.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 In 2023-24 the Directorate will continue with the strategy of prudent vacancy management.

9.2 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2000.

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Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director, Education and Corporate Services  
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer  
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy  
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN  
Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager  
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement  
Cllr Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities  
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance  
Cllr Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer  
Dave Roberts, Interim Finance Manager  
Julie Baker, Principal Finance Officer (Schools)  
Nicola Hooper, Senior Accountant Education  
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services  
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer  
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer  
Clive Campbell, Transportation Engineering Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Projected Revenue Outturn Figures 2023-24

<b>EDUCATION &amp; LIFELONG LEARNING</b>	<b>Original Estimate 2023-24 £</b>	<b>Revised Estimate 2023-24 £</b>	<b>Estimated Outturn 2023-24 £</b>	<b>Variance Under (Over) 2023-24 £</b>
<b><u>SUMMARY</u></b>				
<b>SCHOOLS RELATED</b>	138,689,251	138,689,251	138,487,506	201,745
<b>EDUCATION</b>	20,552,483	20,552,483	20,108,445	444,038
<b>LIFELONG LEARNING</b>	4,425,578	4,425,578	4,403,601	21,977
<b>TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE (Revenue)</b>	<b>163,667,312</b>	<b>163,667,312</b>	<b>162,999,552</b>	<b>667,760</b>
<b>HOME TO SCHOOL / COLLEGE TRANSPORT (Infrastructure Division)</b>	9,639,854	9,639,854	10,647,498	(1,007,644)
<b>TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE (Revenue) Including Transport</b>	<b>173,307,166</b>	<b>173,307,166</b>	<b>173,647,050</b>	<b>(339,884)</b>

<b>EDUCATION &amp; LIFELONG LEARNING</b>	<b>Original Estimate 2023-24 £</b>	<b>Revised Estimate 2023-24 £</b>	<b>Estimated Outturn 2023-24 £</b>	<b>Variance Under (Over) 2023-24 £</b>
<b><u>SCHOOLS RELATED</u></b>				
<b>Individual Schools Budget</b>	<b>136,204,949</b>	<b>136,204,949</b>	<b>136,204,949</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Post 16 Initiative (Grant Income)</b>	<b>(3,895,867)</b>	<b>(3,895,867)</b>	<b>(3,895,867)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Earmarked Formula Funding (inc. Joint Use Sites)</b>	<b>254,084</b>	<b>254,084</b>	<b>254,079</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Schools LMS Contingencies</b>	<b>115,171</b>	<b>115,171</b>	<b>115,171</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other Direct School Related</b>				
Learning Support Staff Registration Fee	22,560	22,560	19,058	3,502
PFI Funding Gap	412,659	412,659	412,659	0
PFI Building Maintenance	55,260	55,260	55,260	0
Repairs & Maint. 50/50 Scheme (Funded through reserves in 23/24)	0	0	0	0
School Meal Admin. Utility & Telephone	825,513	825,513	825,513	0
Relief Supply Cover (Maternity)	768,980	768,980	815,029	(46,049)
Police Checks	68,057	68,057	63,057	5,000
Copyright and Licensing (Schools)	79,585	79,585	82,816	(3,231)
Total Other Direct School Related	<b>2,232,614</b>	<b>2,232,614</b>	<b>2,273,392</b>	<b>(40,778)</b>
<b>Early Years (Rising 3's)</b>	<b>921,121</b>	<b>921,121</b>	<b>909,110</b>	<b>12,011</b>
<b>Education Improvement Grant - Match Funding</b>	<b>677,295</b>	<b>677,295</b>	<b>645,042</b>	<b>32,253</b>
<b>Early Retirement Pension Costs of School Based Staff</b>	<b>2,179,884</b>	<b>2,179,884</b>	<b>1,981,630</b>	<b>198,254</b>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE TO DIRECTORATE SUMMARY</u></b>	<b>138,689,251</b>	<b>138,689,251</b>	<b>138,487,506</b>	<b>201,745</b>

<b>EDUCATION &amp; LIFELONG LEARNING</b>	<b>Original Estimate 2023-24</b>	<b>Revised Estimate 2023-24</b>	<b>Estimated Outturn 2023-24</b>	<b>Variance Under (Over) 2023-24</b>
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
<b>Management &amp; Support Service Costs</b>	<b>1,442,559</b>	<b>1,442,559</b>	<b>1,304,483</b>	<b>138,076</b>
<b>Social Inclusion</b>				
Psychological Service	973,701	973,701	972,928	773
Behaviour Support	209,141	209,141	152,647	56,494
Education Welfare Service	436,140	436,140	436,072	68
Youth Offending Team	59,196	59,196	59,196	0
Safeguarding & LAC	294,057	294,057	296,416	(2,359)
School Based Counselling	429,265	429,265	392,901	36,364
<b>Total Social Inclusion</b>	<b>2,401,500</b>	<b>2,401,500</b>	<b>2,310,160</b>	<b>91,340</b>
<b>Additional Learning Needs</b>				
ALN Advisory Support Service	125,012	125,012	125,012	0
Professional/Statementing	339,424	339,424	336,602	2,822
Learning Support	52,775	52,775	59,630	(6,855)
Language Support	684,295	684,295	691,883	(7,588)
Specialist Resources	46,006	46,006	46,005	1
ALN Improvement Initiative	40,657	40,657	40,657	0
Childrens Centre	36,872	36,872	36,872	0
SNAP Cymru	52,045	52,045	52,045	0
Outreach Trinity Fields	59,944	59,944	59,944	0
Speech Therapy	65,360	65,360	65,360	0
SENCOM (Sensory Service)	784,912	784,912	784,912	0
Autism (CASS)	227,960	227,960	227,960	0
<b>Total Additional Learning Needs</b>	<b>2,515,262</b>	<b>2,515,262</b>	<b>2,526,882</b>	<b>(11,620)</b>
<b>Learning Pathways Partnership</b>				
14 - 19 Initiative (Transport Costs)	144,819	144,819	144,819	0
<b>Total Learning Pathways Partnership</b>	<b>144,819</b>	<b>144,819</b>	<b>144,819</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EOTAS, Additional Support &amp; Out of County Provision</b>	<b>12,173,763</b>	<b>12,173,763</b>	<b>12,211,597</b>	<b>(37,834)</b>
<b>Early Years Provision &amp; Support</b>				
Early Years Central Team	367,779	367,779	103,703	264,076
<b>Total Early Years Provision &amp; Support</b>	<b>367,779</b>	<b>367,779</b>	<b>103,703</b>	<b>264,076</b>

<b>EDUCATION &amp; LIFELONG LEARNING</b>	<b>Original Estimate 2023-24</b>	<b>Revised Estimate 2023-24</b>	<b>Estimated Outturn 2023-24</b>	<b>Variance Under (Over) 2023-24</b>
<b>Other Service Provision</b>				
SACRE	2,922	2,922	2,922	0
Outdoor Education Advisor SLA	33,878	33,878	33,878	0
School Improvement	158,501	158,501	158,501	0
Music Service	409,638	409,638	409,638	0
WJEC & Subscriptions	19,265	19,265	19,265	0
Total Other Service Provision	<b>624,204</b>	<b>624,204</b>	<b>624,204</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Education Achievement Service (EAS)</b>				
Contribution to EAS Joint Working	882,597	882,597	882,597	0
Total Education Achievement Service	<b>882,597</b>	<b>882,597</b>	<b>882,597</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE TO DIRECTORATE SUMMARY</b>	<b>20,552,483</b>	<b>20,552,483</b>	<b>20,108,445</b>	<b>444,038</b>
<b><u>LIFELONG LEARNING</u></b>				
Adult Education	<b>162,616</b>	<b>162,616</b>	<b>89,147</b>	<b>73,469</b>
Youth Service	<b>1,381,282</b>	<b>1,381,282</b>	<b>1,444,479</b>	<b>(63,197)</b>
Library Service	<b>2,795,401</b>	<b>2,795,401</b>	<b>2,784,361</b>	<b>11,040</b>
LLL Insurance & Non Operational Property/Land	<b>86,279</b>	<b>86,279</b>	<b>85,614</b>	<b>665</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE TO SERVICE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4,425,578</b>	<b>4,425,578</b>	<b>4,403,601</b>	<b>21,977</b>



## EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY CARES SUPPORT PACKAGE FOR FAMILIES  
ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

**REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline support available for families eligible for Free School Meals from Caerphilly Cares.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 On Wednesday 28 June 2023 Welsh Government informed the Council that they would no longer be able to support the payment of Free School Meal Holiday payments, with immediate effect.
- 2.2 The announcement generated a lot of feedback from families who were relying on the payment. Consequently, on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023 Cabinet agreed to provide **a one-off payment** of £19.50 per week, per child, to eligible families for the school holiday period commencing Friday 21 July 2023 and ending on Thursday 31 August 2023.
- 2.3 This decision was taken to cushion the impact of late withdrawal of funding by Welsh Government and required the allocation of one-off funding of £900,000.
- 2.4 The Caerphilly Cares team (and associated partners) currently provides a wide range of support to vulnerable individuals and families as part of the Cost-of-Living support package.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the content of this report.



#### 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To mitigate the impact of the withdrawal of Welsh Government funding for holiday payments to families eligible for Free School Meals.

#### 5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 In March 2020, the Council commenced a free school meals home delivery scheme in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020 Wales became the first UK nation to guarantee free school meals for eligible families during the school holidays. This scheme initially started with a food parcel being delivered to eligible families' homes on a weekly basis. For the next 2 years, the Council continued to deliver food parcels which were fully funded by Welsh Government.
- 5.2 Due to resource and supplier challenges to deliver food parcels, in Autumn 2022 a decision was made to change the scheme to the issuing of a Post Office Voucher to the value of £19.50 per week, per child. It was felt that using the voucher system would allow eligible families to receive cash payments directly.
- 5.3 The ever-increasing cost of living has become a significant burden on our communities, especially those from low-income backgrounds. Rising prices have placed a severe strain on households.
- 5.4 Vulnerable families have indicated that the funding of £19.50 per child, per week has been invaluable in supporting them to purchase food items during the current cost of living crisis.
- 5.5 On Wednesday 28 June 2023, the Welsh Government announced that there will be no further extension to cover the summer holiday period or beyond.

*The Welsh Government stated that: "As you are aware, holiday provision for learners that are eligible for a free school meal was introduced in response to the COVID pandemic as a form of time-limited support to help families. While we have been able to support several temporary continuations of the scheme, we confirmed in March 2023 that the most recent extension would be up to the end of the May half term only. I can now confirm that this remains the case and that there will be no further extension to cover the summer holiday period or beyond."*

*Options for funding a further extension of the scheme have been fully explored, but due to budgetary constraints this isn't possible and I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your patience. We appreciate that the provision offered to those eligible throughout holiday periods has proven popular and understand that not extending the offer further will likely lead to additional enquiries from those families affected".*

- 5.6 Feedback from families has evidenced a reliance on this payment and an expectation that it would continue.
- 5.7 The Caerphilly Cares Service currently offers access to a wide range of support initiatives for individuals and families who are vulnerable or in financial crisis and whilst this is not specifically targeted at families in receipt of Free School Meals, the service and support is open to anyone who is vulnerable or experiencing hardship.

- 5.8 Initial contact for support can be made to the Caerphilly Cares Team, which provides residents needing support with a single coordinated access point for information, advice and assistance, to ensure that residents' needs are met appropriately. This enables people to tell their story once and ensures their voice is central to the 'What matters?' conversation.
- 5.9 Referrals to Caerphilly Cares may be made via the Caerphilly Cares Gateway, via the following details:
- Tel: 01443 811490  
Text: SUPPORT to 07537 414443  
Email: [caerphillycares@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:caerphillycares@caerphilly.gov.uk)  
[www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyCares](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyCares)
- 5.10 The Caerphilly Cares Gateway already provide direct support to Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) Catering in fielding calls from families who are concerned about their ability to afford school meals for their children.
- 5.11 Specific engagement work has also been carried out with schools, to promote the gateway to the families and wider communities that are connected to each school. This has included attendance at CCBC Headteacher forums and email circulars to all schools outlining services available, as well as sessions held in specific schools in relation to cost of living support. Caerphilly Cares staff are also working in partnership with the Community Focused Schools team to develop a pilot for shared working and engagement, to raise awareness of local support with school communities. This approach will be piloted in the Upper Rhymney cluster initially.
- 5.12 A summary of some of the main activities and initiatives available through CCBC, which can be accessed via referral to the Caerphilly Cares Gateway and which may offer alternative or wraparound support to families in the wake of the withdrawal of Welsh Government funding for free school meals holiday payments, is as follows:
- 5.13 Cost of Living Hardship fund - A CCBC Cost-of-living Hardship Grant has been established in response to identified need across CCBC frontline support services, for those who are in need of urgent financial support but are not eligible for or have exhausted existing grant schemes, in particular those that might be working but are experiencing in-work poverty. The grant has been operational since April 2023 and provides either direct financial assistance (up to £700 per application) or equivalent white goods (if that is the specific need). The primary eligibility factor for the grant is professional judgement (via referral from an officer providing support), to give flexibility to support those who may not have been approved for other grants based purely on traditional criteria, such as employment/benefit status etc.
- 5.14 Financial Hardship/Maximising Income – For anyone experiencing financial hardship, the Welfare Benefits and Cost of Living teams within Housing (Rents) can support residents with a wide range of issues relating to maximising their income, including support with accessing any additional benefits and grants that they might be entitled to (including potential direct financial assistance).
- 5.15 School Essentials Grant (previously PDG Access Grant) – The School Essentials Grant provides £125 (or £200 for Year 7 Pupils) for eligible pupils to buy school uniform, equipment, sports kit, and kit for activities outside of school for children. This funding is for pupils currently eligible for free school meals.

- 5.16 Fuel Vouchers – Residents struggling with the cost of topping up their pre-payment meter could be eligible for a fuel voucher, which can be used to quickly add credit to their energy supply (in partnership with Citizen’s Advice). Referrals can be made via the Caerphilly Cares Gateway and can be supported with additional advice around managing energy bills and saving energy within the home, including energy advice visits or guidance on any grants or initiatives that may be available to assist with measures to improve energy efficiency, thus potentially resulting in savings on energy bills for residents.
- 5.17 Foodbank (and additional support for those experiencing food poverty) - The foodbank network extends across the Caerphilly County Borough and a referral can be made immediately, via the Caerphilly Cares Gateway, to support someone in urgent need of food and other household essentials. Support may be in the form of emergency food parcels or signposting to Fareshare or Food Pantry schemes to access low-cost food.
- 5.18 Mobile Phones – For families who require a phone to remain in contact with CCBC and other services, particularly where a phone is required for the provision of support, Caerphilly Cares may be able to provide a basic (call-only) phone and phone credit to help them to stay in touch. In addition, for residents in need of data to help them engage with key services, CCBC Library Service in partnership with the Good Things Foundation offer pre-loaded data SIM cards to residents who are most at need, via referral from CCBC staff.
- 5.19 Housing and Homelessness – The Supporting People team are able to provide expert support and advice for anyone experiencing difficulties with housing, including problems with their tenancy or even risk of homelessness. Support can include help with finding housing, support with form filling, debts, benefits, eviction notices and rent/mortgage arrears.
- 5.20 Employment Support - The Council has a dedicated team to support people to find work. The Employment team can help people to gain new skills, access training and improve their chances of getting a job by supporting with things such as updating their CV, job searching, interview skills etc. Staff can also complete “better off calculations” if customers have questions or concerns about how working might impact their current benefits.
- 5.21 Community Connectors - The Community Connectors team aim to promote well-being, reduce social isolation, help people feel part of their community and promote independence. The team reconnect residents (18+) with their community by helping them to find suitable groups, linking them to other people who have similar interests and encouraging them to participate within their community. The team will also make appropriate referrals for those on their caseload, for example signposting for support with maximising their income or accessing other forms of support such as those outlined within this report.
- 5.22 Warm Packs - To help support those that may be struggling to keep warm during the colder months and amongst rising fuel costs, CCBC has funded a supply of warm packs, containing warm clothing and other useful items (such as a hot water bottle). Warm packs are available for anyone that needs them, with no eligibility conditions, through professional or self-referral by contacting the Caerphilly Cares Gateway. Wherever possible, warm packs are always provided alongside the offer of additional support to assist someone with addressing the underlying issues which contribute to the difficulties in heating their home.

## 5.23 **Conclusion**

Members are asked to note the content of this report.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 There are no assumptions included in this report.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The decision to terminate the funding has been made by Welsh Government. The recommendation within this report is a measure to support families due to withdrawal of funding provided by Welsh Government.

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications outside existing Caerphilly Cares Resources and the Cost of Living budget allocation of £3 million.

## 9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no personnel implications.

## 10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

## 11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 None

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Consultees: Christina Harray, Chief Executive  
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive.  
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services  
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment  
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities  
Councillor Sean Morgan, Leader of the Council  
Cllr Theresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
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