

MONITORING REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF LEARNING & CARE

DATE: 18 December 2008

PURPOSE

To update members on activity within the Learning & Care Directorate during the period to 30 November 2008.

BACKGROUND

The total Learning and Care Budget is projected to be overspent by £124k. This is a reduction of £259k from the previous month arising mainly from a reduction in projected expenditure on Elderly and Physical Disability Services, offset by an increase on Home to School Transport costs. There is also a projected saving on Concessionary Fares in the current year.

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Revenue Budget

Children & Young People – Central Schools Budget (DSG)

LA services funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) are likely to be overspent by £299k, a small reduction on the £308k reported last month. The main pressure on the DSG budget continues to be in out-borough special school placements. The budget was overspent by around £100k in 2007-08. This year has seen an untypically large net increase in the number of children placed. It was reported last month that underspends elsewhere in the DSG funded Schools Budget, most notably in the contingency set aside for in-year school costs arising from a reassessment of rateable values in schools, have helped to offset some of the overspend on the SEN placement budget. This position has not changed significantly. Any over- or underspends against the ring-fenced DSG at the end of the year is carried forward into the following year's Schools Budget, and does not affect the Local Authority funded budget.

Children & Young People – LA funded Budget

The LA funded Children and Young People's budget currently shows a projected overspend of £483k, an increase of £32k on the £451k forecast overspend reported last month. The main pressures remain, as before, in high-cost demand-led budgets such as Home to School Transport, and residential care for vulnerable children. The overall increase on last month relates to a further pressure on the Home to School Transport budget arising from the extension of a travel operator's contract from November to March covering a route to Henley College.

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care currently shows an underspend of £279k, a decrease of £291k on the reported overspend last month of £12k. Income from service users and third party contributions for Residential and Nursing Placements have continued to increase above budgeted levels contributing to a favourable variance on the Older Person Residential and Nursing Care income budget. Expenditure on Residential and Nursing Care Spot placements has also reduced contributing to a £66k favourable change to the previously reported variance. There is also a decrease in the cost of External Homecare provision as clients begin to be moved from high cost to medium cost spot providers.

A recent meeting with major bus operators has led to a revised estimate of the cost of the Concessionary Fares scheme in the current financial year. It is anticipated that there will be an underspend of £200k.

Capital Budget

Since last month the Directorate's approved gross expenditure budget has increased by £59k from £19.858 to £19.917 million. (This includes schools devolved formula capital projects and other devolved funding totalling £3.578 million). All of this additional expenditure is funded by Section 106 monies or DCSF grant as shown below:

Scheme	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Note
Children & Young People - Schools			
Larchfield School – devolved allocation	16	(16)	S106 funding
Holyport Primary – devolved allocation	16	(16)	S106 funding
Alwyn Infants – travel plan	5	(5)	Travel Plan Grant
Ellington Primary – travel plan	5	(5)	Travel Plan Grant
Lowbrook Additional Classroom	77	(77)	Allocation of Extended Schools Grant agreed at Prioritisation Sub-Committee 2 October 2008
Children & Young People - General			
Allocation of extended School Grants	(77)	77	(See above)
Adult Social Care			
Oak Lodge Day Centre	16	(16)	Slippage from 07-08
TOTAL	58	(58)	
<i>Difference due to rounding</i>			

The projected outturn for the Learning and Care capital budget remains unchanged from last month at £16k above budget. This is mainly due to a handful of projects where the tender costs have come in higher than expected.

This month, £1.078 million of budgeted expenditure within the Learning and Care capital programme is expected to be slipped to 2009-10. This relates to 5 schemes as follows:

Scheme	Exp £000	Inc £000	Reason for slippage
Early Years Quality and Access programme	550	(550)	3 year programme – currently at feasibility stage
Children's Centre Phase 3	300	(300)	3 year programme – currently at feasibility stage
Modernisation of school dining facilities	100	(100)	Only able to complete work in summer holidays
IT Client Record Base	50	(50)	Still at planning stage
Social Services IT	78	(78)	Still at planning stage
	1,078	(1,078)	