

Corporate Director's summary: Children and Young People

Overview

CYP are forecasting an under spend of £2k this is after the £219k in year ABG cut and the £200k recruitment freeze.

Overspends are currently forecast in Education Services (£56k) and Children's Services (£196k).

Customer Services are now reporting a break even position, and Youth and Commissioning £134k of savings as a result of Director and Head of Service review and the bringing forward of cost saving action plans.

The MVF for the Directorate is £688,690 and MVF for all services areas is on track, other than the Director's cost centre where there has been no staff turnover. There has been a clear MVF strategy in place for profiling and monitoring the delivery of the MVF. Managers have been aware of the savings required and all vacancies were scrutinised by the relevant Head of Service before they were filled.

Pressures on the 2010-11 budget

Overspends in Education mainly relate to agency staff costs within Disabled Children's Team and Speech and Language Therapy. These overspends have been partly offset by savings on Home to School transport.

The Children's Services overspend relates predominately to Residential Placements and Agency staff costs. These are reduced by savings in Kinship Carers, Special Guardianship, Adoption Placements and In-house Fostering.

Progress against the recruitment freeze

There is also now a Council wide recruitment freeze, in order to deliver 10/11 in-year savings following central Government's announcements re cuts in funding.

All posts in CYP which fall vacant are scrutinised not only by Head of Service but also SMT, Director and Portfolio Holders as well as BUMP before they can be filled. A number of posts remain vacant as a result of this process. The 200k recruitment freeze target remains a challenge.

Management action taken to address emerging pressures

Heads of Service are looking across all budgets to find savings to meet the overspends in their area. Grants are being reviewed to see whether additional costs could be grant funded. It is difficult to reduce the pressures on Speech and Language therapy, as this is a statutory requirement and failing to meet these costs could lead to judicial review.

Risks identified

In respect of Children's Services there remains a risk to the year-end budget position regarding the financial impact of increasing numbers of Looked After Children.