

Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee

Friday 13 December 2019
10.00 am Library Meeting Room, Taunton Library



To: The Members of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee

Cllr L Redman (Chair), Cllr R Williams (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Dimery, Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper, Cllr James Hunt, Cllr J Lock, Cllr W Wallace, Cllr J Williams.
Mr P Elliott, Ms Helen Fenn, Mrs Ruth Hobbs and Mrs Eilleen Tipper

All Somerset County Council Members are invited to attend meetings of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees.

Issued By Scott Wooldridge, Strategic Manager - Governance and Risk - 5 December 2019

For further information about the meeting, please contact Neil Milne on 01823 359045 or ndmilne@somerset.gov.uk

Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows the printed agenda.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

This agenda and the attached reports and background papers are available on request prior to the meeting in large print, Braille, audio tape & disc and can be translated into different languages. They can also be accessed via the council's website on www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers



RNID typetalk

Are you considering how your conversation today and the actions you propose to take, contribute towards making Somerset carbon neutral by 2030?

AGENDA

Item Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee - 10.00 am Friday 13 December 2019

**** Public Guidance notes contained in agenda annexe ****

1 **Apologies for Absence**

to receive Members' apologies

2 **Declarations of Interest**

Details of all Members' interests in District, Town and Parish Councils will be displayed in the meeting room. The Statutory Register of Member's Interests can be inspected via the Community Governance team.

3 **Minutes from the previous meeting** (Pages 7 - 18)

The Committee is asked to confirm the minutes are accurate.

4 **Public Question Time**

The Chairman will allow members of the public to ask a question or make a statement about any matter on the agenda for this meeting. **These questions may be taken during the meeting, when the relevant agenda item is considered, at the Chairman's discretion.**

5 **Scrutiny Work Programme** (Pages 19 - 36)

To discuss any items for the forthcoming work programme. To assist the discussion, the following documents are attached:

- a) – The Cabinet's latest published forward plan;
- b) – Current Work Programme for the Committee;
- c) – Outcome Tracker.

6 **Young Carers Update report** (Pages 37 - 42)

To consider this report.

7 **2019/2020 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Month 6 (Quarter 2)** (Pages 43 - 78)

To consider this report.

8 **Children's Services Performance Report Quarter 2 - 2019/2020** (Pages 79 - 88)

To consider this report.

9 **Update on the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Well-being**

To consider this report.

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10 **Any other urgent items of business**

The Chairman may raise any items of urgent business.

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Guidance notes for the meeting

1. Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect Minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the Agenda should contact the Committee Administrator for the meeting on 01823 359045 or email: democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk
They can also be accessed via the council's website on www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/organisation/key-documents/the-councils-constitution/>

3. Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the Minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

4. Public Question Time

If you wish to speak, please tell the Committee's Administrator by 5.00pm on Monday 9 December 2019.

At the Chair of the Committee's invitation you may ask questions and/or make statements or comments about any matter on the Committee's agenda – providing you have given the required notice. You may also present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit. The length of public question time will be no more than 30 minutes in total.

A slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been signed. However, questions or statements about any matter on the Agenda for this meeting may be taken at the time when each matter is considered.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chair. You may not take a direct part in the debate. The Chair will decide when public participation is to finish.

If there are many people present at the meeting for one particular item, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to allow views to be expressed more freely. If an item on the Agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

An issue will not be deferred just because you cannot be present for the meeting. Remember that the amount of time you speak will be restricted, normally to two minutes only.

5. **Exclusion of Press & Public**

If when considering an item on the Agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

6. **Committee Rooms & Council Chamber and hearing aid users**

To assist hearing aid users the meeting rooms have infra-red audio transmission systems. To use this facility you need a hearing aid set to the T position.

7. **Recording of meetings**

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public - providing this is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings and a designated area will be provided for anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings.

No filming or recording may take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting. As a matter of courtesy to the public, anyone wishing to film or record proceedings is asked to provide reasonable notice to the Committee Administrator so that the relevant Chair can inform those present at the start of the meeting.

We would ask that, as far as possible, members of the public aren't filmed unless they are playing an active role such as speaking within a meeting and there may be occasions when speaking members of the public request not to be filmed.

The Council will be undertaking audio recording of some of its meetings in County Hall as part of its investigation into a business case for the recording and potential webcasting of meetings in the future.

A copy of the Council's Recording of Meetings Protocol should be on display at the meeting for inspection, alternatively contact the Committee Administrator for the meeting in advance.

SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee held in the Library Meeting Room, Taunton Library, on Friday 15 November 2019 at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr L Redman (Chair), Cllr R Williams (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Dimery, Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper, Cllr J Lock, Cllr J Williams, Ruth Hobbs and Mrs Eileen Tipper

Other Members present: Cllr F Nicholson and Cllr F Purbrick

Apologies for absence: Cllr James Hunt and Cllr W Wallace

15 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

Additional declarations of interest were made by Ruth Hobbs as Governor of Greenfield School and an Associate for the Contact Charity.

16 Minutes from the previous meeting - Agenda Item 3

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October were an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

17 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

There were no members of the public present and no questions had been submitted.

18 Scrutiny Work Programme - Agenda Item 5

The Chair of the Committee invited members to consider the Cabinets Forward Plan of proposed key decisions in forthcoming months and suggest any items for the committee to consider. The plan was noted.

The Chair directed attention to the Committees work programme and invited suggestions for possible future agenda items.

The Task and Finish Group around exclusions would provide updated to the committee to ensure everyone would be able to contribute. A report would be due back by 4 March.

An update would be provided in the new year relating to the Regional Adoption Agency 6 month review.

An update would be provided relating to the Home Education Policy.

Further updates were requested in relation to the Local Offer Development and Transitioning Services from Children to Adults.

19 **Review of Scrutiny function - Agenda Item 6**

Effective scrutiny helped secure the efficient delivery of public services to drive improvements within the Council and, if done well, amongst other public service providers too. While scrutiny had matured in Somerset over the years, it still faced challenges.

As part of organisational transformation and taking forward Peer Challenge recommendations, the Council had undertaken a thorough review of its scrutiny function. The review considered best practice from other councils and the latest Government statutory guidance in May 2019. The review had also involved working with the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). Their covering report along with final review report (set out as Appendix A) provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider a series of recommendations and suggested any further developments they consider appropriate.

The majority of the recommendations in the report combined both the short term improvements that could be taken forward from the CfPS report along with recognising that necessary cultural improvements were required to develop and embed better scrutiny form part of a longer term programme of work commencing before the end of 2019 through until March 2021.

The Council undertakes an annual review of its democratic arrangements and its Constitution to ensure they remained fit for purpose for the organisation to meet its legal duties.

The Communities and Local Government Select Committee undertook an inquiry into the effectiveness of scrutiny in local government in 2017. The select committee's report identified a number of areas for improvement. This work has led to the development of the new statutory Scrutiny Guidance which was published in May 2019.

While Scrutiny had matured in Somerset over the last decade, it still faced challenges. This included officer driven agendas, Scrutiny Committees being used as a 'tick box' for agreeing new policy and not providing the Committees the opportunity to add value, limited member engagement, overcrowded agendas and work programmes.

The Peer Challenge in 2018 identified, as one of the key recommendations, that 'Somerset County Council should review its scrutiny arrangements as part of making it more effective, ensuring all councillors were equipped to play an active role and contribute to the policy making and key decisions affecting the future of Somerset's residents and the council, and that its governance arrangements are reflective of this.'

In parallel, as part of the organisational transformation work it was recognised there was a need to improve the Council's scrutiny arrangements. As a result the Council commissioned the nationally renowned Centre for Public Scrutiny to carry out an independent review of the scrutiny function at SCC between March and May 2019. This involved attending all 3 Scrutiny Committees (Place, Adults and Health and Children

and Families) during April and conducting a Member survey, before producing an initial draft report in late May. This was subsequently reviewed with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs in June.

Following receipt of the draft Scrutiny Review report the Leader and the 3 Scrutiny Chairs agreed that the next step should involve an all member workshop to discuss the report, the recommendations within and consider these alongside the recently issued national guidance and the council's transformation work. The workshop was held in September, where members received an introductory briefing on the recently published statutory Scrutiny guidance for councils, an appraisal of the scrutiny arrangements and scrutiny resources at Devon County Council, provided a valuable opportunity for members to discuss the ideas and opportunities to make scrutiny more effective. The workshop provided the opportunity for members to discuss the Centre for Public Scrutiny's report and other ideas that members had for improving scrutiny prior to the report formally considered at all 3 Scrutiny Committees in November, as well as Cabinet, ahead of the recommendations being presented to Full Council in November. The workshop was facilitated by Ian Parry, from the Centre for Public Scrutiny who wrote the CFPS's report.

One of the main areas of focus discussed by the Members present, was that the report was focusing on an ideal scenario for 'pure scrutiny' and did not necessarily completely reflect the reality of day to day Local Authority and Committee working styles and politics. There was also concern raised that the report was in parts generic and Members felt that what the Council adopts should be more Somerset specific. This is reflected in the amended recommendation relating to the number of agenda items and a consensus that Cabinet Members and the relevant Director should co-present agenda items, rather than a select Committee style approach, which Members agreed didn't consider appropriate for Somerset County Council.

The report of the Centre for Public Scrutiny, set out in Appendix A, provided a comprehensive analysis of the current arrangements and contained 11 specific recommendations for how scrutiny could be improved at the Council. Several of these recommendations could be defined as logistical or practical changes and therefore were relatively easy and straightforward to implement. Other recommendations were more cultural and these would take longer to embed and required a change of approach throughout the Council by Members and officers.

The easier to implement changes included reducing the number of formal committee meetings in order to provide each scrutiny committee with the opportunity to focus its available resources on areas such as the development of commissioning plans, undertaking more partnership scrutiny, review opportunities for services improvements and doing more scrutiny outside of formal committee meetings e.g carrying out visits to frontline services and greater use of task and finish groups. Improvements to work planning (including quarterly joint work planning meetings across the committees), more focused agenda setting, improved meeting layouts, as well as a strict adherence to no 'for information' report as part of any formal agenda, would be relatively straightforward to implement during 2020.

The cultural work that had been identified would require a more gradual introduction, as members assumed more ownership with the work programme, actively suggest and pursue items they wished to be considered, as well as Cabinet and officers making greater use of utilising Scrutiny as a sounding board early in policy development and consider their recommendations when shaping decisions and focusing on outcomes. There would also be an emphasis of greater ownership and engagement by all Scrutiny Committee Members, as well as a depoliticising of Scrutiny where possible, for example removing the need for political group pre-meetings and replacing with pre-meetings for all Committee members, to agree themes of questioning and specific areas of interest.

These types of changes would take time to embed and as result the intention would be to have implemented and fully embed all of the recommendations by March 2021, to align with the new quadrennium. It is anticipated that all Members would begin to notice changes to the way scrutiny is working and conducted with an immediate effect.

Although the CfPS's report is comprehensive and suggested improvements and amendments in a number of areas, the Committee are invited to suggest other areas or issues that could be addressed at this time and can be incorporated in the overall review. Officers are especially keen to seek the Committee's views on the relationships with Cabinet members, senior officers and also how they would like to be consulted and incorporated within policy development.

Page 11 of the Centre for Public Scrutiny's final report detailed the Members and officers who were met with on an individual basis.

All Members were invited to take part in an online Scrutiny survey. Over 40% of Members completed the survey, the results of which formed part of the Centre for Public Scrutiny's final report. 20 County Councillors attended the Scrutiny review Member workshop in September.

While there were no direct budget implications within the CfPS recommendations, the review of other councils and the new statutory guidance identified the need for more scrutiny training and development for members, the possibility of conducting scrutiny in different ways, including increased use of visits and travel around the County. These recommendations would result in increased Member expenses and training budget requirements. However this should be considered alongside a reduction in officer demand, especially at a senior level, to prepare reports, briefings and attend a reduced number of formal Committee meetings from 2020.

The cultural transformation required, improved work planning and policy advice support would require dedicated officer resources in addition to what the council provided through the Democratic Services Team. The Strategic Manager, Democratic Services has reviewed other councils and the CfPS recommendations and has identified, as a minimum, the need for an additional scrutiny support officer within the Democratic Services team. This additional officer resource and training resources for members were an integral part of the recommendations as they will be essential to support successful implementation by March 2021 and will have specific responsibility for policy research, liaison with members and officers throughout the Authority and scrutiny training and development.

Background papers included:-

Supporting governance, scrutiny and member support in Somerset County Council – Centre for Public Scrutiny - May 2019

Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – May 2019.

Debate

- The role of the committee receiving the relevant information, to adequately challenge for effective Scrutiny was considered.
- Information being received too late was a concern for Councillors.
- Public engagement was considered important to divest the approach to public engagement and reach a wider demographic.
- Membership of Scrutiny committees was discussed, the committee were reassured that substitutions would continue, minimum attendance rules to address problematic attendance was considered.
- Resources would be put in place to ensure implementation
- Future training requirements were considered. Scrutiny and questioning skills were believed beneficial and good value.
- The rule of four agenda items per meeting was considered adequate to conduct good Scrutiny,
- Members of the committee endorsed the report along with the implementation of its recommendations to encourage stronger and more effective Scrutiny and robustly hold the Executive to account.

The Committee:

1. Endorsed and recommended to Full Council that the Council implements a programme of cultural transformation and improvements to its scrutiny arrangements by March 2021, including the provision of additional resources in the Democratic Services Team and members training budgets to deliver the enhanced scrutiny arrangements;
2. Endorsed 10 of the 11 recommendations within the Centre for Public Scrutiny's 'Supporting governance, scrutiny and member support in Somerset County Council' report as detailed on pages 9 and 10 of Appendix A; The Committee is asked to agree to an alteration to Recommendation 6 within the CfPS report and limit the number of agenda items to an absolute maximum of 4, rather than two as currently recommended, as this more accurately reflect the current position of the Authority and the size of the workload.
3. to consider and make any further recommendations it considers appropriate to include as part of the Scrutiny Review with reference to the Government's new

statutory guidance, best practice from other councils and the members workshop held in September 2019;

4. to support all recommendations relating to the Scrutiny Review being recommended by Full Council on 27th November 2019 and for the improvements to be taken forward from January 2020 to March 2021;

5. The Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee to receive a quarterly progress report on the improvements and review of scrutiny arrangements.

20 **Progress on the implementation of the new Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements - Agenda Item 7**

The report was presented by Caroline Dawson.

The three Somerset Safeguarding Partners (Somerset County Council, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, and Avon and Somerset Constabulary) now constituted a tripartite Children's Safeguarding Partnership. New safeguarding arrangements were published on 26 June 2019 and took effect on 29 September 2019, having been assessed as compliant with the new legislation by the Department for Education. The arrangements replaced the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board. In the interests of efficiency, it had been possible to integrate the Somerset Children's Trust with the new Safeguarding Partnership arrangements. Delivery subgroups were currently under review with revised chairing and membership.

The three safeguarding partners had a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in the local area. Many local organisations and agencies had a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that they considered the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions, and continue to be involved in the wider Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Local and regional scrutiny arrangements were being developed, building on existing good practice across the Safeguarding Partnership. A key development was the intention of the three key safeguarding partners to appoint an Independent Scrutineer to undertake high-level assurance of safeguarding activity for children across Somerset.

The final annual report for the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board had been published, detailing progress and outcomes against the four key priority areas: early help, multiagency safeguarding, child exploitation, and neglect.

The SSCP were exploring regional scrutiny arrangements where they add value (e.g. a regional pool of independent reviewers for child safeguarding practice

reviews or other independent scrutiny/reciprocal regional arrangements for peer reviews with clearly defined terms of reference). An initial scoping meeting was held across the force area on 1 October 2019, during which the following themes emerged as areas for consideration for peer scrutiny in Somerset, building on learning from serious case reviews and other learning activity:

- intrafamilial sexual abuse
- child exploitation
- children's emotional and mental health
- early help in the context of neglect.

Scrutiny arrangements would remain place-based within Somerset, with the possibility of future contractual arrangements for delegation at a regional level. The tenure of the Independent Chair for the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board, required under the previous legislation, ended on 30 September 2019. In October 2019, the three key safeguarding partners agreed the appointment of an Independent Scrutineer to provide robust Scrutiny of the effectiveness of Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership's multiagency arrangements in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in Somerset. This would include Scrutiny of arrangements in place to identify and review Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews which replaced Serious Case Reviews under the new legislation. The post had been advertised and an appointment was anticipated in late 2019.

In addition, a local framework was being refreshed which built on existing scrutiny and quality assurance activity which included, but was not limited to:

- multi-agency audits
- thematic and learning reviews
- Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews
- Section 11 audits as set out in the Children Act (2004) and associated multi-agency peer challenges to audit findings
- peer reviews within Somerset
- an annual face-to-face conversation with children and young people
- Section 157/175 audits of education providers as set out in the Education Act (2002)
- a twelve-monthly report in line with Working Together to Safeguard

Overarching structures for the new Safeguarding Partnership arrangements were presented and set out the subgroups that would deliver on key areas of work for the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership. In addition, a framework for seeking the views of children and young people within the new safeguarding arrangements was under development, building on existing good practice from the Children's Trust.

Responsibility for Child Death Reviews now fell under the Department of Health as opposed to the Department for Education, and were therefore outside local safeguarding arrangements. The Somerset Child Death Overview Panel had merged with the Pan-Dorset Child Death Panel to increase the number of cases reviewed from which to draw learning. As from 1 April 2019, administrative support for child death arrangements would be provided by Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, as opposed to Somerset County Council, but strong links would be retained with the Safeguarding Partnership to ensure continued learning from child deaths.

The Scrutiny for Policies for Children and Families Committee were asked to note the final report of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board for 2018/2019. During the year, SSCB focused on four priority areas:

- 1) Early Help
- 2) Multi-agency Safeguarding
- 3) Neglect
- 4) Child Exploitation/Children Missing

Two serious case reviews were undertaken in the period 2018 to 2019: one was published in autumn 2018 (Family A), and one would be published in early 2020 (Family B). Two thematic reviews were also undertaken: one regarding suicides of young people in Somerset, which showed no rising trend and no factors which would make Somerset an outlier; and another reviewing the management of sex offenders against children. The learning continued to be embedded across the partnership in terms of the identification and intervention where there was long-term neglect, and the protection of unborn and very young children, and the importance of information-sharing.

Debate

- The Governance arrangements for the Children's and Young People's Plan confirmed that this would be reported to the partnership group. With SCC this was also set out through Corporate Reporting to the Cabinet.
- Predictions using big data were considered. SCC and the Police held data and this was an area of focus around safeguarding and using this data effectively to focus on troubled families and child exploitation.
- Focusing on the Adults, Childrens and Health Information to predict adequate support needs as part of a peer challenge across the area was encouraged.
- It was acknowledged that greater discussion and resourcing could be done around this, along with the problems encountered with sharing

data, The committee requested a update to work to achieve ensure a high level information sharing agreement was out in place.

- As part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, it had been agreed at a previous wellbeing board that data sharing should be a focus. Feedback would be monitored to ensure transparency.
- All three partners were keen to raise awareness of safeguarding and to provide community support for children at risk. A wide ranging public health survey combined with a population based approach would be undertaken.
- It was agreed that the Wellbeing Forum minutes would be made available to ensure information was shared.
- Following discussion around the annual reporting mechanism, it was requested for this document to be considered against the priorities for Children and Young People.
- To ensure transparency it was agreed for the Scrutiny Committee to be involved in the Scrutiny arrangements of the partnership.

1. The Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee endorsed the proposal for Somerset County Council to implement new Safeguarding Partnership arrangements alongside changes to the Children's Trust arrangements in March 2019.

2. The Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee noted:

The progress towards new arrangements as set out in the attached paper (September 2019) and focus of future activity.

The developing scrutiny arrangements for safeguarding activity in so far as they have been agreed by the three key safeguarding partners as of October 2019.

Key areas in the final Somerset Safeguarding Children Board annual report (2018-2019).

21 **Annual Customer Feedback report** - Agenda Item 8

The report was presented by Rebecca Martin.

In 2018/19 there were a total of 1923 pieces of feedback recorded (all types) compared with 1933 in the previous year (0.5% reduction). Complaints reduced by just over 2% on the previous year with 1076 received (compared to 1101 in 17/18).

Figures for 2018/19 showed a 0.5% decrease in total feedback received when compared with figures recorded in the 12 months prior. Complaints had decreased by 2.2% compared with 2017/18 and compliments by 6.4%. A percentage increase/decrease was provided per service area for all feedback types.

The resolution status for the 1077 complaints received in 2018/19 were presented. The vast majority of complaints received in the year (95%) had been managed at stage 1 of the complaints process. This was consistent with previous years. There had been an increase in cases escalating past stage 1 of the process with 13 cases escalating to stage 2 and 41 referred to the Ombudsman (6 and 17 respectively in 2017/18).

Somerset County Council's complaint procedure set a target resolution timescale of 10 days. The average resolution times at stage one by service area for the 937 stage1 cases resolved in year were set out

For the 86 stage 1 complaints that were received in 2018/19 but not closed in year, the average number of working days open as at 31st March was 4

The percentage of complaints across all services that were resolved with the listed outcomes and a comparison with the previous year were detailed. The percentage of complaints that had been upheld or partly upheld in 2018/19 was broadly consistent with the previous year (31% compared to 32% in 17/18).

The primary causes recorded for resolved complaints as a percentage of the total and the percentage change compared with the previous year were set out. Service provision and communication remained in the top 3 causes for complaint and were joined by 'service quality' which had seen an 8% increase. Complaints regarding policy and procedures had reduced by 11%

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) published annual review letters to all local authorities. The letters included information about the number of customers that approached them to complain about the Council, how many were refused, signposted, investigated etc. and for the investigated cases, what the LGSCO judgment was. The letter supplied both high level statistical data and the case references to allow further analysis. All annual review letters were publicly available online. When considering the annual review data, it was noted that the data supplied would not necessarily align with the data held locally. For example, the numbers quoted would include enquiries from people that the LGSCO signposts back to the Council, some of whom may never contact us. Additionally, some of the cases the LGSCO had closed within the year 2018/19 fell in to a different reporting period for the Council (e.g. the case may have been received significantly earlier or later by SCC).

On analysis of the Ombudsman Review Letter, there was a slight decrease in the number of complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO in 2018/19 compared with the previous 12 months (81 in 2017/18, 76 in 2018/19).

As a general picture, the LGSCO have reported that they have upheld 58% of detailed investigations nationally for the year (a slight increase on 57%

nationally in 2017/18). It is therefore really pleasing that Somerset's uphold rate is below the national average by 3%, with a significant improvement on previous years (63% in 17/18, 79% in 16/17 and 78% in 15/16). Additionally, the LGSCO analysis shows that the number of Somerset complaints upheld is less than the average for similar authorities (which is 64%).

Debate

- There were processed involved in managing vexatious complaints. These were not used lightly or frequently.
- Clarification was provided that rejected or withdrawn complaints were often complaints not relevant to the authority or when the complainant did not wish to continue.
- Positive comments in relation to Council services went largely under recorded.
- Support was provided to complaints from under eighteen-year olds and vulnerable people to ensure they had a voice heard.
- Children's Social care were often likely to have higher levels of complaints due to the area of the Council it supports.
- Most ombudsmen complaints were not taken further.
- Reservations were expressed by the committee with the change to a 21 working day response to complaints. The generation of an automatic holding reply was requested to ensure a greater level of engagement.
- Leaving a 21 day response to a complaint was considered a concern if there were safeguarding implications. The committee were reassured that these would be prioritised, but ongoing issues and standard complaints would be dealt with as business as usual.
- It was requested if learning would be picked up with Somerset Highways complaints to reconsider service provision in areas where the greatest number of complaints were experienced.
- Where possible, expected increases such as times where road improvements were being conducted – trends would be assessed to ensure complaints could be mitigated.
- Self Service had experienced a 20% increase in usage, customers having encountered that using a complaint form on the web page was smoother to navigate through than using the contact centre.
- Where there were additional needs where disability or language barriers were encountered, Swan advocacy was used to ensure complainants understood the process.
- The report was due to be resolved as a key decision by the leader at the end of November.

The Committee noted the report.

22 **Any other urgent items of business** - Agenda Item 9

After ascertaining there were no other items of business, the Chair thanked all those present for attending, and close the meeting at 12.23pm.

(The meeting ended at 12.23 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Somerset County Council Forward Plan of proposed Key Decisions

The County Council is required to set out details of planned key decisions at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken. This forward plan sets out key decisions to be taken at Cabinet meetings as well as individual key decisions to be taken by either the Leader, a Cabinet Member or an Officer. The very latest details can always be found on our website at:

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=134&RD=0&FD=1&bcr=1>

Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 defines a key decision as an executive decision which is likely:

(a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.

The Council has decided that the relevant threshold at or above which the decision is significant will be £500,000 for capital / revenue expenditure or savings. Money delegated to schools as part of the Scheme of Financial Management of Schools exercise is exempt from these thresholds once it is delegated to the school.

Cabinet meetings are held in public at County Hall unless Cabinet resolve for all or part of the meeting to be held in private in order to consider exempt information/confidential business. The Forward Plan will show where this is intended. Agendas and reports for Cabinet meetings are also published on the Council's website at least five clear working days before the meeting date.

Individual key decisions that are shown in the plan as being proposed to be taken "not before" a date will be taken within a month of that date, with the requirement that a report setting out the proposed decision will be published on the Council's website at least five working days before the date of decision. Any representations received will be considered by the decision maker at the decision meeting.

In addition to key decisions, the forward plan shown below lists other business that is scheduled to be considered at a Cabinet meeting during the period of the Plan, which will also include reports for information. The monthly printed plan is updated on an ad hoc basis during each month. *Where possible the County Council will attempt to keep to the dates shown in the Plan. It is quite likely, however, that some items will need to be rescheduled and new items added as new circumstances come to light.* Please ensure therefore that you refer to the most up to date plan.

For general enquiries about the Forward Plan:

- You can view it on the County Council web site at <http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=134&RD=0&FD=1&bcr=1>
- You can arrange to inspect it at County Hall (in Taunton).
- Alternatively, copies can be obtained from Scott Wooldridge or Michael Bryant in the Democratic Services Team by telephoning (01823) 357628 or 359500.

To view the Forward Plan on the website you will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader available free from www.adobe.com
Please note that it could take up to 2 minutes to download this PDF document depending on your Internet connection speed.

To make representations about proposed decisions:

Please contact the officer identified against the relevant decision in the Forward Plan to find out more information or about how your representations can be made and considered by the decision maker.

The Agenda and Papers for Cabinet meetings can be found on the County Council's website at:
<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>

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FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<p>FP19/11/02 First published: 11 November 2019</p>	<p>Not before 16th Dec 2019 Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning</p>	<p>Issue: To approve the extension of the existing HPC Supply Chain & Nuclear South West Inward Investment Expertise Cross LEP Contract for which SCC is the accountable body Decision: Decision report seeks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval to notify the Supplier of the intention to extend the Contract, and; 2. Subject to formal confirmation of the funding package approval to extend the Contract 			<p>Julie Wooler, Economic Development & Strategic Tourism Officer</p>
<p>FP19/10/09 First published: 14 October 2019</p>	<p>16 Dec 2019 Public Health Director</p>	<p>Issue: Approval to award the contract for the Provision of a Public Health Nursing Case Management & Information Management System Decision: Approval to award the contract</p>			<p>Alison Bell, Consultant in Public Health, Public Health</p>
<p>FP/19/07/06 First published: 22 July 2019</p>	<p>16 Dec 2019 Cabinet Member for Education and Council Transformation</p>	<p>Issue: Creation of New Academies in Somerset Decision: The Secretary of State for Education has directed via an Academy Order, the conversion to Academy Status for the following schools.</p>			<p>Elizabeth Smith, Service Manager – Schools Commissioning Tel: 01823 356260</p>

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FP/18/04/06 First published: 30 April 2018	Not before 16th Dec 2019 Director of Commissioning and Lead Commissioner for Economic Community Infrastructure	Issue: Procurement of the HotSW Growth Hub Service Decision: To undertake the procurement of a Business Support Service (Growth Hub) on behalf of the HotSW LEP			Melanie Roberts, Service Manager - Economic Policy Tel: 01823359209
FP/10/01/11 First published: 5 February 2019	Not before 16th Dec 2019 Cabinet Member for Education and Council Transformation	Issue: Bridgwater College Academy Expansion - Funding Decision: To agree funding as required			Elizabeth Smith, Service Manager – Schools Commissioning Tel: 01823 356260
FP/19/07/13 First published: 30 July 2019	Not before 16th Dec 2019 Cabinet Member for Strategy, Customers and Communities	Issue: Revision of Corporate Complaints Policy Decision: A periodical update to the Council's complaints policy. Key changes are a switch in title from a 'procedure' to a 'policy', a change in the stage 1 resolution target time from 10 working days to 20 working days and the addition of a quality control process at stage 1.			Rebecca Martin, Service manager- Customer Experience & Information Governance
FP/19/10/04 First published: 7 October 2019	Not before 16th Dec 2019 Public Health Director	Issue: Changes to sexual health targeted prevention services Decision: Award of contract, additional targeted prevention services and arrangements for c-card condom distribution			Michelle Hawkes, Public Health Specialist Tel: 01823 357236

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<p>FP/19/10/12 First published: 15 October 2019</p>	<p>Not before 18th Dec 2019 Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: To identify a sustainable long term location for a library in Shepton Mallet Decision: To consider the relative merits of 3 options for the location of the library and make a decision informed by the conclusions of the options appraisal</p>			<p>Sue Crowley, Strategic Manager Library Services, Community and Traded Services Tel: 01823355429</p>
<p>FP/19/10/22 First published: 30 October 2019</p>	<p>18 Dec 2019 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Review of Scrutiny Function Decision: To consider this report</p>			<p>Jamie Jackson, Service Manager - Governance Tel: 01823 359040</p>
<p>FP/19/10/11 First published: 15 October 2019</p>	<p>18 Dec 2019 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Management of Risk Pathway documents; Strategy, Policy and Process Decision: Approve that the Management of Risk Pathway documents are fit for purpose and allow adoption into the business</p>			<p>Pam Pursley</p>
<p>FP/19/09/13 First published: 25 September 2019</p>	<p>18 Dec 2019 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Climate Change Strategy Framework Decision: To endorse the framework</p>			<p>Michele Cusack, ECI Commissioning Director</p>

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FP/19/10/13 First published: 23 October 2019	18 Dec 2019 Cabinet	Issue: Investment Strategy Decision: To consider a proposed Investment Strategy to support the MTFP and recommend this to Full Council			
FP/19/10/19 First published: 24 October 2019	18 Dec 2019 Cabinet	Issue: Revenue Budget Monitoring - Month 7 Decision: To consider this report			Sheila Collins
FP/19/10/05 First published: 7 October 2019	18 Dec 2019 Cabinet	Issue: Annual Report of the Director of Public Health Decision: To agree the report			Pip Tucker, Public Health Specialist Tel: 01823 359449
FP19/11/01 First published: 6 November 2019	23 Dec 2019 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	Issue: Implementation of Street Works Permitting Scheme in Somerset Decision: A decision to replace the current Street Works Noticing Scheme with a Street Works Permitting Scheme as required by the Secretary of State for Transport			Bev Norman, Service Manager - Traffic Management, Traffic & Transport Development Tel: 01823358089

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FP/19/10/01 First published: 4 October 2019	6 Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Education and Council Transformation	Issue: Creation of New Academies in Somerset Decision: The Secretary of State for Education has directed via an Academy Order, the conversion to Academy Status for the following four schools.			Helen Waring, Commissioning Officer - Schools
FP19/11/04 First published: 14 November 2019	Between 6 Jan 2020 and 10 Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	Issue: Decision to commence consultation on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. Decision: To agree the consultation plan and commence the consultation activities			Fraser Amos
FP/19/04/13 First published: 29 April 2019	Not before 13th Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure	Issue: Decision to appoint a contractor from a framework for the delivery of the Bruton Enterprise Centre Decision: To agree to appoint a supplier for the delivery of the Bruton Enterprise Centre			Katriona Lovelock, Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823 359873

FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<p>FP/19/09/08 First published: 10 September 2019</p>	<p>Not before 13th Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Issue: Decision to accept the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Fund Award towards the Creech Castle junction improvements (Toneway Corridor phase 1) Decision: That the Director of Commissioning and Lead Commissioner for Economic and Community Infrastructure and Interim Director of Finance & Performance agree to accept the Local Growth Fund Award by signing an agreement with the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership.</p>			<p>Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763</p>
<p>FP19/08/01 First published: 12 August 2019</p>	<p>Not before 13th Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) Superfast Extension Programme (SEP) Phase 2: decision to introduce additional funding into the Lot 4 contract. Decision: To approve the introduction of additional funding into the Lot 4 Contract.</p>			<p>Katriona Lovelock, Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823 359873</p>
<p>FP/19/06/02 First published: 14 June 2019</p>	<p>13 Jan 2020 Director of Children's Services, ECI Commissioning Director</p>	<p>Issue: Approval to submit the full application for European Social Funding, under Priority Axis 1 - Inclusive Labour Markets (1.2) Decision: To consider thie report</p>			<p>Melanie Roberts, Service Manager - Economic Policy Tel: 01823359209</p>

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FP/18/11/10 First published: 20 November 2018	Not before 13th Jan 2020 Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning Director, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure	Issue: Decision to approve revisions to the Connecting Devon and Somerset phase 2 deployment contracts Decision: To approve revisions to the Connecting Devon and Somerset phase 2 deployment contracts			Nathaniel Lucas, Senior Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823359210
FP/19/07/11 First published: 30 July 2019	13 Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Children and Families	Issue: Approval of Somerset Youth Justice Plan 2018/19 Decision: Approval of Somerset Youth Justice Plan 2018/19			Lise Bird, Strategic Manager - Prevention,
FP19/07/14 First published: 31 July 2019	Not before 20th Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Resources	Issue: Sale of Morgan House site, Bridgwater, including former library office. Decision: Authority to proceed to sale of the surplus SCC Property, namely the Morgan House Site, Bridgwater, including Bridgwater library offices			Charlie Field, Estates Manager, Corporate Property Tel: 01823355325

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<p>FP/19/03/03 First published: 26 March 2019</p>	<p>Not before 20th Jan 2020 Interim Finance Director, Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning</p>	<p>Issue: Somerset Energy Innovation Centre (Phase 3) - acceptance of Growth Deal 3 Funding Decision: Approves acceptance of Heart of the South West Growth Deal 3 funding £2,542,755 for the development of phase 3 of the Somerset Energy Innovation Centre and approve the decision to proceed with the construction of SEIC 3</p>			<p>Julie Wooler, Economic Development & Strategic Tourism Officer</p>
<p>FP19/07/07 First published: 23 July 2019</p>	<p>Not before 20th Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Resources</p>	<p>Issue: Sale of The Court and Popham House property, Wellington Decision: Authority to proceed to sale of the surplus SCC Property, previously known as the Popham Court Care Home, comprising of The Court and Popham House in Wellington.</p>			<p>Charlie Field, Estates Manager, Corporate Property Tel: 01823355325</p>
<p>FP19/09/05 First published: 3 September 2019</p>	<p>Not before 20th Jan 2020 Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: SCC Endorsement of the Heart of the South West Local Industrial Strategy Decision: SCC endorsement of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). The HotSW LIS has been developed by the Local Enterprise Partnership in coordination with local partners and stakeholders, including SCC, and in partnership with Government.</p>			<p>James Gilgrist</p>

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FP/19/10/07 First published: 7 October 2019	22 Jan 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan Decision: To consider this report			Mickey Green, Managing Director - Somerset Waste Partnership Tel: 01823 625707
FP/19/10/10 First published: 15 October 2019	22 Jan 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Admission Arrangements for Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools for 2021/22 Decision: That the Cabinet agrees the determination of the Admission Arrangements for all Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools for 2021/22 as set out in this report.			Jane Seaman, Access and Admissions Manager Tel: 01823 355615
FP/19/10/20 First published: 24 October 2019	22 Jan 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Revenue Budget Monitoring - Month 8 Decision: To consider this report			Sheila Collins
FP/19/10/22 First published: 29 October 2019	22 Jan 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Adoption of the International definition of Antisemitism Decision: Cabinet to adopt the definition and additional policy changes and training			Tom Rutland Tel: 01823 359221

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FP/19/10/02 First published: 4 October 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Decision to conclude the award of a contract for the provision of highway improvements at Toneway Creech Castle junction. Decision: The decision is to enter into a contract with the preferred contractor for the construction of the highways scheme to improve the Toneway Creech Castle junction.			Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763
FP/19/10/15 First published: 23 October 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 Decision: To consider the proposed strategy and recommend it to Full Council in February for approval			
fp/19/10/16 First published: 23 October 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Q3 2019/20 Performance Report Decision: To receive the Q3 report on performance, details of management actions and consider any further actions required			Simon Clifford, Customers & Communities Director Tel: 01823359166
FP/19/09/11 First published: 17 September 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: SCC Endorsement of the Heart of the South West Local Industrial Strategy Decision: Agreement to endorse the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) which			Paul Hickson, Strategic Manager - Economy and Planning Tel: 07977 400838

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fp/19/10/17 First published: 23 October 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Q3 2019/20 Revenue Budget update Decision: To receive the Q3 revenue budget position and consider any recommendations			
fp/19/10/18 First published: 23 October 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Q3 2019/20 capital investment programme update Decision: To receive the Q3 budget position and consider any recommendations			
FP/19/10/14 First published: 23 October 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 - 2022/23 Revenue Budget Decision: To consider the proposed MTFP 2020/21+, council tax precepts and revenue budget proposals			
FP/19/10/16 First published: 23 October 2019	10 Feb 2020 Cabinet	Issue: Capital Investment Programme 2020/21-2022/23 Decision: To consider the proposed capital programme and recommend it to Full Council for approval			

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<p>FP/19/11/06 First published: 25 November 2019</p>	<p>Not before 20th Feb 2020 Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning</p>	<p>Issue: Contract for the provision of Fuel Cards and Associated Services to SCC Decision: Award of contract to successful supplier following a further competition under the Crown Commercial Services Framework</p>			<p>John Perrett, Service Manager, Transporting Somerset ECI Tel: 01823 356968</p>
<p>FP19/11/04 First published: 18 November 2019</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Mar 2020 Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning</p>	<p>Issue: Award of contract for management operator services for Somerset Energy Innovation Centre Buildings 2 and 3 Decision: Approval to award a contract for the provision of management operator services for Somerset Energy Innovation Centre Buildings 2 and 3</p>			<p>Samantha Seddon, Service Manager-Economy</p>
<p>FP19/11/03 First published: 14 November 2019</p>	<p>Not before 22nd Jun 2020 Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning</p>	<p>Issue: Award of contract for management operator services for iAero Centre, Yeovil Decision: Approval to award a contract for the provision of management operator services for iAero Centre, Yeovil</p>			<p>Samantha Seddon, Service Manager-Economy</p>

Scrutiny for Policies Children and Families Committee Work Programme

Committee meetings		Lead Member & Officer
13 December		
CYPP Update 2019-2022 – Year 1 Quarter 2		Fiona Phur
CYP Mental Health Local Transformation Plan		John Dunning
Finance update report – Month 6 (quarter 2)		Lizzie Watkin
Young Carers update report		Louise Palmer
24 January 2020		
Family Safeguarding		Claire Winter/Rowina Clint-Shanley
MTFP/Budget setting report		Sheila Collins
Safe routes to school		Mike O'Dowd-Jones/Phil Curd
4 March		
Task & Finish Group – School Exclusions		Sam Baker
Adoption Medicals		Pending CCG attendance
1 April		
Possible joint meeting with Adults & Health		
6 May		
Regional Adoption Agency 6-month review		Claire Winter
Early Help Strategic Commissioning Board Update – (possible visit)		Louise Palmer
3 June		
9 July		
9 September		

(What impact does that have on Children in Somerset?)

Scrutiny for Policies Children and Families Committee Work Programme

7 October		
12 November		
2 December		
27 January 2021		
3 March 2021		

Note: Members of the Scrutiny Committee and all other Members of Somerset County Council are invited to contribute items for inclusion in the work programme. Please contact Democratic Services (01823) 359500 & democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk who will assist you in submitting your item.

Possible future items:

A Joint meeting with Adults & Health Scrutiny Committee: CAHMS service;
 Immunisations;
 Oral health;
 Transitions Plans for LD service users (18-25) going in to Adult Services;
 The impact on Children and Families of the next stage of migration/roll out of Universal Credit.

(What impact does that have on Children in Somerset?)

Scrutiny for Policies Children & Families Committee Outcome Tracker

Agenda items	Action owner	Agreed Outcome	RAG Status
26 April 2019			
Regional Adoption Agency	Suzanne Lyus	The update was accepted, and the Chair suggested, and it was agreed that an update report be provided in 6 months.	Pending – for May 2020
13 September 2019			
Scrutiny Work Programme	Scrutiny Manager	It was requested that a report with a Children and Families aspect regarding contingencies to manage 'Brexit' be brought to a future meeting.	Pending
		The Scrutiny Manager updated Members on the 'Safe routes to school' item and the Committee agreed that the Chair, Vice Chair and Scrutiny Manager meet to determine the specific aspects to be considered.	Pending
Early Help Strategic Commissioning Board Update	Scrutiny Manager	The Chair requested that Officers look in to arranging an appropriate visit for the Committee and that an update report be presented in 6 months.	Pending
18 October 2019			
Value for Money: Tracker and Social Care Experts Review 2018 - 2019	Chair & Vice Chair & Scrutiny Manager	The Committee accepted the report and the Vice Chair undertook to work with the Chair and Officers to determine how the Committee could best review progress on the 3 specific VFM actions during the year.	Pending
15 November 2019			
Work Programme	A Perrington	The Committee agreed to form a Task and Finish Group to review – School Exclusions and to produce a report for the March 2020 meeting.	Pending

Scrutiny for Policies Children & Families Committee Outcome Tracker

The new CYPP 2019-2022 had been produced following a multi-agency process, overseen by Somerset Children's Trust. The CYPP had 4 priorities: **Supported Families; Healthy Lives; A Great Education; Positive Outcomes.**

Completed	Action complete and will be removed from tracker for next meeting and retained on Master Tracker document.
Pending	Action on-going or plans in place to address.
Incomplete	No action currently in place with a minimum of 3 months since action agreed.

Somerset County Council
Scrutiny Committee – 13 December 2019

Young Carers - Update

Lead Officer: Louise Palmer

Author: Louise Palmer

Contact Details: lzpalmer@somerset.gov.uk

Cabinet Member: Frances Nicholson

1. Summary

- 1.2 On 13 May 2019, Cabinet agreed the future support arrangements for young carers based upon a vision for better identification of, better engagement with and better support for young carers both known and unknown within Somerset.
- 1.3 There were three components to the decision, all funded initially by SCC;
 - a) **Complex needs:** £120,000 allocated to assess and support young carers with more complex needs – facilitated via Team 8 and the Early Help Assessment tool.
 - b) **Grant Funding Young Carers Groups:** £53,000 annual grant fund for the facilitation of young carers support groups throughout Somerset. Managed initially by Children's Commissioning and Team 8, involving young carers themselves in the decision to award grants.
 - c) **Community Alliance:** £75,000 to develop a 'community alliance' to build local capacity to support young carers, especially those who may otherwise be hidden. This includes working with external organisations/enterprises to maximise social value and securing additional funding from other sources.
- 1.4 The first two of these actions (1.3a and 1.3b) have been implemented and progress is being monitored.
- 1.5 The third action – to develop a community alliance – is being developed with a grant funding process planned for Spring 2020.

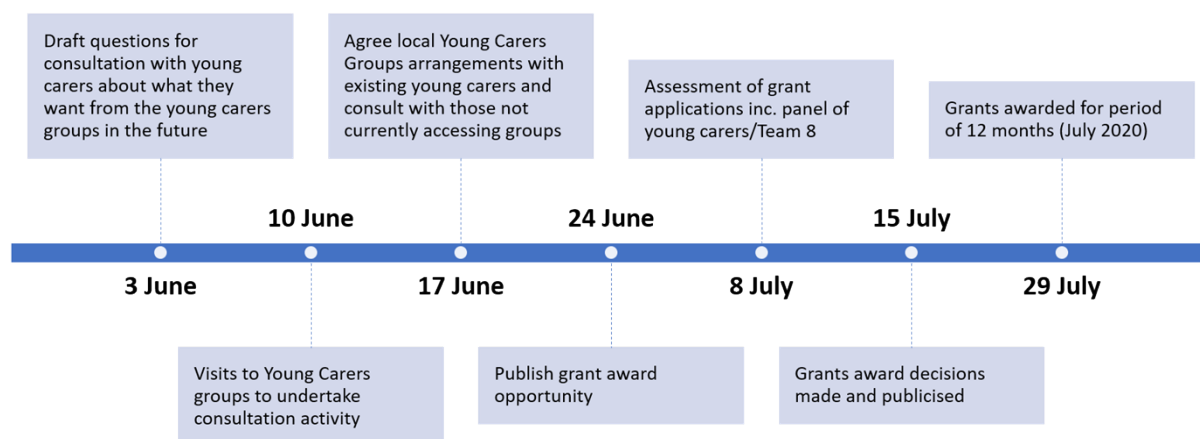
2. Young Carers with Complex Needs (1.3a)

- 2.1 Team 8 provide a preventative family service, working with a range of needs which impact family life and risk the escalation of that family into social care. Needs include mental health, eating disorders, family dysfunction, victimisation and gang related activity.
- 2.2 The investment of £120k has enabled capacity to be created and established in Team 8, allowing all staff to work with young carers with complex needs.
- 2.3 All staff in the team have the skills and knowledge to work with young carers, there are no young carer specific workers.
- 2.4 There are 222 young carers allocated to a worker in Team 8, as of November 2019. This is broken down by area as follows:
 - Taunton & West Somerset – 59
 - Mendip – 51
 - Sedgemoor – 49
 - South Somerset - 63
- 2.5 63% of young carers known to Team 8 are female.

- 2.6 Team 8 is restructuring into the Family Intervention Team (FIS) January, which will extend the team's reach and capacity, enabling young carers to receive a service at evenings and weekends
- 2.7 Identification of Young Carers is via an Early Help Assessment (EHA), which may be completed by any professional in Somerset, including schools and NHS staff. This EHA may be used to refer to a service such as Team 8/FIS, who will then assign a worker and find out further information.
- 2.8 The Children & Families assessment and Early Help Assessment now have specific young carers questions within them. From this, a young carer can be referred to one of the youth groups, to Team 8/FIS or to social care where required.
- 2.9 Team 8/FIS provide further analysis to the assessment, which may change the response required, escalating to safeguarding or reducing to a community-based service such as the young carers youth clubs.

3. Grant funding young carers groups (1.3b)

- 3.1 Four organisations have been awarded funding to run five young carers groups in each area of Somerset from August 2019 – July 2020.
- 3.2 The bidding process followed the timetable below, including consultation with young carers, and assessment of bids by young carers.



- 3.3 An online survey was developed to capture young carers' views on young carers groups provision. The link was shared with existing young carers groups via the YMCAs, shared with school associations for further distribution within school networks, the Friends of Somerset Young Carers, CAMHs, SPCF, Young Somerset, Spark Somerset and Engage.
- 3.4 A number of bids were received for all areas of the county, including West Somerset, where no SCC young carers group provision had previously run.
- 3.5 Each bid was assessed for viability, cost, innovation and scope.
- 3.6 The strongest theme communicated by young carers involved in the evaluation of each bid was the desire for continuity;

"I'd like the group to be the kept the same but with more trips offered"
"Happy with group as it is"
"I'd like the group to be weekly but I like the group as it is"
"I wouldn't change anything about the group"

- 3.7 Funding of £49,564.30 was awarded across the following organisations:
- YMCA Dulverton Group (Sedgemoor)
 - YMCA Mendip & South Somerset (Mendip & South Somerset)
 - Minehead EYE (West Somerset)
 - YMCA Taunton (Taunton)
- 3.8 Commissioners sent a letter to the households of approximately 200 young carers known to Somerset County Council at the start of the new school year to inform about the Autumn term programme of young carers groups and to boost uptake.
- 3.9 A further letter is due out in December to inform young carers about the 2020 programme.

4. Young carers Community Alliance (1.3c)

- 4.1 The purpose of the Community Alliance is to increase identification and support to ensure more young carers get a range of support to choose from, with organisations outside the council.
- 4.2 A meeting has been arranged the end of January with a range of interested stakeholders to discuss how best to take this work forward.
- 4.3 Following this, a grant funding process will begin in the Spring to identify a range of voluntary sector organisations who can offer relevant and novel ways of identifying and supporting young carers. The grant process will require successful organisations to work together to share best practice.

5. Identification and participation data

- 5.1 Young Carer attendance at the new youth clubs from Sept – Oct 2019 have remained stable compared to participation in the groups which existed prior to the Cabinet decision, with the exception of the newly commissioned group in Minehead.
- 5.2 The new group in Minehead Eye did not exist prior to being commissioned in September and has begun with three attendees. This is expected to grow during the next quarter.
- 5.3 Attendance at the new youth clubs represents 37% of the young carers with an allocated Team 8 worker
- 5.4 A recent school survey asked for schools to report numbers of young carers in each school. 50% of schools responded. These schools reported 144 young carers in total who are not known to the council.
- 5.5 This data will be analysed so that schools are supported by relevant services where needed to ensure young carers are getting the right help.

6. Additional opportunities for Young Carers

- 6.1 The Bath Philharmonia has been successful in applying for funding from youth Music to improve access to music and provide opportunities for music making for young carers in Somerset. Two projects will run in Somerset offering dedicated ensemble sessions for our young carers, with the intention of a final performance at the Glastonbury Festival in 2021.
- 6.2 Friends of Somerset Young Carers continue to offer funding to individual young carers and to young carers groups.

- 6.3 Triangle of Care is a participation group for carers run by Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, who have taken an active interest in young carers and have asked for regular reports on progress, and welcome requests for support.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 To implement the Community Alliance plans
7.2 To explore input for schools so that young carers can be supported appropriately
7.3 To work with adult commissioners to create an all-age carers plan and to review Somerset's offer to all carers, including young carers.
7.4 To return to Scrutiny in July 2020 to report on the first 12 months of the new arrangements.

8. Background papers

- 8.1 Feedback from Young Carers

Feedback from young carers groups – September to November 2019

From South Somerset Young Carers Groups

We made sensory toys both sound and sight which was fun with lots of glitter and sequins and many of the young carers expressed, ***"I will use this to calm down"*** and ***"this will really help me at home."***

One of the young carers came to perform at a talent show. Since then she has been opening up to me and talking to me a lot. She says it has really helped to talk about it and she said, ***"I am feeling happier and things are getting better."*** Music is one of her coping strategies and performing gave her more confidence, she also says it has given her ideas for the future as a performer/singer/songwriter. The music activities at young carers youth club are really helping her expand in this way.

From Mendip Young Carers Groups

For the juniors the highlight of the two months has been their trip to Carymoor. This has increased their self-confidence, team working skills and cemented the group as a whole. We are now working with the Carymoor Trust who are seeking funding so that we can offer a further two trips to the centre.

The seniors are happy that they are growing in number and enjoy the new format of the session. They have been welcoming to new and returning members and come together as a group to support members who are going through a troubled time.

As an organisation we have worked with outside agencies so that the young carers are building a network of support. We have further partnership working over the next two months including Samaritans, Young Somerset Workshops, Mendip AONB, and a larger project with Bath Philharmonic.

YMCA Mendip has secured an agreement with the Tesco Supermarket chain who have agreed to supply birthday cakes and pizza and chips once a term for all young carers. Mendip Young Carers Group have also signed up to the Greggs end of day unsold food policy which helps to provide food and treats for each session.

From Bridgwater Young Carers Groups

The sessions have been very youth led. Each group have taken ownership of the programme and offered ideas, which have been very successful, eg Soap making, cooking, board games and crafts, as well as sports and music.

The keyboard sessions with Indigo proved a success and even encouraged two young people to show others how to play. 6 young people left the sessions being

able to play a whole tune whilst another young person was signposted to a community music group and has started to attend their sessions after school.

Both Juniors and Seniors took part in the YMCA community action fortnight where they identified a charity and then decorated and filled shoeboxes for the homeless. They young people enjoyed thinking of items to add to the boxes.

The next few session we will be concentrating on making Christmas gifts for the family.

From Taunton Young Carers Groups

The young people were very engaged and one young person who is usually very withdrawn connected with one of the new young people who hadn't attended before, over shared interests. The two new young people who were quite shy in their first session really opened up and were very involved in all activities. The young people enjoyed the pizza making session, something they had requested as a planned activity and in the last 15 minutes they chose to go on to the football pitch and have a run around and get some exercise.

The young people enjoyed interacting together over pool, table tennis and physical activities outdoors. Some shared photographs of artwork they enjoyed doing and did some glass painting. A lot of conversation in the group around image – body image, hair styles and around eating during the shared meal.

Feedback from the Forest School trip (all groups)

"The night walk was 'cool' and spooky"

"This is really nice" (about the campfire and tealights)

"Can I put one more log on the fire?"

"I enjoyed making pizza"

"You get to make friends"

"Young carers group is fun and you get to make lots of friends"

Somerset County Council
Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee
13 December 2019

2019/20 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – Month 6 (Quarter 2)

Lead Officer: Sheila Collins, Interim Director of Finance

Author: Leah Green, Finance Manager MTFP – Corporate

Finance Contact Details: SDCollins@somerset.gov.uk 01823 359028

Cabinet Member: Cllr Mandy Chilcott – Cabinet Member for Resources

Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

- 1.1.** The Cabinet report sets out the Quarter 2 (month 6) forecast outturn position for 2019/20 for the net Revenue Budget of £327.967m. It highlights variances to service budgets, as well as emerging issues, risks, areas of concern and proposed actions to resolve them. The Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (2019-22) sets out proposals to further develop its financial resilience over the long-term whilst also supporting the delivery of the Council's key priorities.
- 1.2.** The report shows an overall projected **balanced position** for the Council, with the main adverse movement from month 5 being within Children's Services. Section 5 of the cabinet report details the management actions underway to mitigate these pressures with an aim to end the year within approved budgets. Until these management actions are more fully developed and fully implemented, these variances are included in the detail of the report and a proportion of the corporate contingency 'notionally' allocated to off-set the variances. This leaves £6.127m of the Corporate Contingency budget currently unallocated and therefore potentially available to further improve the Council's financial resilience in the medium term. This position is improved from month 5. A decision regarding use of the contingency will be considered later in the year once the end of year position is firmer.
- 1.3.** Children's Services are reporting an adverse variance within their budget of £1.768m which is an adverse movement of £1.149m from month 5.
- 1.4.** External placements projections have increased by £0.933m resulting in a total projected overspend of £2.056m. The increase is due to 11 children changing placement during the last month; 7 have moved from a fostering to a residential setting due to a lack of suitably skilled and resilient foster carers in house or in the private sector.
- 1.5.** Staffing projections across Children's Social Care have reduced by £0.399m this month as a result of the start dates being revised to the new year for any current vacancy. Ongoing difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced permanent social work front line staff and managers and family support staff account for a significant proportion of the projected underspend. This is not a sustainable position due to the impact on staff morale and the ability to deliver

high quality support to families. The HR and Organisational Development Director is leading the development of a workforce strategy to address these issues.

- 1.6. The costs of transporting children to school are projected to increase by £0.196m; a reduction of £0.304m in Home to School and an increase of £0.500m in SEND. The reduction in Home to School is as a result of specific market disruption activity, a project called The Big Bus, which sees an inhouse fleet offering several routes to offset costs of additional children travelling.
- 1.7. King Arthur's Community School has become a sponsored academy (i.e. required to join a multi academy trust following an inadequate Ofsted inspection) as part of the Sherborne Area Schools Trust. At the point of transfer the school was in deficit which remains with the local authority, to be funded from its core budget. This is not an allowable charge to the Dedicated Schools Grant. The value of the deficit is still being validated but current estimate is £0.450m.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to comment on the projected revenue outturn for 2019/20 for the Children's Services budget, whether there are any suggestions for additional management actions or alternative options that they would like to recommend to the Cabinet.
- 2.2. The Committee is asked to consider any issues or information they would like to be addressed or included in future reports.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Cabinet report (Annex A) is the second quarterly revenue budget monitoring for 2019/20 and remains an early forecast of the potential end of year position.
- 3.2. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that the forecast continues to show confidence that the more robust approach to budget planning for 2019/20 onwards has ensured that the budget assumptions are realistic, and deliverable with a relatively small adverse variance seen in Service forecasts of £0.423m. This is being off-set by a 'notional' allocation from Corporate Contingency while firm management actions to correct variances are being implemented.
- 3.3. The Council is evidencing a sustained tighter financial grip going forwards through the budget monitoring forecast and through its approach to MTFP for 2020-2023. To further support this there will be a continuation of formal monthly monitoring report to Cabinet and to Scrutiny for Policies and Place and iterative improvements to the format, content and layout of the reports to aid effective review and scrutiny. Alongside this internal tracking and budget monitoring processes continue to be given close attention by the Senior

Leadership Team.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. See Annex A

5. Implications

5.1. See Annex A

6. Background papers

- 6.1.**
- 2019/20 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report (month 5) to Scrutiny Place – 4th November 2019
 - Revenue Budget – Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-22 to Full Council – 20 February 2019

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

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Annex A

Cabinet 13 November 2019

2019/20 Revenue Budget Monitoring – Quarter 2 (month 6) Report

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Mandy Chilcott – Cabinet Member for Resources

Division and Local Member(s): All

Lead Officer: Sheila Collins, Interim Director of Finance

Author: Leah Green, Finance Manager MTFP – Corporate

Finance Contact Details: SDCollins@somerset.gov.uk 01823 359028

	Seen by:	Name	Date
	County Solicitor	Honor Clarke	05/11/2019
	Monitoring Officer	Scott Wooldridge	05/11/2019
	Corporate Finance	Sheila Collins	05/11/2019
	Human Resources	Chris Squire	05/11/2019
	Property	Paula Hewitt / John Cooper	05/11/2019
	Procurement / ICT	Simon Clifford	05/11/2019
	Senior Manager	Sheila Collins	05/11/2019
	Commissioning Development Team	commissioningdevelopments@somerset.gov.uk	05/11/2019
	Local Member(s)	All	
	Cabinet Member	Mandy Chilcott	05/11/2019
	Opposition Spokesperson	Liz Leyshon	05/11/2019
	Relevant Scrutiny Chairman	Cllr Anna Groskop for Scrutiny Place	05/11/2019
Forward Plan Reference:	FP/19/05/10		
Summary:	<p>This report sets out the Quarter 2 (month 6) forecast outturn position for 2019/20 for the net Revenue Budget of £327.967m. It highlights variances to service budgets, as well as emerging issues, risks, areas of concern and proposed actions to resolve them. The Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (2019-22) sets out proposals to further develop its financial resilience over the long-term whilst also supporting the delivery of the Council's key priorities.</p>		

	<p>The report shows an overall projected balanced position for the Council, with the main adverse movement from month 5 being within Children’s Services. Section 5 details the management actions underway to mitigate these pressures with an aim to end the year within approved budgets. Until these management actions are more fully developed and fully implemented, these variances are included in the detail of the report and a proportion of the corporate contingency ‘notionally’ allocated to off-set the variances. This leaves £6.127m of the Corporate Contingency budget currently unallocated and therefore potentially available to further improve the Council’s financial resilience in the medium term. This position is improved from month 5. A decision regarding use of the contingency will be considered later in the year once the end of year position is firmer.</p> <p>As this a more detailed quarterly report, it includes more detail on aged debt, reserves, use of capital receipts flexibilities and an up-date on the Improving Lives Programme than would be the case for the intervening monthly reports. This confirms the positive direction of travel to continue to strengthen the reserves position through taking appropriate opportunities to replenish reserves were sensible.</p> <p>The budget for 2019/20 includes a savings target of £21.547m and this report confirms forecast delivery of £21.316m.</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p>	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the forecast balanced budget position for the end of 2019/20 2. Note that £6.127m of the corporate contingency remains unallocated. 3. Note the delivery of £17.884m savings by Quarter 2 and the forecast delivery of £21.316m by the year end. 4. Note the improving financial resilience of the Council, with the level of reserves now being projected as £56.347m by the year end (comprising £36.657m of Earmarked Reserves and £19.690m of General Fund).

Reasons for Recommendations:	Closely monitoring spend against the agreed budget is necessary to ensure that the Council delivers its priorities within its means. This report requires action to be taken so that this objective can be met.
Links to County Vision, Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy:	The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP 2019-22) sets the funding for the County Vision and the use of those funds is then monitored, via this report and others throughout the year to ensure delivery of Council objectives and actions within the resources available.
Consultations and co-production undertaken:	Information and explanations have been sought from directors on individual aspects of this report and their comments are contained in the report. Due process and consultations will be carried out where required for any further specific proposals for change.
Financial Implications:	The financial implications are identified throughout the report.
Legal Implications:	There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.
HR Implications:	There are no HR implications arising directly from this report, but remedial actions may have such implications. These will be dealt with in any subsequent reports.
Risk Implications:	<p>The Council's corporate risk register recognises the difficulties to containing spend within budget in the face of service pressures, reducing funding and the challenges of delivering ever more savings and efficiencies.</p> <p>Although broader market uncertainty exists in view of the current Brexit negotiations, at this stage any precise implications are not known. The Council needs to be alert to potential implications as negotiations develop and respond accordingly at the time.</p> <p>The Children's Services budget, while rebased, remains under pressure as the Service continues to improve alongside the sensitivity of some aspects of the services to volume changes, especially placements.</p> <p>The Organisational Risk (00043) has a broad perspective,</p>

	<p>encompassing both current year spending and future years' budgets. At the beginning of each year this corporate risk is reviewed.</p> <p>The up-dated risk for 2019/20 acknowledges the improvement that has been made and describes the risk to be: "Maintaining a balanced budget for 2019/20 and ensuring a sustainable MTFP. There is a risk to the council's long-term sustainability if there are significant in-year service adverse variances, and or if the council suffers significant loss of funding in future years its ability to prepare a robust and sustainable MTFP for 2020/21 onwards may be impacted."</p> <p>Following the Spending Round (SR19) additional funding for Local Authorities has been announced mainly for social care and high needs education. However, the mechanisms for distribution of these additional funds is subject to consultation and more details are expected to be announced as part of the Local Government Provisional financial settlement in the autumn.</p> <p>Additionally, there is no current commitment to continue the significant levels of uncertain funding beyond 2020/21. In view of this significant level of uncertainty facing local government in funding and on-going increasing demand pressures and costs, despite growing confidence with internal control mechanisms, the risk score remains at the current level of "very high" (4x4(16)).</p> <p>Robust control must be maintained.</p>				
	Likelihood	4	Impact	4	Risk Score

Other Implications (including due regard implications):	<p><u>Equalities Implications</u></p> <p>There are no specific equalities implications arising from the contents of this report.</p> <p><u>Community Safety Implications</u></p> <p>There are no community safety implications arising from the contents of this report.</p>				

	<p><u>Sustainability Implications</u></p> <p>There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.</p> <p><u>Health and Safety Implications</u></p> <p>There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.</p> <p><u>Privacy Implications</u></p> <p>There are no privacy implications arising from this report.</p> <p><u>Health and Wellbeing Implications</u></p> <p>There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.</p>
<p>Scrutiny comments / recommendation (if any):</p>	<p>This report will be presented to Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee, on 11 December 2019 and Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families on 13 December 2019; comments arising will be made available to the Cabinet at a subsequent meeting.</p>

1. Background

- 1.1. This report is the second quarterly revenue budget monitoring for 2019/20 and remains an early forecast of the potential end of year position.
- 1.2. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that the forecast continues to show confidence that the more robust approach to budget planning for 2019/20 onwards has ensured that the budget assumptions are realistic, and deliverable with a relatively small adverse variance seen in Service forecasts of £0.423m. This is being off-set by a 'notional' allocation from Corporate Contingency while firm management actions to correct variances are being implemented.
- 1.3. The Council is evidencing a sustained tighter financial grip going forwards through the budget monitoring forecast and through its approach to MTFP for 2020-2023. To further support this there will be a continuation of formal monthly monitoring report to Cabinet and to Scrutiny for Policies and Place and iterative improvements

to the format, content and layout of the reports to aid effective review and scrutiny. Alongside this internal tracking and budget monitoring processes continue to be given close attention by the Senior Leadership Team.

2. Reserves

2.1. The Council holds reserves in two forms:

- Earmarked reserves held for specific purposes and to mitigate against future known or predicted liabilities, and;
- The General Fund to mitigate against unforeseen spends or major unexpected events.

2.2. During 2018/19 significant progress was made in replenishing the Council's reserves position, with total balances at the end of the year being £26.075m for Earmarked Reserves and £17.689m for General Fund Reserve. This was an improvement of over £20m during 2018/19.

2.3. This second Quarter budget monitoring report sets out the forecast position and use of earmarked reserves during 2019/20 and the forecast position of General Fund reserve with a summary set out in the tables below (Tables 1, 2 & 3).

2.4. Earmarked reserves are set aside for specific purposes and any anticipated transfer to and from those reserves is in line with those original purposes. Table 1 below confirms the contributions to earmarked reserves that were approved by the Council on 20 February 2019 as part of the budget setting strategy to increase the financial resilience of the council.

2.4.1. Table 1 Earmarked Reserves: Approved movements for 2019/20 (February 2019 Council decisions)

Earmarked Reserves 2019/20	£m
Balance as at 31st March 2019	26.075
<u>Budgeted In-Year Movements 2019/20 as agreed in the MTFP:</u>	
Set Up Invest to Save Fund	2.852
Set Up Business Rates Pilot County-Wide Pot	4.015
Set Up Prevention Fund	1.000
Budgeted Increase to Insurance Fund	0.541
Balance as at 1st April 2019	34.483

2.5. A review of the approach, in 2019/20 and future years, to the use of reserves has recently been completed that now provides greater consistency and transparency across services. This up-dated approach more clearly sets out the original forecast impact on overall reserve balances (see table 2) and the impact of changes to

these forecasts during the year. (In future years the original reserve forecasts will be built into service budgets enabling variances to be included within the overall variances report by services).

2.5.1. Table 2 Earmarked Reserves: Original anticipated use of earmarked reserves for 2019/20

Service	Original Estimated Draw from or Contribution to Earmarked Reserves (£m)
Balance as at 1st April 2019	34.483
Draws from Earmarked Reserves:	
Adults	(2.500)
Economic & Community Infrastructure Services	(2.126)
Non-Service	(0.034)
Contributions to Earmarked Reserves:	
Adult Services	2.511
Public Health	0.567
Economic & Community Infrastructure Services	0.178
Corporate & Support Services	1.202
Non-Service	2.187
Trading Units	0.189
Total net increase in Earmarked Reserves	2.174
Estimated Balance of Earmarked Reserves	36.657

2.5.2. Narrative is included within the service sections below (Section 5) with explanation of any changes to the original anticipated use of earmarked reserves (as shown above in table 2). These changes will be presented within the outturn report for 2019/20 for approval alongside other reserve requests so that the impact on reserves and the overall council financial resilience is visible and a full position of reserves is known.

2.6. The forecast end of year position for earmarked reserves clearly demonstrates the continued positive improvement in the Council's financial resilience. These movements will be monitored closely for the remainder of the year and details reported in quarterly reports during the year.

2.7. General Fund

The 2019/20 revenue budget includes plans to improve the Council's resilience of its General Fund Reserve by £2.000m as set out in Table 3 below:

2.7.1. Table 3 General Fund Reserve Movements 2019/20

General Fund 2019/20	£m
Balance as at 31st March 2019	17.689
<u>In Year Movements 2019/20:</u>	
Budgeted Contribution	2.000
Balance as at 1st April 2019	19.690
<i>Less notional impact of Negative Earmarked Reserve</i>	<i>-1.322</i>
Closing Balance as at 31st March 2020	18.367

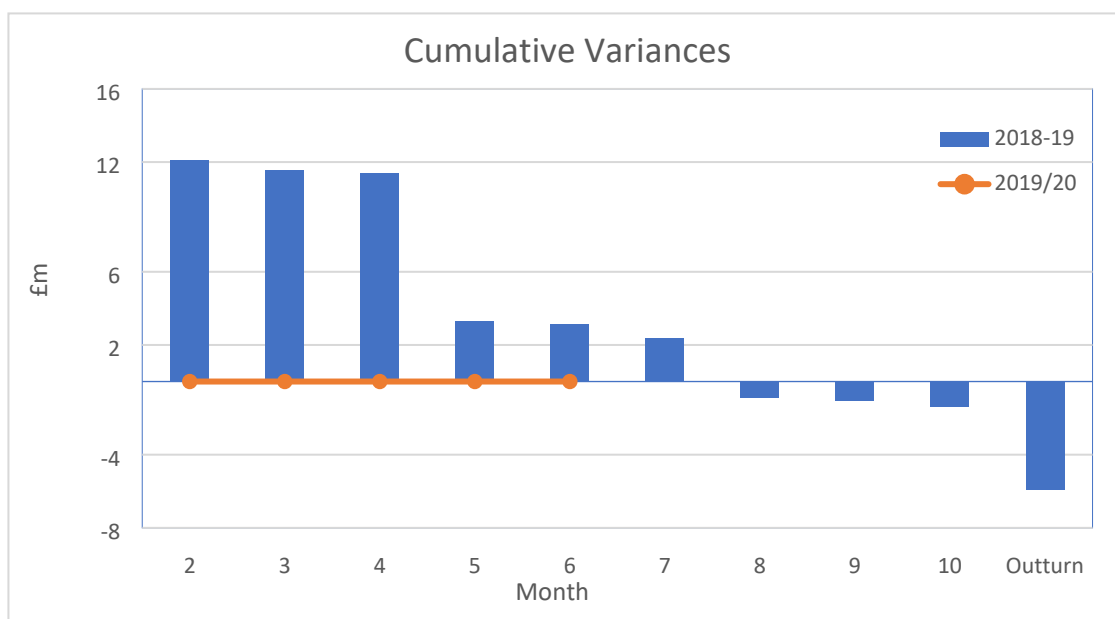
3. Capital Receipts Flexibilities (CRF)

The MTFP (2019-22) process included a review of business cases supporting the transformation activity that planned to utilise capital receipts flexibilities during 2019/20 in compliance with Government Guidelines. This was originally planned at £2.795m in the MTFP. The Month 6 forecast position indicates a reduction of £0.449m to £2.346m against the original planned amount and is a small reduction from what was forecast in the month 5 report (£2.425m). Appendix B gives a summary of the transformational projects and current forecast value.

4. Summary Forecast 2019/20 – Revenue Budget

- 4.1.** The Councils forecast shows a projected balanced position when compared to the revenue budget of £327.967m. There is a forecast overspend in Key Service Spend with most of the variance being within Children’s Services and Trading Units (Dillington House). Most other areas of the Council are within reasonable tolerance.
- 4.2.** The following graph (Graph 1) compares the reported monthly budget variances in 2018/19 and the current financial year.

Graph 1 – Revenue Budget Cumulative Variances 2018/19 and 2019/20

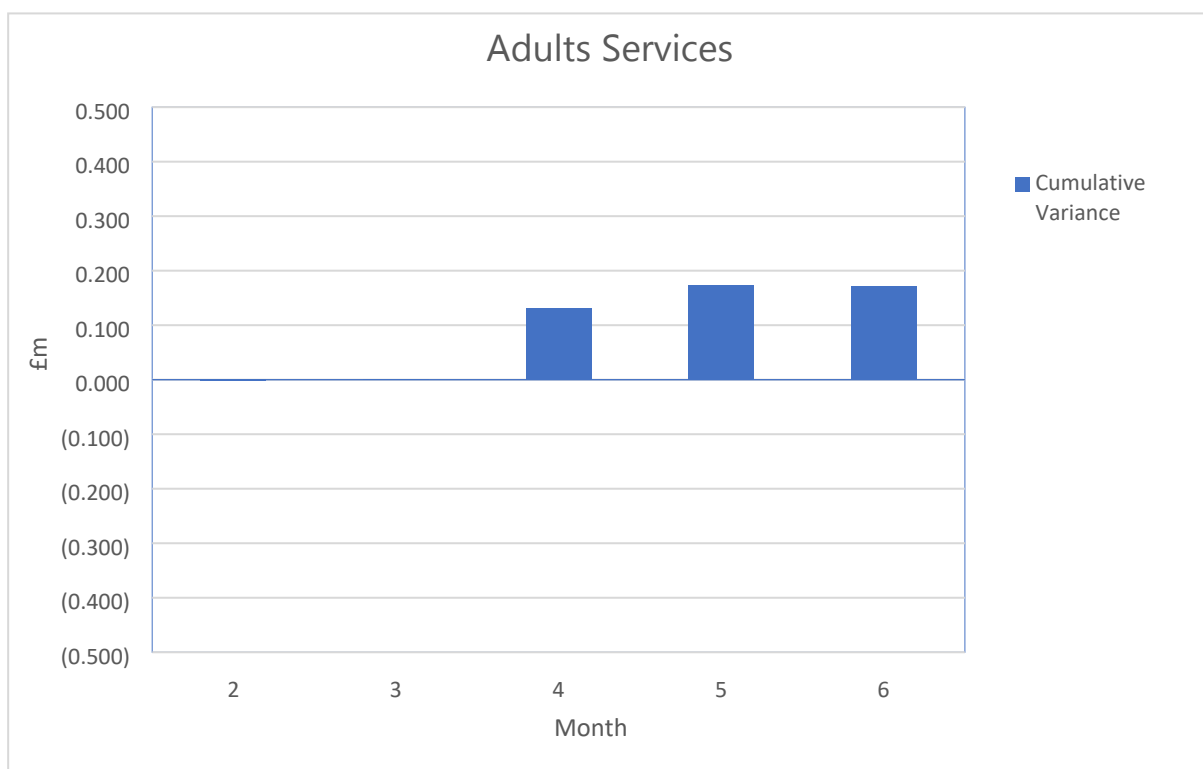


4.3. The table showing the projected end of year position, and variances from agreed budgets, are set out in Appendix A. The paragraphs below offer short explanations of the major parts of those variances. As part of continuing improvements to financial management the format of the table in Appendix A will be reviewed to ensure that it meets current best practice and aids transparency.

5. Key Variances

5.1. Adults Services: Net budget £126.522m, £0.171m projected adverse variance, favourable movement of £0.003m

Graph 2 – Adults Services 2019/20 cumulative variance to budget



The Adults budget is projected to be overspent by £0.171m against the net budget of £126.522m. Although this is a small decrease of £0.003m from the figure reported in Month 5, there are a number of positive and negative movements which should be noted and are reported below.

There has been an increase in the use of Short-Term placements to assist with discharge from hospital which has increased costs by £0.106m. The service is analysing all the data available to understand this increase but given that these placements are benefitting the system as a whole by speeding up discharge, they will be funded from the Social Care Grant.

The projected cost of Domiciliary Care continues to decrease as capacity in certain areas of the County remains low. There was a reduction in hours delivered in the Sedgemoor and South Somerset areas, which is similar to what was reported last month. The projected cost has reduced by £0.085m.

Staffing projections have reduced by £0.217m since the previous report due to a number of vacancies having their start dates pushed back, and new vacancies created by people leaving the service.

The Learning Disabilities Pooled Budget remains on track with a very small favourable variance of £0.003m, although this is an increase of £0.059m from the position reported at month 5. The main increases were due to new Day Services, the ending of Continuing Health Care for one person and increased costs for a Residential client.

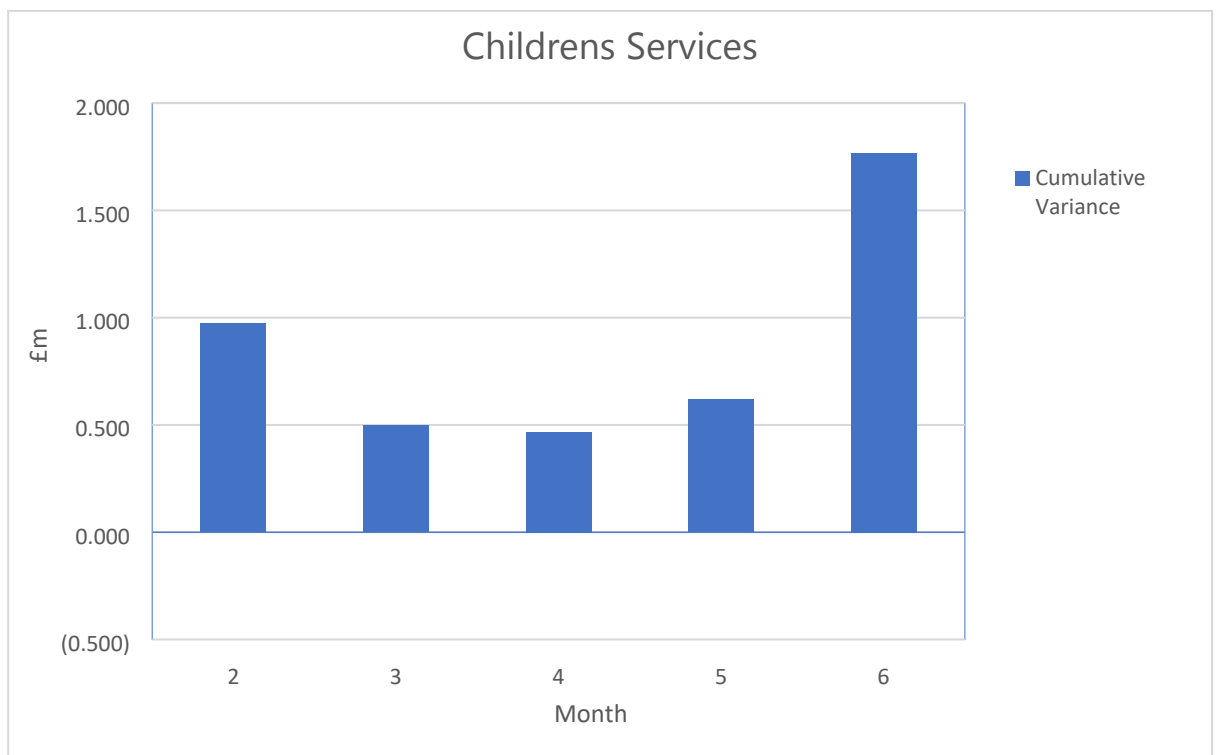
These increases have been largely offset by anticipated reductions in Supported Living and Day Services delivered through the Discovery contract.

This variance is net of an estimated £2.841m that will be requested at year end to be transferred to the Adult Social Care Resilience earmarked reserve. This figure could change as the year progresses should new pressures arise but will allow the service to build up further resilience for future service commissioning.

There are MTFP savings of £5.157m to be achieved during 2019/20. Of these £3.798m have already been fully achieved with the remaining £1.359m on track to be delivered throughout the year.

5.2. Children’s Services Net budget £83.426m, £1.768m projected adverse variance, adverse movement £1.149m

Graph 3 – Children’s Services 2019/20 cumulative variance to budget



External Placements: adverse £2.056m; movement: adverse £0.933m

A Somerset market management conference is taking place on the 25th November led by Children’s Commissioners with private sector providers of care and accommodation. This is part of the strategy to involve these stakeholders in shaping Somerset’s future care market to enable more flexible approaches and ways of providing homes and care, including support for children to return to their family.

Commissioning activity led through the Peninsula Framework is currently focussed on market management – improving quality and cost reduction - in the private fostering market. A revised framework agreement, with reduced costs is anticipated by the end of December 2019. It is anticipated that similar market management activity with residential providers early in 2020, will also evidence some reduction in costs in this area.

External placements projections have increased by £0.933m resulting in a total projected overspend of £2.056m. The increase is due to 11 children changing placement during the last month; 7 have moved from a fostering to a residential setting due to a lack of suitably skilled and resilient foster carers in house or in the private sector.

Transformational activities in relation to external placements continue to deliver cost avoidance, with £1.761m already achieved against a target of £1.649m. Reducing the cost of residential placements through individual provider negotiations and reduction in the number of these placements through successful step down to suitable alternative provision has achieved savings of £1.189m. Savings in post 16 provision currently achieved are £0.569m of £0.859 anticipated by year end.

Service management actions are focussed on prevention into care, placement stability and reconnection with families. The primary objective of these actions is to improve the lives of our children and young people, but most will also result in a financial benefit.

Staffing: favourable -£1.026m; movement: favourable -£0.399m

Staffing projections across Children's Social Care have reduced by £0.399m this month as a result of the start dates being revised to the new year for any current vacancy. Ongoing difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced permanent social work front line staff and managers and family support staff account for a significant proportion of the projected underspend. This is not a sustainable position due to the impact on staff morale and the ability to deliver high quality support to families. The HR and Organisational Development Director is leading the development of a workforce strategy to address these issues.

Transport: adverse £0.293m; movement: adverse £0.196m

The costs of transporting children to school are projected to increase by £0.196m; a reduction of £0.304m in Home to School and an increase of £0.500m in SEND. The reduction in Home to School is as a result of specific market disruption activity, a project called The Big Bus, which sees an inhouse fleet offering several routes to offset costs of additional children travelling.

The increase in SEND reflects the increase in the number of eligible children and young people with EHCPs being transported now the new academic year has begun. There has been an increase of 66 children with SEND accessing transport with additional routes commissioned to meet demand.

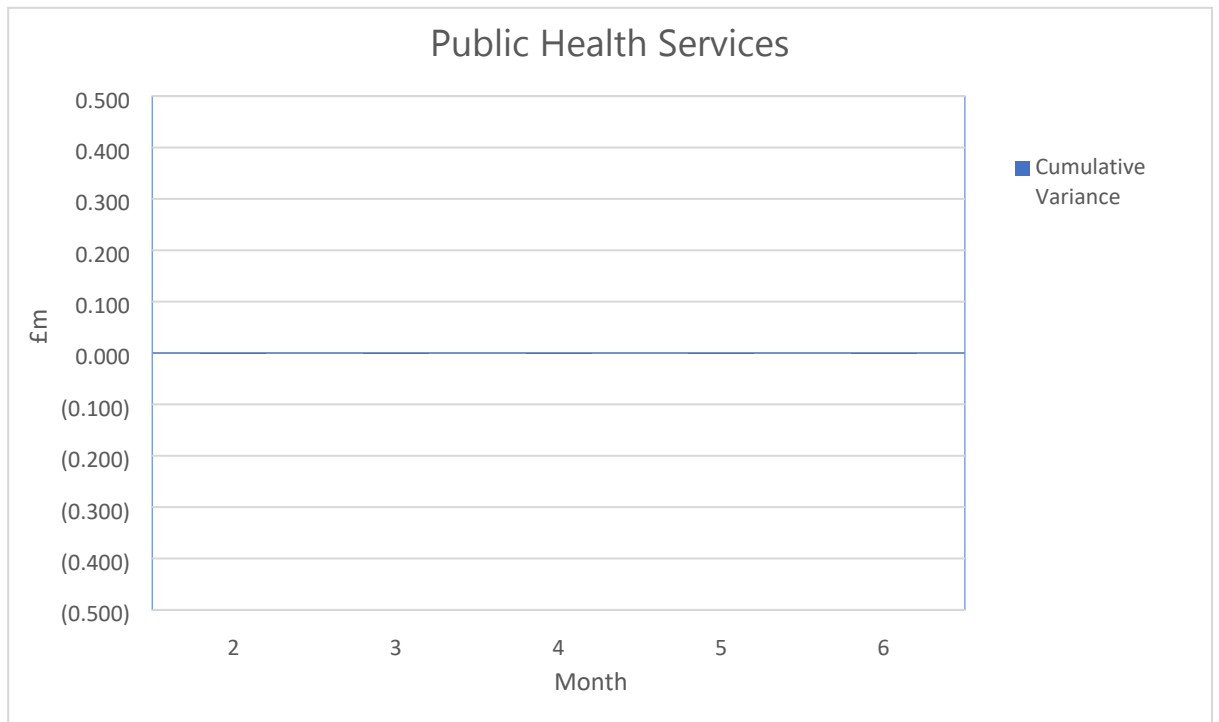
The top 20 high cost routes to each provision type will be reviewed to ensure the transport is the most appropriate and cost effective for that journey. The decision-making process is also being reviewed in conjunction with Transporting Somerset to ensure that it is robust, and a business case is being considered to increase the number of personal travel plans.

Sponsored Academy Balances: adverse £0.450m; movement: adverse £0.450m

King Arthur’s Community School has become a sponsored academy (i.e. required to join a multi academy trust following an inadequate ofsted inspection) as part of the Sherborne Area Schools Trust. At the point of transfer the school was in deficit which remains with the local authority, to be funded from its core budget. This is not an allowable charge to the Dedicated Schools Grant. The value of the deficit is still being validated but current estimate is £0.450m.

5.3. Public Health: Net budget £0.586m, projected on budget movement; £nil

Graph 4 – Public Health 2019/20 cumulative variance to budget



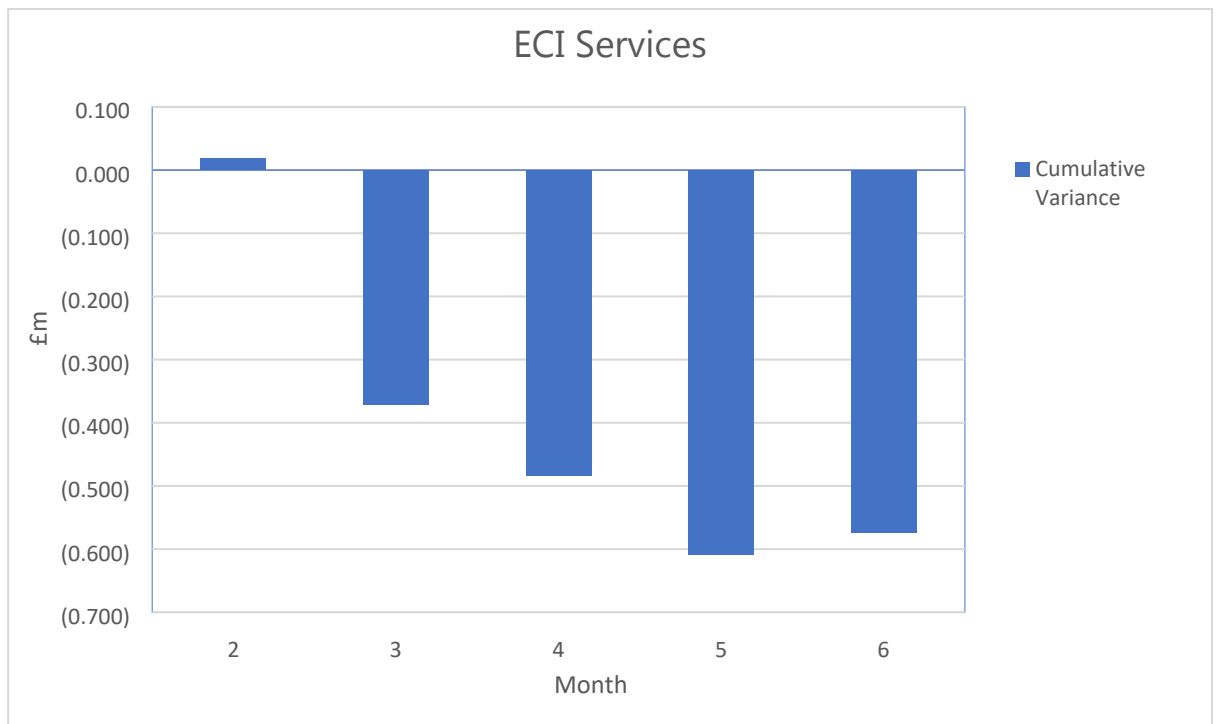
Public Health is projected to be on budget. This variance is net of an estimated £0.567m to be transferred to the Public Health Earmarked Reserve. This money will be

used to fund Neighbourhoods Transformation in the following years and to provide a degree of future resilience given the uncertainty over long term funding for Public Health.

All savings have been fully achieved for 2019/20.

5.4. Economic and Community Infrastructure: Net budget £68.738m, -£0.574m projected favourable variance, adverse movement of £0.034m

Graph 5 – Economic and Community Infrastructure 2019/20 cumulative variance to budget



Economic and Community Infrastructure (ECI) are forecasting a favourable variance of £0.574m for 2019/20. The major variations are:

Property Services are projecting a £0.253m favourable variance. This is due to a delay in the sale of properties resulting in rental income for the year being higher than anticipated. The movement of £0.217m from month 5 is as a result of detailed analysis of the service to ensure projections are accurate. Some projections have been increased to reflect the level of spend anticipated. This also includes the £0.012m increase in costs on the activity associated with the Repairs and Maintenance reserve resulting in a reduced surplus that will be requested to be returned to the reserve at the end of the year.

Transporting Somerset are forecasting a £0.012m favourable variance which is a

favourable movement of £0.020m from month 5. This is due to an anticipated underspend on County Ticket based upon early indicative figures. This has been offset in part by an increase in Concessionary Fares projections as a result of fares increases and passenger numbers.

Highways and Transport Commissioning are projecting a £0.371m adverse variance. This is as a result of new urgent technical studies and additional staff to improve service levels in highways development management. The adverse movement of £0.009m from month 5 is due to a number of small over and underspends within the service.

Highways is forecasting a £0.286m adverse variance. This is due to the Term Maintenance Contract rebate being lower than initially anticipated and a shortfall in Highway licence income. The £0.079m favourable movement from month 5 is due to decrease in the projected Rights of Way expenditure, a reduction in tree spend following a review of dead, diseased and dying trees and staff vacancy savings. The highways adverse variance is being closely monitored and a plan is in place to track and reduce this further.

Traffic Management are forecasting a £0.024m favourable variance. The adverse movement of £0.097m to the favourable variance reported in month 5 is a result of additional expenditure for the street works permitting project and Road Safety equipment for roadshows. This in part is offset by increased Traffic Regulation Order income (road closures and diversions) and a £0.019m favourable variance due to updated income projections that will be requested to be transferred to the Parking earmarked reserve at outturn.

Somerset Waste Partnership are forecasting an £1.099m favourable variance, a favourable movement of £0.0297 from month 5. This is down to waste volumes being less than the budgeted 1.5% growth, future months are now forecast on 1% growth in line with household growth. The most significant areas that have seen a reduction are kerbside collections of both residual waste and dry recycling and reduced residual tonnages at the HRWC. Green waste has been higher, but this is the usual trend for this time of year. Volumes continue to be volatile and dependent on outside factors such as the weather.

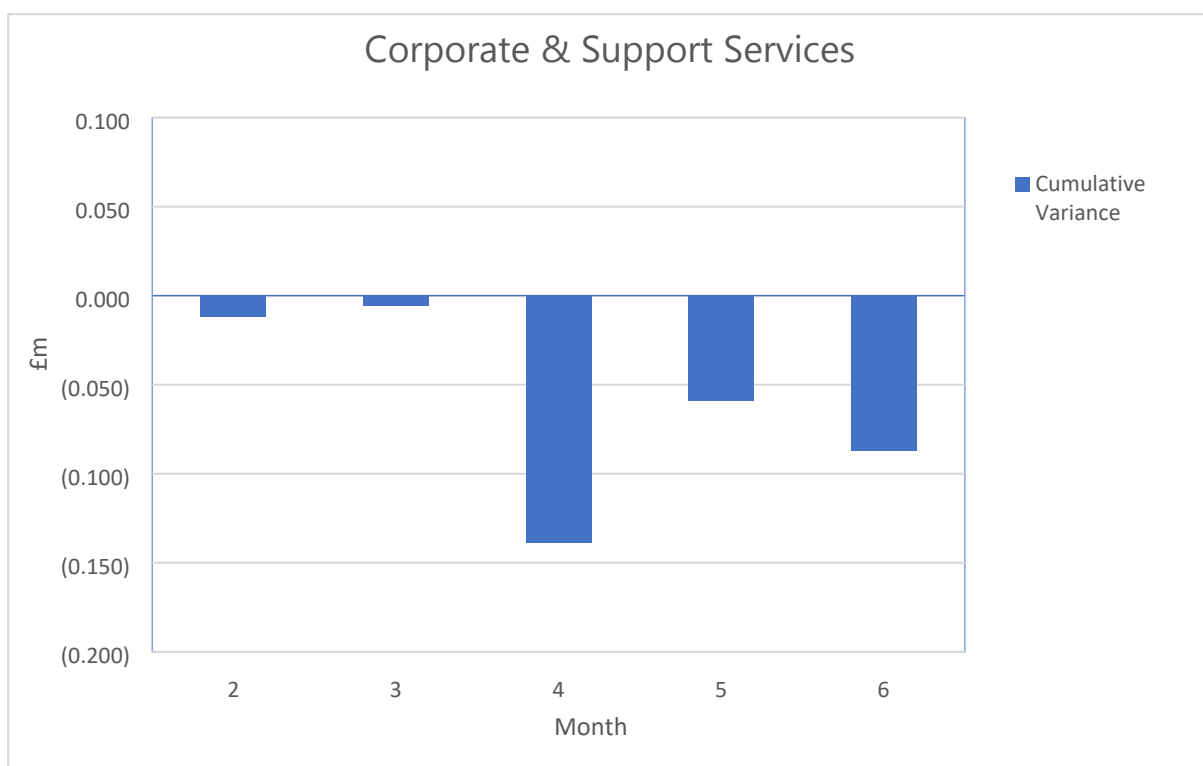
Economic Development are projecting an adverse variance of £0.136m. This adverse movement of £0.103m from month 5 is due to the anticipated costs within Planning Control associated with enforcement appeals and reduced income because of continued staff vacancies in the service.

There are still a number of factors that could change forecasts including adverse weather and emergency costs and any upturn in waste volumes and transport costs (Concessionary Fares as a result of operator's data and County Ticket).

Economic and Community Infrastructure have £3.165m of savings for 2019/20. Of this £2.400m has been achieved and £0.765m is on track to be achieved by the end of the financial year.

5.5. Corporate and Support Services: Net Budget £21.103m, £0.087m projected favourable variance, favourable movement of £0.028m

Graph 6 – Corporate and Support Services 2019/20 cumulative variance to budget



Corporate and Support Services are forecasting a favourable variance of £0.087m for 2019/20. This is due to the following;

Commercial and Procurement is projecting an adverse variation of £0.032m. The adverse movement from month 5 of £0.073m is due to an increase in staffing costs due to vacancies being filled by temporary staff and the additional cost of audits by external audit. Included in the month 6 position are additional costs of £0.013m associated with the Building Schools for the Future contract and this reduces the anticipated transfer to the earmarked reserve set aside for future contractual costs and will be requested at outturn.

The Finance service is projecting an underspend of £0.075m, this is due to several staff vacancies within the service which are yet to be filled. The service may seek to either spend in the current year or carry forward a further anticipated underspend of

£0.075m to invest in team development.

The ICT favourable variance now stands at £0.038m. This is as a result of underspends in transformation projects and increased income received by the service.

Customers and Communities teams are forecasting a favourable variance of £0.077m. This is due to staff vacancy savings of £0.089m offset in part by a shortfall in income. The favourable movement of £0.020m from month 5 is due to further staff vacancies.

Democratic Services are projecting an adverse variance of £0.040m, this is as a result of a shortfall of Partnership Governance funding and £0.035m of MTFP savings (Member allowances voluntary deduction, Partnership Governance income generation and Democratic Services demand management) that are unachievable. These savings are unachievable due to the business need to continue as the Host Authority for several significant Partnership Governance arrangements and additional work as part of the Improving Lives Programme and Peer Challenge recommendations for Member training and the review of the council's scrutiny function. The favourable movement of £0.020m from month 5 is as a result of some staff vacancy savings and a £0.012 favourable variance as a result of reduced projected spend on publicity and promotions for the Heart of the South West Joint Committee which will be requested to be transferred to the earmarked reserve at outturn.

Legal Services are forecasting a £0.049m adverse variance, which is an adverse movement of £0.038m from month 5. This adverse variance is due to counsel fees which continues to be a pressure on the legal service budget. This also includes £0.012m of an unachievable saving for changing working practices, this is currently being reviewed through the change control process. These pressures are offset in part by staff vacancy savings.

The communications budget is projecting an £0.018m favourable variance as a result of staff vacancy savings and income projections being higher than anticipated for the year.

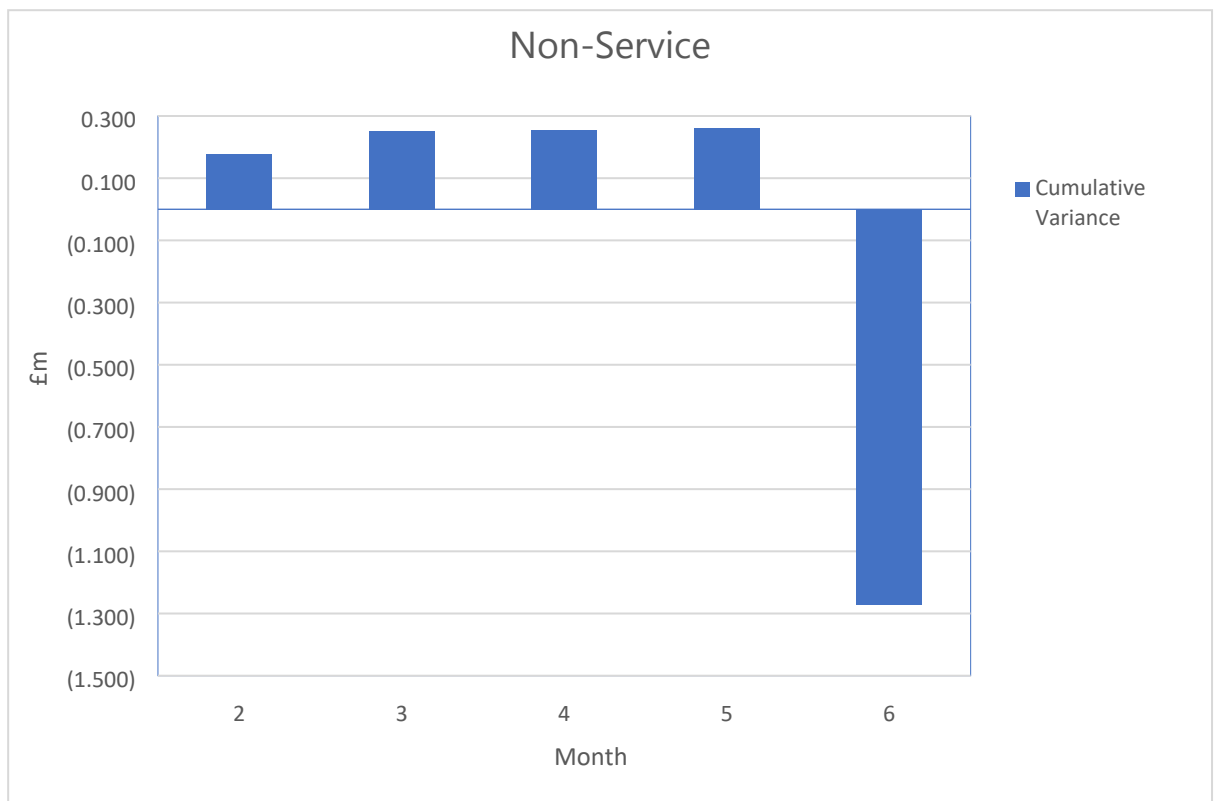
The HR&OD budget is projecting a balanced position as at month 6 however finance and the service are working through a number of in-service adverse and favourable variances in detail to ensure that this remains the case. It is anticipated that any variation to this will be known by month 7.

Corporate & Support Services have £3.574m of savings for 2019/20. Of this £3.207m has been achieved, £0.136m is on track to be achieved and £0.231m is currently unachievable. This is made up of £0.035m of unachievable savings within Democratic Services for income recovery and generation, £0.065m of unachievable savings in IT Services which are subject to change control, a £0.012m unachievable saving in Legal

Services which is being reviewed and £0.120m unachievable savings in Commercial and Procurement for the review of fees and charges which is currently being considered as part of the change control process. A saving of £0.060m has already been identified to replace the fees and charges saving and is awaiting formal change control sign-off.

5.6. Non-Service Net Budget: £21.042m, projected favourable variance: -£1.272m, favourable movement -£1.533m

Graph 7 – Non-Service 2019/20 cumulative variance to budget



Pension Deficit: favourable -£0.864m, movement; favourable -£0.864m

Following the allocation of the corporate pension deficit budget and the allocation of charges to services, there is a favourable variance of £0.864m. This is mainly due to maintained schools being charged a more proportionate share of the pensions deficit, funded by their delegated budget share. This has resulted in a reduced pressure on the Council’s budget. This is an ongoing favourable variance and has been included in MTFP assumptions in future years.

Investment and Debt Income and Expenditure: favourable -£0.603m, movement; favourable -£0.650m

The cash flow of the Council is being carefully managed so that there is no need for additional external borrowing to fund the Capital Programme during 2019/20. This results in a favourable variance of £0.650m due to no additional interest charges that were assumed when the budget was set.

5.7. Trading Units: Net budget £0.00m, adverse £0.417m, movement; £nil

Dillington House: adverse £0.417m, movement; £nil

Dillington is currently forecasting a deficit of £0.417m following a deep dive budget/performance review of month 5 accounts and forecasts. The adverse variance reflects revised projections of income levels across all areas of activity particularly weddings. Further updates have been made by adjusting costs to reflect the reduction in activity.

There are positives with increased income this year from conferences, events and online B&B bookings. Actions are taking place to continue building on these positives and to identify potential alternative revenue streams for 2019/20.

Adult Education has not managed to reach its stretch targets for this year but has exceeded previous years' income levels. Work is ongoing to develop a refreshed programme in 2020 to attract new business. We will be taking advantage of the space in this year's programme to test new courses and market appetite.

Whilst weddings have been disappointing for this year (due to a vacancy in a key post during the relevant booking period), next year's wedding bookings are already 57% higher than the current year, with bookings and enquiries continuing.

An independent review is imminent to assess the latest business plan and financial forecasts for the next 3 years and consider how Dillington can effectively deliver services as part of the County Council's portfolio.

Support Services for Education: trading surplus £0.189m, movement; favourable £0.112m

SSE Outdoors' favourable variance has increased by £0.041m due to an increase in residential bookings resulting in additional income. The planned refurbishment work is also not expected to be fully completed in this financial year therefore a reduction in project spend has contributed to the change between months 5 and 6.

Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning's (SCIL) favourable variance has increased by £0.072m which is predominantly due to increased income resulting from additional pupil numbers for the year 1 Foundation Degree course. Plus, new programmes within the Apprenticeship Service has also attracted more income. Expenditure across

SCIL has reduced due to the service reviewing their publications and advertising priorities.

5.8. Contingencies: Net Budget £6.550m, -£0.423m projected notional allocation, favourable movement of £0.382m (£6.127m remaining following notional allocation)

The 2019/20 budget included £7.226m in a corporate contingency to mitigate against the risk of unexpected in-year service pressures and or funding changes. This sum is now £6.550m following the agreed recommendation to transfer £0.498m to fund some of the pressure within Children’s Services for SEN transport (as per July Cabinet meeting) and the agreed recommendation to transfer £0.175m to fund the enhanced capacity and capability to aid Brexit preparations (as per September Cabinet meeting).

At this stage in the year it remains prudent for this contingency budget to be shown as fully committed however an element is being shown to off-set the adverse variance of £0.423m currently forecast in service areas and Trading Units which is a favourable movement of £0.382m from month 5 (See table 4). If the current adverse variance in other services and Trading Units is not mitigated by additional management action the remaining available contingency budget would be £6.127m. If no other pressures materialise during the year the outturn position would be an overall favourable variance of this sum for the Council.

5.8.1 Table 4 – Corporate Contingencies Movements

Contingencies	£m
Original Budget	7.226
Virement to Children's (as per month 2)	(0.498)
Virement to ECI (as per month 4)	(0.175)
Overall Adverse Variances at Month 6 (Notional Allocation)	(0.426)
	6.127

6. Delivery of Savings

6.1. The Financial Imperative approach, established to manage the preparation and delivery of MTFP continues to provide monthly assurance for the development, delivery and validation of savings plans.

6.2. The different savings statuses are as follows:

- Red: This means that the saving has been identified as being at risk of delivery and plans to replace the saving have not yet been agreed via the change control process.

- Green: The saving is on track for delivery.
- Blue: The saving has been delivered.

6.3. The following table (Table 5) shows a summarised breakdown of achievement of savings for 2019/20 as at 30th September 2019 and confirms that 99% of the proposals for change have been classified as having a green or blue status, meaning service directors are confident that these savings will be delivered or in the case of the blue savings, they have already been delivered. 1% of savings proposals have been classified as red meaning the savings are currently at risk or replacement savings have not been agreed through the change control process. The monitoring of the delivery of the savings across the three decision processes can be seen in Appendix C.

6.4. Table 5 – Revenue Savings 2019/20

Service	Agreed Savings £	Red (at risk) £	Green (on track) £	Blue (delivered) £
Adult Services	5,506,800	-	1,359,100	4,147,700
Children's Services	4,592,800	-	1,172,300	3,420,500
Corporate & Support Services	3,573,500	231,300	135,503	3,206,697
Economic & Community Infrastructure	3,165,300	-	765,400	2,399,900
Non-Service	4,708,800	-	-	4,708,800
Total	21,547,200	231,300	3,432,303	17,883,597
Percentage of Delivery		1.07%	15.93%	83.00%

7. Aged Debt Analysis

7.1. The overall debt position shows a total gross debt of £7.993m, of which £1.465m (18%) is over 90 days old. This is an improvement on last year, where the figure was 23% at quarter 2. Previous areas where debt has been difficult to collect promptly have improved. A summary of aged debt can be found in Table 6 below.

7.2. Detailed debt information is reported to Audit Committee on a quarterly basis. In addition, last year, a SWAP audit report was issued on debt management, which informed updates to the Income Code of Practice. Mandatory training awareness sessions have also been provided to all officers involved in actively managing debt and additional support has been provided to services on specific debt management processes and controls.

7.3. Members are reminded that over the last 3 years, the Council has collected 99% of all the debt raised on our Accounts Receivable system.

7.4. Table 6 – Aged Debt Analysis by Service

Service	Not Overdue	0-30 Days	31-90 Days	91-365 Days	365+ Days	Total (Gross)	Unassigned Cash	Total (Net)
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Services	0.104	0.700	0.698	0.472	0.291	2.265	(0.109)	2.156
Children's Services	0.267	0.112	0.054	0.136	0.023	0.592	(0.015)	0.577
Public Health	0.000	0.517	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.517	0.000	0.517
Economic & Community Infrastructure	0.871	2.554	0.204	0.314	0.172	4.115	0.000	4.115
Corporate & Support Services	0.020	0.104	0.014	0.037	0.007	0.182	0.000	0.182
Support Services for Education (Trading Units)	0.004	0.291	0.014	0.013	0.000	0.322	(0.015)	0.307
Total (£m)	1.266	4.278	0.984	0.972	0.493	7.993	-0.139	7.854
Total (%)	16%	54%	12%	12%	6%	100%		

7.5. Adult Services: £2.156m

Focus continues to be on debts over 90 days old which have reduced from £1.079m reported at Quarter 1 to £0.763m now. Debts in the 30 to 90-day bracket have increased slightly however there are a number of debts owed by Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group in this figure which we anticipate will be paid shortly. All debts are either being actively pursued by the Adults Finance Team or are with Legal for further action.

7.6. Children's Services: £0.577m

Of the debts over 30 days, 66% relates to 2 invoices owed by the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group for agreed contributions to fees of children with complex needs in residential placements. These invoices are part of ongoing discussions to ensure settlement as soon as possible. The remaining debt is for Education Safeguarding penalty notices, paid seats on school transport and recharges for training provided by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership. All debts over 30 days have been referred to legal.

7.7. Economic & Community Infrastructure: £4.115m

ECI are reporting a total of £0.486m outstanding debt over 90 days old, which is 11.81% of ECI's total debt. These debts are all being actively chased by services or by legal/debt recovery. The total value of debt is high as usual at this time of year due to a large amount of county ticket invoices having been raised.

7.8. Corporate & Support Services: £0.182m

Corporate and Support Services: £0.182m a reduction of £0.062m from month 5. The total value of debts over 90 days is £0.044m, all debts are being actively chased or have been referred Legal/Debt recovery.

7.9. Support Services for Education: £0.307m

The majority of debt (96%) is under 30 days old and relates to services and courses purchased via the SSE website. This is expected to be recovered in line with the timescales set out within the Income Code of Practice.

8. Improving Lives Programme

8.1. We are continuing to mobilise and scope The Improving Lives Programme (ILP) which will redesign the organisation to create a sustainable Council that better manages demand, puts prevention at the heart of its thinking and has a culture that promotes innovation and values our staff.

8.2. Over the last three months, we have undertaken a 'deep dive' into each of the four enabling workstreams within the ILP: Digital Customer, Prevention, Commissioning for the Future and Behaviours & Culture. The purpose of these deep dives was to understand the activity being scoped by each workstream, the maturity of their plans and how the outputs and capability being delivered by the themes can change and improve the way we deliver services. This is being used to inform the scope of the ILP programme by prioritising the opportunities identified. We are also reviewing all service led transformation activity to identify whether delivery could be scaled corporately rather than within services, for example, we will look at how technology being utilised to help service users in one service might also support those in another.

8.3. Notable achievement across the four enabling workstreams over the last three months includes:

- Digital Customer – good progress is being made with several key enabling pieces of work, including how we use our systems to better capture quality data intelligence that can be used to improve commissioning. The benefits of using of AV1 robots to support students who are long term absent from school to integrate back into the environment is being explored through a test and learn approach. Work is progressing with the delivery of a SEND portal which will support Professionals and the SEND service to submit and receive the correct information accurately and in line with statutory deadlines. The workstream is engaging services to help them understand how digital capability can help them improve service delivery.

- Commissioning – plans for the co-location of commissioning teams to enable more joined up working are being finalised. A new integrated commissioning gateway has been designed in order to facilitate more joint and consistent commissioning and the app that will host it is being built by ICT.
- Culture and Behaviour – a vision for the future workforce has been developed and agreed. This will be used to provide structure and direction to the activities that have been identified to change the culture and behaviours needed to support the new organisation. Staff engagement with the Somerset People Attributes continues through team meetings and via the staff roadshows. Testing is also underway through recruitment and staff development to begin embedding them and capture learning. A knowledge site for sharing and celebrating great work and ideas has been scoped and a project team is now in place to progress this.
- Prevention – a prevention learning programme, designed to embed a prevention ethos, has been developed and launched. This includes Prevention Masterclasses and eLearning modules which are designed to improve general confidence in prevention. These will form part of a wider Prevention training programme which is currently being developed.

8.4. Following the Strategic and Service Manager Workshop in June, where staff exhibited examples of where the design principles are being brought to life across SCC, work has been completed to run the exhibition as part of the Staff Roadshows from October to December this year. As well as the opportunity to hear from, and speak with, the Chief Executive and Leader, the roadshows aim to raise the level of general awareness about the ILP programme amongst staff whilst giving them the chance to find out about some of the innovative work going on across the Council. All Councillors have been invited to the Improving Lives Exhibition part of the roadshows and will have the same opportunity as staff to hear about these initiatives and ask questions.

8.5. Other programmes:

8.5.1. Children's Service Transformation Programme – The objectives of the programme to improve outcomes for children and young people within a sustainable budget, have been aligned to the Improving Lives design principles and aim to deliver improvements in demand management, prevention, digital customer thinking and commissioning for the future. The programme continues to focus on priority areas of high opportunity to transform commissioning and practice and ensure future sustainability of the Service in the light of known service funding and future demand pressures. The workstreams are progressing well with changes in behavior, practice and improvement in evidence across the Programme, e.g. in the Fostering Service and 16+. The workstreams are enabled by required changes to technology, systems and culture with interventions in place to ensure continued good progress.

- 8.5.2. Adults Service Transformation Programme** – The transformation program continues to focus on how we promote people’s independence. The vision is for ‘people in Somerset to live healthy and independent lives, supported by thriving and connected communities, with timely and easy access to high-quality and efficient support when they need it’ delivered through seven workstreams, Mental Health, Learning Disability, Collaboration, Technology, Community Connect, Accommodation and Investing in Carers.
- 8.5.3.** The ‘Steps to Independence’ model is currently being tested on a small pilot group to better support adults with a learning disability to become more independent. Its focus’ on developing life skills such as preparing for work, cooking, budgeting, going shopping, etc as well as making friends, getting fit or learning to travel independently.
- 8.5.4.** Community Connect is a philosophy and way of working being adopted by community, health and social care organisations to improve wellbeing and keep people living independent lives for as long as possible. A review of how this works for people with more complex needs in Somerset has been completed and development plans will now be created to enhance the model and better enable people to help themselves, identifying local solutions so people can live a good life in their community. Alongside this, our customer access points are also under review to ensure people are accessing the right information when they need it.
- 8.5.5.** Preparation is complete to launch a pilot in Somerset, ‘Brain in Hand’, for how assistive technology can be used to maximise an individual’s independence. It will be used to help people gain independence and remain independent, focusing on prevention and providing person centred care. It will enable the step down of ‘care’ but provides ongoing support when needed. The pilot includes people with we are currently working with who have a mental health need or learning disability.
- 8.5.6.** The Somerset Community Connect website went live this summer and is an online **information and advice guide** and **directory of services** for adult residents in Somerset to find information, advice and services to manage their own health and wellbeing. It also provides a platform to find out about local “events” - groups, activities and services within their community. We are now developing how this can provide information on what help and support is available at home (micro providers) <https://www.somersetcommunityconnect.org.uk/>
- 8.5.7.** Work is underway to replace the case management system with an application called Eclipse. A series of workshops to review the current processes are underway, and we are preparing for a trial migration of data from AIS to Eclipse in October. Ongoing work on reporting, training and testing to plan the approach for implementation March 2020.

- 8.6.** The Prevention fund (£1.000m) continues to attract expressions of interest with 1 Expression recently submitted asking for £0.050m. 4 projects totalling £0.530m have now commenced delivery and benefits are being tracked. The members prevention grant which closes on the 30th November has received 12 successful bids to a total of £0.008m of the £0.110m available. Our third grant of £0.025m designated for the youth parliament implementation in Q4 is being developed. The Prevention theme has now mobilised and has begun to develop and implement a plan to build capability in the organisation for continuous improvement into 2020.
- 8.7.** Robust tracking and delivery of MTFP savings for 2019/20 is continuing as part of the financial imperative process. Delivery of each saving has been profiled throughout the financial year with a clear picture of the actions required to achieve them which is providing the necessary assurance. As at 30th September 2019 £12.945m of the savings agreed by Full Council in February 2019 have been achieved against a target of £15.062m.
- 8.8.** As at 30 September 2019, the estimated cost of additional resources required to facilitate the Improving Lives Programme during 2019/20 is £0.439m.

9. Options considered and reasons for rejecting them

- 9.1** There is no alternative but to undertake effective and thorough budget monitoring to follow through with appropriate actions to address any variances.

10. Background Papers

- 10.4**
- 4th November 2019 Scrutiny for Policies and Place Month 5 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report

Appendix A – Revenue Budget Monitoring (quarter 2, month 6) – Headline Summary Table

Service	Total Revised Budget	Adverse Variances (+)	(Favourable) Variances (-)	Month 6 Net Variance Adverse / (Favourable)		Month 5 Net Variance	Movement from Month 5
	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m
Adult Services	126.522	5.270	(5.099)	0.171	0.14%	0.174	(0.003)
Children's Services	83.426	7.491	(5.722)	1.768	2.12%	0.619	1.149
Public Health	0.586	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
Economic & Community Infrastructure Services	68.738	2.759	(3.334)	(0.574)	(0.84%)	(0.608)	0.034
Key Services Spending	279.272	15.520	(14.155)	1.365	0.49%	0.185	1.180
Corporate & Support Services	21.103	0.730	(0.818)	(0.087)	(0.41%)	(0.059)	(0.028)
Non-Service Items	21.042	0.698	(1.970)	(1.272)	(6.04%)	0.261	(1.533)
Trading Units	0.000	0.417	0.000	0.417	0.00%	0.417	0.000
Support Services & Corporate Spending	42.145	1.846	(2.788)	(0.942)	(2.24%)	0.619	(1.561)
Corporate Contingencies	6.550	0.000	(0.423)	(0.423)	(6.46%)	(0.805)	0.382
Total SCC Spending	327.967	17.366	(17.366)	(0.000)	(0.00%)	(0.000)	0.000

Total Revised Budget = Revised budget after transfers between services, not affecting the total budget for 2019/20

Adverse variance = one that deteriorates the projected outturn position

(Favourable) variance = one that improves the projected outturn position

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Appendix B – Planned use of Capital Receipts Flexibilities (Quarter 2, Month 6)

Service		Original Planned Costs £m	Current Forecast Costs £m	Previous Forecast Costs £m	Description
Adult Services	Learning Disabilities	0.624	0.624	0.624	Contractual transformation costs
Children and Families	Getset	0.055	0.000	0.000	Supporting the Family Support Service model
ECI Services	Property	0.206	0.163	0.206	Costs associated with property rationalisation and transforming the use of assets
	Economic Development	0.381	0.381	0.381	Supporting the roll-out of Broadband, underpinning how services can be delivered to the public
	Commissioning	0.070	0.046	0.046	Commissioning development and working towards integrated commissioning solutions
	Libraries	0.066	0.066	0.066	Costs associated with the activity supporting the Library transformation
Key Services		1.402	1.280	1.323	

Corporate and Support Services	Core Council Programme	1.006	0.683	0.718	Costs within the Core Council Programme team who support transformational projects across the Council
	ICT and related costs	0.233	0.220	0.220	Costs associated with supporting the digital transformational changes across the Council
	Customers and Communities	0.154	0.154	0.154	Costs supporting the transformation of the customer "front door" service delivery
	Community Governance	0.000	0.010	0.010	Costs for the Cabinet Member for Education and Transformation who supports transformational work for the Council.
Support Services and Corporate		1.393	1.067	1.102	
SCC Total		2.795	2.346	2.425	

Appendix C – Delivery of Savings Summary 2019/20

Savings agreed in February 2019 for 2019/20:

Service	Agreed Savings £	Red (at risk) £	Green (on track) £	Blue (delivered) £
Adult Services	3,389,000	-	1,688,674	1,700,326
Children's Services	1,701,000	-	98,300	1,602,700
Corporate & Support Services	2,955,900	120,000	150,503	2,685,397
Economic & Community Infrastructure	2,307,200	10,000	716,500	1,580,700
Non-Service	4,708,800	-	-	4,708,800
Total	15,061,900	130,000	2,653,977	12,277,923
Percentage of Delivery		0.86%	17.62%	81.52%

Savings agreed in September 2018 (MTFP2) for 2019/20:

Service	Agreed Savings £	Red (at risk) £	Green (on track) £	Blue (delivered) £
Adult Services	1,717,800	-	-	1,717,800
Children's Services	2,891,800	5,800	1,148,200	1,737,800
Corporate & Support Services	561,700	46,300	-	515,400
Economic & Community Infrastructure	842,400	-	389,900	452,500
Non-Service	-	-	-	-
Total	6,013,700	52,100	1,538,100	4,423,500
Percentage of Delivery		0.87%	25.58%	73.56%

Savings agreed in February 2018 for 2019/20:

Service	Agreed Savings £	Red (at risk) £	Green (on track) £	Blue (delivered) £
Adult Services	400,000	-	-	400,000
Children's Services	-	-	-	-
Corporate & Support Services	55,900	-	55,900	-
Economic & Community Infrastructure	15,700	-	-	15,700
Non-Service	-	-	-	-
Total	471,600	-	55,900	415,700
Percentage of Delivery		0.00%	11.85%	88.15%

ALL Combined Savings for 2019/20:

Service	Agreed Savings £	Red (at risk) £	Green (on track) £	Blue (delivered) £
Adult Services	5,506,800	-	1,688,674	3,818,126
Children's Services	4,592,800	5,800	1,246,500	3,340,500
Corporate & Support Services	3,573,500	166,300	206,403	3,200,797
Economic & Community Infrastructure	3,165,300	10,000	1,106,400	2,048,900
Non-Service	4,708,800	-	-	4,708,800
Total	21,547,200	182,100	4,247,977	17,117,123
Percentage of Delivery		0.85%	19.71%	79.44%

CHILDRENS SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 - 2019/20



SOMERSET
County Council



Purpose of the Report

This report draws out the key performance measures included in the Corporate Performance Report that relate to Children's Services. It sets out the key activities and measures used to check our performance for the year against the priorities we are working towards.

This report does not contain details of the numerous other activities ongoing that also contribute to delivering what is important and will make a difference to children in Somerset.




Further information about how the Council monitors and reports on performance can be found on the Council website (www.somerset.gov.uk)

For any other information please contact the Planning and Performance Team at Performance@somerset.gov.uk

Key to KPI ratings used

This report includes Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), where progress is assessed against targets and project updates.

Performance is shown using Performance Ratings, progress is shown in terms of Direction of Performance (DOP) through the use of arrows.

Performance Ratings	
G	Performance is on or exceeding target. Project is on target
A	Performance is off target but within tolerance. Project requires attention
R	Performance is off target and outside tolerance. Project is off target
B	Metric discontinued. Project is closed.
Direction of Performance	
	Performance is improving. Project achieved a milestone.
	Performance is steady. Project is progressing
	Performance is declining. Project missed or at risk of missing milestones.

High level Summary

	RAG Rating	Direction of Performance*
Embed an Effective Multiagency Early Help Offer in Somerset	G	➔
Improved Multi Agency Children's Safeguarding	A	➔
Improve the Outcomes for Looked After Children	A	➔
Improve Outcomes for Vulnerable Learners	A	N/A
Ensure Effective Workforce Capacity is in Place Across Children's Services	A	➔
Embedding a Learning Culture in Children's Social Care	A	➔

*Not all measures carry a direction of performance



Areas of Success/ What is working well

- An event was held for Early Help leaders across Somerset, where partners shared challenges and opportunities, creating new connections across different agencies.
- The Early Help Assessment has been shortened, adjusted to clearly identify SEND, and re-launched as part of a month-long campaign on Early Help. This has received positive feedback from our partners.
- Funding for Young Carers clubs has been awarded, ensuring all five areas of Somerset have accessible and regular provision. Young Carers were involved in the evaluation and influenced the final decision with their views.
- Working Together training continues to be well-attended and to receive positive evaluation. This training supports staff across partner agencies to have a common understanding of identification of need, and actions to take.

Areas of Concern/ What are you worried about

- The Early Help Strategy for 2020 onwards will be co-produced with children, young people and families. Co-production with a broad range of people will be challenging, and we will need partners to be active in supporting this work.

Focus on for next quarter/ What needs to happen

- Early Help Board to be strengthened with a voluntary sector representative, and a focus on co-producing the next Early Help Strategy
- The Early Help Fund to be launched with funding allocated in the third sector.



Areas of Success/What is Working Well:

The new Executive, comprised of the three key safeguarding partners (SCC, CCG and police) is working well, and has agreed to the recruitment of an Independent Scrutineer post to provide high-level assurance of the safeguarding children arrangements in Somerset, which has now been advertised.

Regional multi-agency scrutiny arrangements are also under development, led by Avon & Somerset Constabulary, and are beginning to identify a pool of peer scrutineers to work across the region. Areas emerging for regional scrutiny across Somerset include: intrafamilial sexual abuse; chronic neglect; child exploitation; children's emotional and mental health.

The first Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (September 2019) was well-attended by agencies with responsibilities for promoting wellbeing and safeguarding under Section 11 of The Children Act, with some positive actions emerging as to how to improve practice around identifying chronic neglect and working with young, vulnerable parents in the pre-birth period.

Areas of Concern/ What are you worried about:

Neglect continues to feature as an area that is not identified early enough for children, and very young children continue to suffer harm. In addition, intrafamilial sexual abuse is emerging as an area for focus across the partnership, and there is more to do to embed the pre-birth protocol to safeguard very young children of vulnerable parents.

Focus for next Quarter/ What needs to happen:

The multi-agency Business Plan needs to be signed off with its four continued areas of focus:

- Early help
- Multi-agency safeguarding
- Child Exploitation
- Neglect (especially in children aged under 5)

Focus for the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership will be on the continued embedding of learning around identification and action on pre-birth vulnerabilities, neglect, high-quality staff supervision and multi-agency information sharing.

The appointment of an Independent Scrutineer for quality assurance of the functioning of the partnership (winter 2019) will also be a key priority for the partners.



Areas of Success/ What is working well:

We continue to work closely with our young people's council (SICC and SLCC) to ensure that the voice of our children and young people is heard and drives our service improvement and delivery. In particular we have responded to concerns raised in respect of language we use around children spending time with their families. We have revised all paperwork and processes to ensure we promote family time rather than the use of the word contact.

The Emotional Health and Well-being team provide consultation and advice to social workers and leaving care workers which has impacted positively on placement planning and stability.

We continue to focus on ensuring children and young people can live in a family environment wherever possible and whilst we have a small number in residential provision, we continue to work towards finding foster families to link and care for these children or for birth family connections these children can return to.

Social care meets regularly with the Virtual School to ensure that we agree priorities and work together to achieve them. We have recently focussed on children and young people who are not in full time education with a view to working towards all children and young people having access to a full-time offer.

The new named nurse for Looked After Children is working closely with social care around the consistency of health assessment. The Fostering Service is well underway in its transformation, looking at the recruitment and retention of foster carers and the foster care offer in order to meet the needs of our children.

Areas of Concern/ What are you worried about:

Placement sufficiency remains an issue in Somerset, as in does in the South West region. Our focus on careful placement planning and review is crucial to ensure the placements identified can meet need and prevent placement breakdown. This requires a partnership approach.

Focus for next quarter/ What needs to happen:

The revised paperwork and processes for Children Looked After is being launched imminently which will focus on one plan, capturing the child's voice in their journey and the removal of unnecessary repetition.

In line with the social care Service Plan, we will continue to work on supporting and improving connection with families, promoting creative family time and reunification of children wherever possible to their families in a planned and sustainable way.

The work of the CLA health team has identified the need for more resource to ensure that the health needs of CLA are met appropriately in line with statutory requirements.

Launch of the new Fostering Service communications strategy.

**Areas of Success:**

- New structure now in place which integrates Virtual School and Learning Support Service. This offers additional capacity to focus upon CLA and those with SEND, to target resources for Education Attainment and Progress outcomes. This comprises a team of fifteen Lead Advisory or Advisory Teachers and ten learning support staff.
- All CLA now have a named Advisory Teacher who will oversee their educational provision and attainment in partnership with other agencies. Caseloads have been reduced to enable a greater focus supporting children and young people.
- A targeted training offer is available to schools to support them in meeting the needs of their vulnerable learners (CLA and SEND). This is delivered by the Virtual School and Learning Support Team. The Virtual School also commissions Education Psychologists to deliver targeted programmes. The offer for FE and early years providers is currently being developed.
- Attainment data of Children Looked After (CLA) shows slightly improved results at end of key stage assessments. These are small cohorts, however Key Stage 2 pupils achieving the expected standards has increased from 25% to 31%, and Key Stage 4 from 8% to 16%.

Areas of Concern:

- There remains continued high levels of fixed term and permanent exclusions. The fixed term exclusions are a concern across CLA and SEND. Some schools are permanently excluding children and young people with identified SEND needs.

Focus for next Quarter/ What needs to happen:

- Ongoing development of a 'Governing Body' of the Virtual School to be formed, this will act as the Education Sub-Group of the Corporate Parenting Board.

**Areas of Success:**

- Locum full time equivalent has dropped by approximately 2 FTE each month over the last 3 months. Currently standing at 20 FTE.
- Annual Health Check report 2019 for Children's Social Care showed improvements in induction for staff joining the service in the last two years. Other key strengths emerging from the survey were; relationships with and support from peers and colleagues, team working, good relationships with managers, flexible working policies. NQSWs in their ASYE continued to rate their learning and development very highly.
- Social Work Degree programme - University of Gloucester/Yeovil College, which commenced in September – 16 starters

Areas of Concern:

- Issues arising related to retention issues. Recruitment is steady, but retention the more significant issue. Proposals are being made in relation to this.
- The turnover of Social Workers is too high. 23% on average for frontline social workers. However, if you look at the Social Worker cohort as a whole, this drops to 17.54%.

Focus for next Quarter/ What needs to happen:

- Development of a more cohesive plan in conjunction with Children's Services to ensure clarity of the journey towards the Family Safeguarding Model. Use this to drive collaboration and behavioural and cultural change.



There is considerable activity underway aimed at developing and embedding a learning culture within Children's Social Care:

1. Review and refresh of the current Quality Assurance Framework, reflecting developments in processes and thinking (Timescale: December 2019)
2. Updated Case File Audit Tool and process (now Practice Evaluation) to reflect a shift from measuring compliance to quality, and a focus on strength based approaches. (Completed and now in use.)
3. Updated Team Diagnostic Process to reflect a strengths based approach and learn from feedback received via Diagnostic Leads (Completed July 2019)
4. Development and implementation of a service wide systematic approach to recording feedback from children and families, to better inform service provision and development with their views (Launched August 2019)
5. Development of a Practice Framework for CSC, outlining the theoretical and practice tools which inform high quality social work practice in Somerset (Completed: to be launched in October 2019)
6. Simplification of complaints codes recording to enable more effective analysis of feedback trends (Completed – August 2019)
7. Participation in the ADCS Peer Challenge, with Bristol City Council, to seek independent peer oversight of quality of practice (Completed June 2019)
8. Development of a Multi-Agency Practice Evaluation (MAPE) based on appreciative enquiry techniques (Launched July 2019)



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Contact us



If you have any specific questions or comments on this publication please contact the Planning and Performance Team by emailing performance@somerset.gov.uk