

Equality and Social Justice Committee

Date: 20 December 2023

Title: Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's draft budget 2024-25

Overview

1. For the 2024-25 draft budget our baseline for planning was the indicative budget set as part of the 2023-24 Final Budget. The table below demonstrates the changes made between the 2023-24 First Supplementary Budget to the figures published as part of the 2024-25 Draft Budget.
2. As part of this Draft Budget, we have made significant changes to our indicative budgets with funding redirected from across Welsh Government, including from this portfolio, to provide extra funding and protection for front-line services for people and communities across Wales – the NHS and the core local government settlement, which funds schools, social services and social care and other everyday services.

Table 1: Overview of changes to BEL tables

	2023-24 Final Budget	2023-24 1st Supp	Indicative 2024-25 Position	2024-25 savings	Baseline Adjust	Revised 2024-25 Position
Near - Cash	136,038	139,237	139,038	-14,081	0	124,957
Non – Cash	210	255	210	0	3*	213
Resource	136,248	139,492	139,248	-14,081	3	125,170
Capital	17,494	16,994	16,958	0	0	16,958
Total	153,742	156,486	156,206	-14,081	3	142,128
AME	24,546	24,546	31,759	0	6,569**	38,328

*Non - Cash adjustment relates to £3k non-cash into Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights BEL (7060) from reserves.

** Increase of £6,569k relating to the Fire Service Pensions – AME, in line with the OBR forecast.

3. A breakdown of the 2024-25 Social Justice MEG allocations by Action and BEL is included at Annex A; this also provides detailed explanations of the changes made between the 2023-24 First Supplementary Budget and the 2024-25 Draft Budget at BEL level.

Overview of Resource changes between 24-25 indicative budget and the 24-25 Draft Budget

4. We have had to make very difficult decisions to re-focus our spending plans on the public services which matter most to people – the NHS and everyday services delivered by local councils, such as schools, housing and social care. Unfortunately, this has meant moving spending away from other departmental areas, including this one.
5. We have taken this approach to ensure we continue to focus funding where it can have the most positive impacts in the circumstances and taking action to ensure we mitigate direct impacts to people and places, as far as possible. Spending more in some areas means there is less to spend in other areas. Where hard decisions have been required, we have sought to identify those areas where the relative impacts are lesser than their alternatives and we have sought to take action to mitigate impacts as far as possible. Given the circumstances, it has not been possible to avoid negative impacts in all cases.
6. Difficult decisions have had to be made about the services we provide and how we provide them. In making these decisions we have been guided by some clear principles. These include protecting front line public services, supporting households who are hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis and minimising the impacts on our actions to tackle the climate and nature emergencies. It has also been important within this portfolio to attempt to avoid making decisions that widen inequalities.
7. We know our partners in the wider public sector as well as our partners in the third sector will be under similar pressures. We will work in collaboration with our partners to manage the risk of the financial challenges ahead, whilst continuing to deliver essential services for the people of Wales.
8. This portfolio has identified **revenue savings of £14.081m** from our indicative resource budget of £139.2m for 2024-25 to contribute towards wider Welsh Government pressures. Further savings were also required within the MEG to meet additional pressures.
9. These were substantial savings from this small portfolio and the decisions will have a range of impacts for the public in general as well as specific impacts for a number of groups of people. In making these decisions it has been a priority to protect frontline public services where possible but also to protect those families and individuals worst affected by the financial situation we face. We have therefore protected the Discretionary Assistance Fund (within the Financial Inclusion BEL), the Single Advice Fund (within the Advice Services BEL) and Basic Income BELs as well as certain key activities within other budgets for example the emergency food aid budget within the Supporting Communities budget as these directly support individuals most vulnerable to financial challenges. These crucial budgets will continue to assist the most disadvantaged,

marginalised and/or vulnerable impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. The revised funding will still enable us to continue our important work to implement the Child Poverty Strategy.

10. We have also protected the Violence Against Women and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) budget due to the continuing demand against this budget and the importance of protecting those experiencing VAWDASV from physical, mental, and emotional harms with a commitment to implement the VAWDASV Blueprint strategy with our criminal justice partners and specialist services.
11. These protections, however, mean it has been necessary to identify savings from other areas of this portfolio. The changes made to indicative revenue budgets as part of the 2024-25 Draft Budget are set out in the table below. The narrative following the table sets out the rationale for the changes between the indicative and draft budgets. Further information is included at Annex A setting out an explanation of changes since the first supplementary budget.

BEL ref	BEL name	Indicative 2024-25 Position	2024-25 changes	Revised 2024-25 Position	% change
1089	Basic Income	7,200	3,500	10,700	48.61%
1694	Financial Inclusion	39,002	0	39,002	0.00%
1084	Digital Inclusion	1,250	-500	750	-40.00%
1084	Digital Inclusion (Non Cash)*	149	0	149	0.00%
1086	Supporting Communities	4,164	-1,500	2,664	-36.02%
541	VAWDASV	8,005	0	8,005	0.00%
7060	Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights	12,987	-3,214	9,773	-24.75%
7062	Cohesive Communities	5,580	-870	4,710	-15.59%
7063	Equal,Poverty&Children's Evidence & Supp	1,949	-313	1,636	-16.06%
480	Children's Commissioner	1,675	-84	1,591	-5.01%
480	Children's Commissioner (Non Cash)*	52	0	52	0.00%
5334	Advice Services	11,675	0	11,675	0.00%
1695	Support for the Voluntary Sector and Vol	9,424	-970	8,454	-10.29%
1265	Fire & Rescue Services	2,533	-10	2,523	-0.39%
1697	FRS Communication System	2,275	-1,000	1,275	-43.96%
1698	Community Fire Safety	848	-457	391	-53.89%
830	Community Support Officers	22,981	-7,473	15,508	-32.52%
1267	Women's Justice & Youth Justice Blue Prints	1,092	-20	1,072	-1.83%
662	Older People Commissioner	1,701	-85	1,616	-5.00%
662	Older People Commissioner (Non Cash)*	9	0	9	0.00%
470	Public Appointments	400	-248	152	-62.00%
6400	Future Generations Commissioner Wales	1,695	-85	1,610	-5.01%
7074	International Sustainable Development	1,275	-225	1,050	-17.65%
1693	Social Partnerships	961	-161	800	-16.75%
6664	Chwarae Teg	366	-366	0	-100.00%
	TOTAL	139,248	-14,081	125,167	-10.11%
7060	Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights (Non Cash)*	0	3	3	
	SJ MEG TOTAL	139,248	-14,078	125,170	

Basic Income

12. An **allocation of £3.5m** has been made as part of the 2024-25 Draft Budget to meet pressures associated with delivering the pilot, a key Programme for Government commitment.
13. The success of the pilot, combined with an increase in eligible individuals during the pilot phase, has meant that more care leavers have enrolled than originally estimated.

Digital Inclusion

14. Due to the significant pressures across public services, we have scaled back our work on Digital Inclusion and **reduced this budget by £0.5m**. Since 2019 the Social Justice and Health MEGs have invested £9.5m in digital inclusion services through the Digital Communities Wales programme. We continue to recognise the importance of tackling digital inequalities and have therefore protected the budget as far as possible. Our continuing investment will focus on maintaining the Digital Communities Wales programme whilst acknowledging that overall activity, outputs, and outcomes will be impacted by the budget reduction. The team will also seek to link up and work with other organisations focussing on digital inclusion and to continue to identify barriers to digital inclusion via stakeholder engagement work.

Supporting Communities

15. Our Supporting Communities budget provides support to a number of our key priorities including emergency food aid and fuel support. Although we have **reduced the indicative budget by £1.5m**, we have been able to maintain £1.5m of the planned uplift that was due to take place between the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years, which means that this budget will be £1.5m higher than it was in 2023-24.
16. This revised budget will enable us to continue to support emergency food as well as funding for emergency fuel support through the Fuel Bank Foundation which will enable us to continue to provide some emergency support to those who are not able to top up their pre-payment electricity meters next year and to support bulk purchase of fuels for those not on the gas grid and who cannot afford to pay for fuel. The revised funding will also enable us to continue our important work to implement the Child Poverty Strategy.

Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights

17. Our Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights budget supports our investment in a range of activity to address and tackle a broad range of inequalities. As part of

the Spending Review, we had planned to increase this budget by £2.017m between 2023-24 Final Budget and 2024-25 to £12.987m. Due to the financial challenges we have made decisions that will result in an overall reduction to this budget of **£3.214m** compared to the indicative budget. This reduces this budget by £1.197m compared to the 2023-24 budget. With adjustments in how we deliver across Equalities, we are able to maintain delivery against Programme for Government commitments supported within the BEL including those associated with the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, LGBTQ+ Action Plan and Disability Rights Task Force work.

18. We will prioritise our grant schemes, adjust our approach to research and training, for example undertaking some research in-house, and focus programmes on where they will have greatest impact.
19. We have reduced the Period Dignity Grant by £400k during 2024-25; from £3.1m in 2023-24 to £2.7m in 2024-25. This reduction is based on previous levels of uptake of the grant. Given inflationary increases we will be dependent on exploring options to maximise value for money to support the same numbers of beneficiaries and locations.
20. Equalities and Inclusion grants and the provision of core funding to some specific organisations will continue. However, we are considering the scale of project-related awards and / or the overall numbers of awards made to fit within the overall budget.
21. The BEL has been allocated £3k non-cash as part of the 2024-25 Draft Budget which will be baselined into future years; this represents the depreciation of an intangible asset.

Chwarae Teg

22. Chwarae Teg has now closed, we have therefore **removed** the Chwarae Teg budget in 2024-25. We will work with stakeholders to co-design new activity in this area.

Public Appointments

23. A **reduction of £248k** will take place against the indicative 2024-25 budget. The remaining budget in 2024-25 will be used to deliver a new pilot job shadowing funded scheme with positive impacts for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic people and disabled people

Equality, Poverty & Children's Evidence & Support

24. This budget was due to increase by £313k between 2023-24 Final Budget and 2024-25 to £1.949m. Due to the need to respond to the financial challenges across the public sector we have taken the decision that this planned uplift is no longer possible. The indicative budget will therefore reduce by **£313k**, however, overall, the budget is not reduced compared to the 2023-24 budget. The maintenance of the budget at the 2023-24 level is important as the evidence priorities of the Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units (ERDEU) support the delivery of the Programme for Government commitment: Create a Race Disparity Unit alongside an Equality Data Unit to ensure an inclusive evidence base to inform decision making in government.
25. The key research projects undertaken by the Unit are designed to make fundamental and long-term changes to the availability, granularity, and quality of equality evidence by improving sample sizes and changing the way information is collected to make it more applicable to the equalities policy landscape in Wales. The projects aim to improve equalities data across policy areas and are key to us being able to support and measure the impact of key equality action plans including the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, the work of the Disability Rights Taskforce, the LGBTQ+ Action Plan and the Child Poverty Strategy.

Support for the Voluntary Sector and Volunteers

26. We greatly value the contribution that the third sector and volunteers make in Wales supporting individuals across our communities. As part of the Spending Review we had planned to increase this budget by £1.8m between 2023-24 Final Budget and 2024-25 to £9.424m. Due to the considerable constraints on our finances and the pressures across the public sector we have been unable to continue with the level of this planned increase and have instead reduced the planned uplift to £830k; this is reflected in our BEL tables as a **saving of £0.970m** against this budget.
27. This BEL provides core funding for the third sector infrastructure that supports Wales' 40,000+ third sector organisations, over 95% of these organisations are micro or small. Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW) is a partnership between the Wales Council for Voluntary Action and the nineteen county voluntary councils (CVCs) across Wales.
28. The third sector plays a significant role in early intervention and prevention activities, without which there would be increasing pressure on acute services, mostly provided by the public sector.
29. The BEL uplift is being spent on the following two areas:
- TSSW - to respond to the increase demand for services, many of which are increasingly more complex, increase safeguarding support available to

organisations, for TSSW to develop strategic elements of support and enable County Voluntary Councils to cover cost-of-living pressures.

- Digital Skills for the Voluntary Sector – for the partnership (WCVA, Cwmpas and Promo Cymru) to continue delivering support and helping voluntary sector organisations to increase their capacity to respond to increasing service needs. This work involves developing tools, delivering training, and supporting leadership through the establishment of communities of practice.

Cohesive Communities

30. As part of the Spending Review, this budget was due to increase by £870k between 2023-24 Final Budget and 2024-25 to £5.580m. Due to the financial challenges we have been unable to proceed with this planned uplift and therefore the budget is reduced by **£870k** compared to the indicative budget. However, we are pleased to have been able to maintain the budget at its 2023-24 level despite the challenges we have faced.

31. This revised budget will still enable Welsh Ministers to implement commitments under the Programme for Government – notably completion of Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan commitments under the Nation of Sanctuary and Crime and Justice chapters, as well as the commitment to work with technology companies to address online hate and misinformation.

32. We will review individual project budgets to ensure that the available funding is directed towards areas of greatest need, providing inflationary uplifts where possible and making savings where demand for services has reduced.

Fire and Rescue Services

33. By realising savings from the restructuring of professional advice on fire matters, we have been able to release **£10k** from this budget. The remaining budget predominantly funds the Fire and Rescue Services' capability to respond to major incidents including flooding, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents, and that will not be affected by this small reduction.

Fire and Rescue Services Communication System

34. The UK Government has committed to establishing the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) to deliver the Emergency Services Network (ESN), a vital piece of critical national infrastructure. Welsh Government, as a Funding Sponsor Body, has been an integral part of this programme since its inception in 2015. We remain firmly committed to this technology and will work with partners to achieve a successful outcome. Since

2015 we have contributed financially to ESN development via our Fire and Rescue Service budgets. These contributions have been paid to the Home Office for programme development i.e., software / hardware build and planning for additional transmission masts.

35. The ESMCP Programme is currently progressing through a re-procurement of key elements and progress has been delayed which has resulted in underspends against this budget in recent years. We have therefore reduced this budget by **£1m** in 2024-25 based on the current Programme forecast for Wales. The existing Airwave / Firelink Emergency Services communications system is still operational so there will be no impact as a result of the savings identified within the budget line and we remain committed to working in partnership with others to deliver the new communications solution.

Community Fire Safety

36. Due to pressures on our resources we have taken the decision to reduce this budget by **£457k** in 2024-25 compared to the indicative budget. This has resulted in the cessation of the Arson reduction programme (£387k) as well as other smaller savings. Fire and Rescue Authorities have a statutory duty to promote fire safety and fire prevention and as such, we do not envisage any impact on the delivery of this work.

Community Support Officers

37. Due to significant pressures across the public sector, we have had to take the difficult decision to reduce our Community Support Officers budget by **£7.473m** compared with the indicative budget for 2024-25 to respond to these unprecedented challenges.

38. This will impact on the PfG Commitment to maintain funding for 500 PCSOs and more recent commitment to increase their number by 100. We will still invest £15.5m in Welsh Government funded Police Community Support Officers. We are working with policing partners in Wales to understand the implications of this revised budget and will work closely with them to minimise negative impacts.

39. We value the continued contribution made by our PCSOs in Wales and the ongoing funding will still support PCSOs who would not otherwise be in post. This is particularly notable given that policing is reserved to the UK Government.

Women's Justice & Youth Justice Blueprints

40. The **saving of £20k** against this BEL's indicative budget relates to funding that was not yet committed. Within the revised budget, we will continue to deliver our

key priorities including the Women's Pathfinder programme, the Visiting Mums initiative and the Women's and Youth Justice Blueprint programmes.

Social Partnerships

41. Placing social partnership on a statutory footing was part of the PfG commitment and the Co-operation Agreement which was achieved through the passing of Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act. We have reduced the budget by **£161k** compared to our indicative 2024-25 budget, but this will not impact the implementation of the Act. The savings can be made from currently unallocated budgets and will therefore have minimal impact on what will be delivered by March 2025.

International Sustainable Development

42. The proposal to reduce the indicative budget for this BEL by **£225k** will impact our investment in the Wales and Africa Small Grants Scheme and the International Learning Opportunities (ILO) scheme. This will result in a pause to the ILO scheme in the 2024-25 financial year. Although this has been an impactful programme with clear benefits to both Wales and Africa, pausing the programme will provide an opportunity to reflect on how it could be better incorporated into wider Wales and Africa activity, adding value to existing project delivery. We will also reduce by 40% the Wales and Africa small grants scheme for the 2024-25 financial year. This will be disappointing for the sector, but there will still be £150k available in 2024-25 for Welsh organisations to apply for grant funding to deliver mutually beneficial projects across sub-Saharan Africa.

Commissioners' budgets

43. We greatly value the work of our commissioners and the contributions they make. Due to the considerable financial challenges we face, we have reduced commissioners' budgets by 5% in 2024-25 compared to their indicative budgets. This will result in a reduction of £84k for the Children's Commissioner and £85k for both the Older People's Commissioner and the Future Generations Commissioner.

44. Each commissioner will have to consider how to manage these budget reductions whilst delivering their priorities and we will work with them to offer our support in doing so. This saving has been made in line with Minister for Education and Welsh Language's decision to reduce the Welsh Language Commissioner's budget by 5% as well as with other decisions across Welsh Government to reduce the budgets of Arm's Length Bodies across a number of portfolios.

45. We will be working with the Commissioners to help reduce back-office costs and explore further shared services cost reduction.

46. Each Commissioner has submitted their statutory estimate for 2024 to 2025 as required by the respective Acts by the end of October before the next financial year. These estimates were:

Commissioner	2024 to 2025 indicative budget (February 2023)	Commissioner estimate	Draft budget 2024 to 2025 (December 2023)
Future Generations Commissioner	£1,695,000	£1,910,600	£1,610,000
Older People Commissioner	£1,675,000	£1,748,000	£1,616,000
Children's Commissioner	£1,675,000	£1,764,433	£1,591,000

Overview of changes to capital budgets between the 2024-25 indicative budget and the 2024-25 Draft Budget

47. There are no changes to the quantum of capital available to the Social Justice MEG in 2024-25. However, not all capital allocated in the 2024-25 indicative budget can now be utilised in 2024-25.

48. **The Community Bank BEL** had a budget of £1.75m in 2024-25. Monmouthshire Building Society pulled out of the plan to develop a Community Bank earlier this year. As a result, no capital in 2023-24 was utilised for this purpose. We understand from policy leads that there is no community bank proposition in hand and therefore the likelihood to deploy any of this capital in 2024-25 is extremely low. Realistically, any proposition put forward would take around 12 months to develop and assess from a legal and financial perspective.

49. We will continue attempts to identify a partner to take forward this policy and have retained a small amount of capital within this budget should a partner be identified during the financial year. However, the remaining capital from this budget has been reallocated in 2024-25 to support as many of our priorities and stakeholders as possible through the next financial year.

50. An allocation of **£600k** has been made as part of the 2024-25 Draft Budget to the **Community Facilities Programme BEL**, this will help fund the current pipeline of projects which exceeds the budget previously available.

51. We have allocated **£200k** to the **Women's Justice & Youth Justice Blueprints BEL** to take forward a proposal to improve facilities within a Secure Children's Home. This will provide young people with increased variety of activities helping them achieve positive outcomes, such as improved self-worth, engagement, social interaction, health, and wellbeing.

52. We have made small capital allocations to the **Older People’s Commissioner (£100k)** and **Children’s Commissioner (£20k)** to meet their capital requirements in 2024-25.
53. The **Fire and Rescue Services BEL** has been allocated **£250k** as part of the 2024-25 Draft Budget to replace equipment used to deploy high volume pumps to major flooding incidents as part of the National Resilience capability. The replacement is more environmentally friendly and offers better value for money in terms of its running costs.
54. A further **£100k** has been allocated to the **Community Fire Safety BEL**. This funding will be used to meet the increasing costs of home fire safety equipment.
55. An allocation of **£300k** has been made to the Local Food Partnerships through the **Supporting Communities BEL** to scale up capacity. The funding will be used to support the coordination of local food activity with a view to building local food resilience. The funding will support Local Food Partnerships to build and strengthen their links with local users and providers, through the development and delivery of local projects, including producers such as farmers and growers, local businesses and local markets. The funding will support the wider ambitions and actions of Welsh Government to support Emergency Food aid support and tackling food poverty.
56. The **Digital inclusion BEL** has been allocated **£50k** for the Minimum Digital Living Standard (MDLS) pilot to provide digital skills support.
57. An allocation of **£80k** has been made to the **Financial Inclusion BEL** to support Credit Unions in updating their banking platform during 2024-25. This will provide increased functionality and cyber security and support for a shared platform across credit unions in Wales.
58. The changes made against the Capital 2024-25 indicative budgets are set out in the table below:

BEL ref	BEL name	Indicative 2024-25 Position	2024-25 changes	Revised 2024-25 Position
1086	Supporting Communities	1,000	300	1,300
541	VAWDASV	2,200		2,200
1008	Gypsy Traveller Sites	3,440		3,440
1372	Community Facilities Programme	6,500	600	7,100
1265	Fire & Rescue Services	1,000	250	1,250
1697	FRS Communication System	210		210
1698	Community Fire Safety	900	100	1,000
1267	Women's Justice & Youth Justice Blueprints	0	200	200
662	Older People Commissioner	0	100	100
1694	Financial Inclusion	0	80	80
1084	Digital inclusion	0	50	50
480	Children's Commissioner	0	20	20
1088	Community Bank	1,750	-1,700	50
	TOTAL - General Capital	17,000	0	17,000
1694	Financial Inclusion (FT Repayments)	-42		-42
	TOTAL	16,958	0	16,958

Strategic Integrated Impact Assessments

59. This Government is fully committed to fulfilling the legislative requirements for all impact assessments, including where these relate to the assessment of our financial decisions.
60. The Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment published as part of the 2024-25 Draft Budget gives due consideration to the United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child.
61. We continue to maintain that the integrated approach underpinning the SIIA enables us to better understand the intersectional and unintended impacts of spending decisions and to maximise the impact of available funding, reducing the disproportionate effect on any one specific group or area. To consider an area of impact in isolation risks unintended consequences such as the negative impact in one area being driven by a positive impact in another.
62. Our 2024-25 Draft Budget sets out within the SIIA at Annex A the impacts of our spending decisions as part of the main narrative in chapter four including spending decisions that directly impact on children and young people.
63. We will continue to engage with our Budget Improvement Impact and Advisory Group (BIAG), exploring how Welsh Government can better reflect children's rights in their improvement to budget and tax processes.

64. We have been working with Children in Wales, Young Wales Project Board and officials across Welsh Government, to co-produce a Young Person's version of the Budget Improvement Plan, which will be published alongside the 2024-25 Draft Budget. An animated version has also been developed to engage with young people and help them understand how the Welsh Government works and what the Welsh Treasury does. The animation is set to be launched in January 2024.
65. The purpose of the SIIA is to identify key trends, strategic and cumulative impacts at portfolio level, across a range of areas, including giving due consideration across the statutory requirements.
66. This ensures strategic Budget decisions reduce the disproportionate effect on any one specific group or area; helps identify opportunities to maximise positive impacts and reduce inequalities across our society
67. We have undertaken a range of engagement with key stakeholders throughout our preparations. These include maintaining our contact with delivery partners including the WLGA, through our Finance Subgroup (FSG). We have continued engagement with the WCVA and social partners to understand the pressures being felt by the third sector, key partners in delivering the policies vital for Wales. As part of the Budget preparations, we also met with the Future Generations Commissioner, the Older Peoples Commissioner, the Children's commissioner, and the deputy Commissioner for Welsh Language

Equality, Race and Disability Data Units

68. The funding allocated for 2023-24 to the Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units was £1,636k. As at 11 December 2023 £786k of the budget had been spent. This was allocated as follows:

Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units budget 2023-24		£k
Budget total		1,636
Staff		1,411
Operational		44
Research		181

69. All costs are fully allocated for 2023-24 as all staff are in place and research has been commissioned. Research costs are for the following projects which also extend into the research budget for 2024-25:
- Research into approaches to boost the National Survey for Wales to look at options to provide granular evidence for policy decisions by equality characteristics;

- Cognitive testing for sex and gender questions in Wales in line with Welsh Government policy;
- To assess how the LGBTQ+ action plan can be evaluated; and,
- Research into how the social model of disability can be measured

70. The funding expected to be allocated for 2024-25 is as follows

Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units INDICATIVE budget 2024-25	£k
Budget total	1,636
Staff	1,400
Operational	20
Research	216

71. The Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units were commissioned by Welsh Treasury to undertake a macro summary of the evidence on equality to highlight who would be the most impacted by funding cuts to inform Cabinet decisions. This involved drawing out where people who belonged to equality groups/those with protected characteristics had multiple intersecting characteristics that meant they would be more susceptible to negative impacts from cuts to certain services compared to people without multiple intersecting equality characteristics. This evidence is shown in the Strategic Context of the Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment of the 2024-25 Draft Budget.

72. Our data Census report on ethnicity and ethnicity sub report for the Well-being of Wales report have provided additional information for policy areas to assess decisions with an equality lens. All our research projects aim to make fundamental and long-term changes to the availability, granularity and accessibility of equalities information which will increase the evidence base for future policy decisions across the Welsh Government and public sector.

Inflation and the cost of living

73. We have re-shaped the indicative spending allocations within our budget to provide extra funding and protection for the services which matter most to people and communities across Wales – the NHS and the core local government settlement, which funds schools, social services and social care and other everyday services. We have done so in line with our principles to:

- Protect core, frontline public services as far as possible.
- Deliver the greatest benefit to households which are hardest hit.
- Prioritise jobs, wherever possible.
- Work in partnership with other public sector bodies to face this financial storm together.
- Re-focus funding away from non-devolved areas, which the UK Government should be funding.

74. In this context supporting households with the cost-of-living pressures remains a priority for the Welsh Government.
75. As an example, we are acting to protect the core local government settlement by maintaining the planned 3.1% increase between 2023-24 and 2024-25. Local authorities deliver a wide range of public services, often to the most vulnerable in our society and people who are economically disadvantaged. By taking this action we aim to protect, as far as possible, core funding for schools, social services and social care, bin collections and local leisure services
76. As a further example within the Social Justice MEG we have allocated £38.5m for the Discretionary Assistance Fund (DAF) to provide emergency support to those who need it the most. We have also protected key activities within other budgets including emergency food aid and some funding for emergency fuel support through the Fuel Bank Foundation within the Supporting Communities budget. This will enable us to continue to provide a level of emergency support to those who are not able to top up their pre-payment electricity meters next year and to support bulk purchase of fuels for people who are not on the gas grid and who cannot afford to pay for fuel. We will also continue our important work to implement our Child Poverty strategy.
77. The Wales Expert Group on the Cost of Living made a total of 29 separate recommendations in their report. These were set out under recommendations for the short term (September 23 and March 24), the medium term (April 24 and April 26) and the long term (May 2026 onwards).
78. The Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip published the Expert Group report and recommendations in September 2023 following an Oral Statement in the Senedd. At the time the Minister noted that there are many recommendations within the report which the Welsh Government are already taking action on or will be able to take forward at pace. This includes actions relating to the short-term recommendations on helping people to maximise income, reducing the cost of the school day and on energy efficiency and affordability.
79. For this draft budget the main relevant recommendations from the Expert Group were those medium-term recommendations (April 24 to April 26). There are a number of recommendations which relate to the way in which we promote, align and evaluate activity which will continue to influence the way in which we deliver our programmes under the 2024-25 budget. There are some, for example the work on the Welsh Benefits Charter and the refreshed Child Poverty Strategy, which we are able to proceed with, and which will help to direct and inform the way we align our programmes across government and get the most out of our individual anti-poverty actions.

80. There are a number of recommendations, however, which, owing to the current budgetary pressures, we have not been able to take forward in the way that we would have wanted, and which will only be realised if significant additional funding becomes available. We will, however, continue to explore these opportunities in the event that the funding situation changes.
81. The First Minister has committed to publish a response to the Expert Group report and recommendations.
82. The Single Advice Fund (SAF) performance management reports demonstrate the demand for debt advice and income maximisation services is at an all-time high, with predictions that demand will continue to rise in the next financial year. The decision to protect the budget for the SAF in 2024-25 means people from disadvantaged and marginalised population groups will continue to have access to the advice and support they need to maximise their income and manage their debts.
83. The latest figures for the Discretionary Assistance Fund for 2023-24 show spend extremely close to the maximum budget available for the year, with concerns that demand will increase during winter. It is anticipated that this level of demand would continue into 2024-25 given the ongoing cost of living pressures and lack of alternative support schemes. On this basis the budget allocation for Financial Inclusion has been protected in full – recognising that the fund assists those who are most disadvantaged, marginalised and/or vulnerable.
84. The Minister for Social Justice recently agreed to make changes to the Individual Assistance Payment element of the DAF to mitigate the pressure on the budget and ensure we are providing as much support as possible to as many people as possible within the budget available.
85. In terms of taking decisions to re-prioritise funding to protect vulnerable households. Within the Social Justice MEG we have taken action to increase funding for our Basic Income Pilot by £3.5m to ensure we continue to provide the basic income payment without reducing either the amount paid or the length of time it is paid for. This will continue to support more than 600 young care leavers enrolled on the pilot.
86. We have also protected key activities within other budgets including emergency food aid and some funding for emergency fuel support through the Fuel Bank Foundation within the Supporting Communities budget. This will enable us to continue to provide a level of emergency support to those who are not able to top up their pre-payment electricity meters next year and to support bulk purchase of fuels for people who are not on the gas grid and who cannot afford to pay for fuel. We will also continue our important work to implement our Child Poverty strategy.

87. Within the Social Justice portfolio, we are protecting key areas of support and maintaining emergency help for people hardest hit by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. However, to achieve this we have had to refocus funding away from activities where the Welsh Government has stepped in to fund non-devolved policy areas to compensate for UK Government shortfalls.
88. Across the wider Welsh Government budgets, to ensure no one is left out we have also protected an increase in the Homelessness Prevention budget. The increase of £2m is reduced from a previous £5m increase in the indicative allocations, reflecting the incredibly challenging budget setting round this year.
89. The Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units were commissioned by Welsh Treasury to undertake a macro summary of the evidence on equality to highlight who would be the most impacted by funding cuts to inform Cabinet decisions.
90. This involved drawing out where people who belonged to equality groups/those with protected characteristics had multiple intersecting characteristics that meant they would be more susceptible to negative impacts from cuts to certain services compared to people without multiple intersecting equality characteristics. This evidence is shown in the Strategic Context of the Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment of the 2024-25 Draft Budget.
91. Our data Census report on ethnicity and ethnicity sub report for the Well-being of Wales report have provided additional information for policy areas to assess decisions with an equality lens. All our research projects aim to make fundamental and long-term changes to the availability, granularity and accessibility of equalities information which will increase the evidence base for future policy decisions across the Welsh Government and public sector.
92. Childcare is part of the Deputy Minister for Social Services portfolio and investment is funded through the HSS MEG.
93. Childcare is a key priority for the Welsh Government and we are investing heavily to ensure that families can access the childcare and play opportunities they need. Through the Childcare Offer for Wales and the Flying Start programme we have already invested more than £90m in childcare in Wales a year and we continue to be committed to expanding early years provision to all two-year olds in Wales.
94. In 2024-25 the Support for Childcare and Play (BEL0310) budget line has an allocation of **£82.378m**. This budget line covers a wide range of activities to support children and families to access childcare and play opportunities, as well as activities that support wider child development, and supporting the staff and settings that support them.
95. The Childcare Offer for Wales (the Offer) is a demand led programme providing 30 hours of government-funded early education and childcare for up to 48 weeks of the year for eligible parents in education/training and working parents of three and four year olds in Wales. A budget of £76.2m, has been allocated for the

Offer which includes: payments to childcare providers; funding to support the Additional Support Grant to help eligible children with additional needs to access the childcare element of the Offer; continuing to build the digital platform to support parents to seamlessly access this funding; and communication activity to ensure that families are aware of the funding they can access.

96. As part of our Cooperation Agreement with Plaid Cymru, we have committed to the expansion of early years provision for all 2 year olds across Wales through our Flying Start programme. The current phase of the expansion programme began in April 2023 and is focussing specifically on expansion of Flying Start childcare to more 2 year olds.
97. In 2024-25 we will be investing £24.3m in supporting more than 5,200 additional children to access high quality Flying Start childcare to support long-term, positive impacts on the lives of those children and families across Wales facing the greatest challenges. Focusing resources on our most disadvantaged communities in the first instance ensures that support reaches families in greatest need at the earliest opportunity.
98. The core Flying Start budget sits within the Children and Communities Grant (CCG). The Children and Communities Grant (CCG) addresses the needs of the most disadvantaged and/or vulnerable children, young people and adults in our society through a range of early intervention, prevention and support mechanisms. The programmes within this grant aim to mitigate or remove disadvantage to disadvantaged and/or vulnerable people to enable them to have the same life chances as others and contribute to a more equal Wales. The budget for the CCG in 2024-25 is £174.583m. Of this, £142.028m is Flexible Funding covering eight programmes, including core Flying Start.
99. The Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services also funds a multitude of other programmes that support the sector and childcare and playwork workforce more generally, as well as programmes that support child development, for example the Training and Support programme for the sector, the Talk with me programme and funding for Cwlwm, Play Wales and Social Care Wales, all of whom offer the sector advice and support. In addition, Welsh Government also supports the sector more broadly for example through business rates relief.

Fuel poverty

100. Between 2010 and the end of March 2023, £450m has been invested to improve home energy efficiency through the Warm Homes Programme, benefitting more than 77,000 lower income households. More than 198,000 people have received energy efficiency advice through the Warm Homes Programme since its launch in 2011.
101. During 2022-23 the Warm Homes Nest scheme provided 21,959 households with free, impartial advice and signposting to a range of support services. 4,364 eligible households received a home energy improvement package, such as a central heating system, a boiler, insulation, solar panel PV or an Air Source Heat

Pump. These improvements are estimated to have saved households £422 on their annual energy bills. Benefit entitlement checks resulted in a household average £2,457 potential increase in benefit take-up, increasing benefit take up by £985k last year.

102. The Warm Homes Programme is funded from the Climate Change MEG and the Minister for Climate Change published a policy statement on the new Warm Homes Programme following consultation and a review of the existing and predecessor schemes. The future scheme, which we aim to be fully operational by 1 April 2024, will address the twin challenges of climate change and fuel poverty.
103. We are also providing a total of £352,000 of funding, alongside technical advice, to local authorities across Wales to leverage greater funding from UK wide schemes such as ECO Flex and the Great British Insulation Scheme.
104. Through the Social Justice MEG, we continue to work with the Fuel Bank Foundation to provide support to households on pre-payment meters who are struggling with the cost of topping up their energy and to support those off grid to purchase bulk fuel such as oil and LPG to heat their homes. Support will be provided from within the Supporting Communities budget where with an indicative £500,000 of the £2.664m budget allocated, however this may be varied depending on demand.

Child poverty

105. When we developed our budget for 2024-25 we did so in line with our core principles of protecting frontline public services and we continue to provide targeted support to those at greatest need.
106. Persistently high inflation, which has not been recognised in our funding settlement, means we are facing the toughest financial situation since devolution. Some of the very difficult decisions we have had to make in 2023-24 will have impacts into 2024-25 and have been reflected in the draft Budget.
107. To reduce the impact on services, we have made decisions to reduce spending by reprioritising or deferring activity, rather than cutting or ending programmes. This means that many of those programmes that we have identified within the Child Poverty Strategy as integral to delivering our objectives will continue to deliver for children in poverty albeit at a lower scale than we would have liked.
108. We have re-shaped the indicative spending allocations within our budget to provide extra funding and protection for the services which matter most to people and communities across Wales – the NHS and the core local government

settlement, which funds schools, social services and social care and other everyday services which directly impact on children.

109. We have taken this approach to ensure we continue to focus funding where it can have the most positive impacts in the circumstances and taking action to ensure we mitigate direct impacts to people and places, as far as possible. Spending more in some areas means there is less to spend in other areas. Where hard decisions have been required, we have sought to identify those areas where the relative impacts are lesser than their alternatives and we have sought to take action to mitigate impacts as far as possible.

110. For example we are acting to protect the core local government settlement by maintaining the planned 3.1% increase between 2023-24 and 2024-25. Local authorities deliver a wide range of public services, often to the most vulnerable in our society and people who are economically disadvantaged. These include significant services for children, through education.

111. This protection we have given to the core local government funding settlement means we have also protected school funding, as far as possible. However, given the scale of the pressures we are facing, it has not been possible to avoid all impacts on children and young people. We have acted to minimise these impacts as far as possible within the funding available.

112. Our 2024-25 Draft Budget sets out within the SIIA at Annex A the impacts of our spending decisions as part of the main narrative in chapter four including spending decisions that directly impact on children and young people.

Preventative spend

113. As we have reshaped our spending plans for 2024-25, we have also been guided by the principles embedded in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. We maintain our commitment to respect these principles as we progress and reflect and adapt where necessary. In this context:

- **Long term** – We have needed to act in the short term to protect the core services on which people rely to ensure they are sustainable into the future.
- **Prevention** – Within the extremely challenging settlement we have had to act to prevent the worst impacts to core services. While it has not been possible to avoid all negative impacts we have ensured as far as possible we mitigate direct impacts to people and places.
- **Integration** – we have maintained our approach of understanding the integrated impacts of the choices we are taking. In deploying our limited funding we have considered where funding can be allocated to achieve the

best possible impact balanced against the negative impacts of needing to reduce funding in other areas.

- **Collaboration** - As we move beyond this budget we will work with our wider partners to deliver on our plans and support them in meeting the challenges posed by this fiscal context.
- **Involvement** – Throughout this budget we have engaged with social partners including the third sector, local authorities and Statutory Commissioners to understand the impacts of the current context to shape our spending plans.

114. There are 50 national well-being indicators for Wales that are designed to measure the progress of Wales towards the seven well-being goals. Each year the Chief Statistician prepares and publishes an Annual Well-being of Wales report which provides an assessment of progress towards the well-being goals based on the national indicators.

Gender-based violence

115. The VAWDASV budget is £8.005m which has not changed from the indicative budget previously published. Of course, there are many other programmes and budgets which contribute to the objectives of our National Strategy, such as healthy relationships' work in education, funding for refuges and other supported housing through the Supported Housing Grant, which sit outside the Social Justice MEG.

116. The SIIA process undertakes an integrated approach to impact assessments to enable us to better understand the impact of spending decisions. In embedding gender-responsive principles this includes seeking to better understand the intersectional and unintended impacts of spending to maximise the impact of available funding.

117. For example we have protected funding for the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) budget at £8m due to continuing demand against this budget and given the importance of protecting those experiencing VAWDASV from physical, emotional and mental harms as well as changing attitudes and culture.

118. As part of our Budget Improvement Plan working with a range of internal and external colleagues, we have continued to promote a better understanding of gender budgeting across Welsh Government. The gender budgeting pilots which were conducted in 2022-23 have shaped our understanding of how this work can be further embedded and expanded. We are in the process of considering next steps to further embed these approaches in our budget and tax processes.

119. Welsh Government's core VAWDASV funding is distributed between a number of programmes and projects which each have their own deliverables and targets. Overall the funding is allocated in order to deliver our National Strategy 2022/2026. The objectives of the strategy are to:
- Challenge the public attitude to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across the Welsh population.
 - Increase awareness in children, young people and adults of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships.
 - Hold those who commit abuse to account and support those who may carry out abusive or violent behaviour to change their behaviour.
 - Make early intervention and prevention a priority.
 - Relevant professionals are trained.
 - Provide all victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs-led, strength-based, inter-sectional and responsive services across Wales.
120. We are working through of National VAWDASV Partnership to deliver against these objectives with the VAWDASV budget contributing alongside those of partners to achieve these objectives.
121. There are no specific ring-fenced budgets within the overall budget for survivor support services such as shelters, hotlines and counselling. There are, however, specific funding awards to delivery partners which funds refuges, hotlines and other support services. Some of these awards are made by regional partnerships who are allocated a budget for this from the overall VAWDASV BEL and some are funded directly by Welsh Government. All Welsh Government awards are currently unchanged, as are the regional allocations.
122. The National Strategy is built on a public health approach which requires changes to societal attitudes to violence against women and girls. Evaluating the extent to which attitudinal change has occurred is complicated and challenging. However, we do evaluate the impact and reach of specific campaigns. The Sound campaign addresses sexist attitudes amongst young men and boys. It has achieved significant levels of public engagement. Over 11 million people have viewed the footage globally, approximately 345,000 of those were men aged 18-34 in Wales who are, of course, the target audience. The campaign has also been successful in recruiting sporting ambassadors such as three current Welsh male football internationals. Whilst we do not have the means to evaluate or attribute change, there are reasons to regard this level of engagement as a success.
123. Impact assessment covers the full range of protected characteristics. Gender is recognised as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act. All budget decisions are impact assessed and therefore all decisions are assessed for gender impact as a matter of course. This includes the impact assessment undertaken as part of the development of the National Strategy.

124. The SIIA process undertakes an integrated approach to impact assessments to enable us to better understand the impact of spending decisions. In embedding gender-responsive principles this includes seeking to better understand the intersectional and unintended impacts of spending to maximise the impact of available funding.
125. For example, we have protected funding for the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) budget at £8m due to continuing demand against this budget and given the importance of protecting those experiencing VAWDASV from physical, emotional and mental harms as well as changing attitudes and culture.
126. As part of our Budget Improvement Plan working with a range of internal and external colleagues, we have continued to promote a better understanding of gender budgeting across Welsh Government. The gender budgeting pilots which were conducted in 2022-23 have shaped our understanding of how this work can be further embedded and expanded. We are in the process of considering next steps to further embed these approaches in our budget and tax processes.

Voluntary sector

127. The Welsh Government continues to fund Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW - comprising Wales Council for Voluntary Action and 19 County Voluntary Councils) to support the wider third sector across the whole of Wales – more than 40,000 organisations of all sizes and covering the full spectrum of Welsh social and economic life.
128. TSSW provides wide-ranging support across the challenges facing the sector, including advice on funding, governance, staffing and legal issues. Core funding for TSSW has been maintained in the 2024-25 budget.
129. The Welsh Government has not undertaken recent research on the value for money offered by the third sector, but is aware of ongoing discussions at UK level between the voluntary sector and UK Government with a view to producing a satellite account for the third sector.
130. In 2022, a [report](#) by Danny Kruger, Conservative MP for Devizes, which was commissioned by the then Prime Minister Theresa May, was produced with a view to strengthening the capacity of civil society. One recommendation was that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) should prepare a set of satellite accounts for the third/voluntary sector. The report outlines shortcomings in the available data relating to the scope and impact of the sector generally.
131. Evidence from organisations like Lloyds Bank Foundation (Value of Small Study) highlights the distinct services small/medium local third/voluntary sector

organisations provide to their communities. This is as a result of understanding the service user needs better, are more flexible and because of their status are more attractive to vulnerable service users.

SOCIAL JUSTICE						
RESOURCE						
Budget Expenditure Line	2023-24 Final Budget	2023-24 1st Supplementary Budget	2024-25 Indicative Plans	Changes	2024-25 Draft Budget	Explanation of changes between First Supplementary Budget 2023-24 and Draft Budget 24-25
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
Basic Income	12,200	12,200	7,200	3,500	10,700	An allocation of an additional £3.5m has been made to the Basic Income BEL as part of the 24-25 Draft Budget due to uptake of the pilot being higher than originally anticipated.
Financial Inclusion	39,002	39,002	39,002	0	39,002	No change to 24-25 Draft Budget
Digital Inclusion	1,250	2,250	1,250	-500	750	2023-24 First Supplementary included budget transfer in of £1m from HSS MEG for extension of digital inclusion and health procured programme. 2024-25 Draft budget reduction by £500k from indicative plans. We continue to recognise the importance of tackling digital inequalities and have therefore protected the budget as far as possible.
Digital Inclusion - Non cash	149	149	149	0	149	No change to 24-25 Draft Budget
Supporting Communities	1,164	1,660	4,164	-1,500	2,664	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £0.496m from FLG MEG for the Ukraine Digital Platform. 2024-25 Indicative Budget due to increase by £3m. 2024-25 Draft budget reduced by £1.5m compared to the indicative budget. This revised budget will still enable us to continue to support emergency food (£1m) as well as funding for emergency fuel support (£0.5m) through the Fuel Bank Foundation; though at a reduced rate. It will also enable implementation of the Child Poverty Strategy - supporting collaboration and co-ordination activity
International Sustainable Development *	1,275	1,375	1,275	-225	1,050	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £0.1m from CSA MEG for The Wales in Africa programme - Mobile Tree Planting project 2024-25 Draft budget has been reduced by £225k. This will impact our investment in small grants and Hub Cymru Africa. However, the BEL will still be able to continue to run the International Learning Opportunities (ILO) scheme.
Social Partnerships	961	961	961	-161	800	24-25 Draft Budget reduced by £161k compared to our indicative 24-25 budget, but this will not impact the implementation of the Act. The savings can be made from currently unallocated budgets and will therefore have minimal impact on what will be delivered by March 2025.
Action: Total Supporting Communities	56,001	57,597	54,001	1,114	55,115	
Fire & Rescue Services	2,533	2,533	2,533	-10	2,523	24-25 Draft Budget reduced by £10k from this budget which has been possible due to realising savings against the retendering of a contract.
Fire & Rescue Services - Communication Systems	2,275	2,275	2,275	-1,000	1,275	24-25 Draft Budget reduced by £1m based on the current Programme 24-25 forecast for Wales. We have been able to identify this saving due to programme slippage and due to delays caused by the re-procurement of new suppliers.
Community Fire Safety	848	848	848	-457	391	24-25 Draft Budget reduced by £457k compared to the indicative budget for 24-25. This has resulted in the cessation of the Arson reduction programme (£387k) as well as other smaller savings including the cessation of funding to support the secondment of an Occupational Therapist to South Wales Fire and Rescue Authorities' and a reduction in funding to support the Armed Forces Day which may result in some scaling back of activities compare to previous years.
Action: Total Fire and Rescue Services and Resilience	5,656	5,656	5,656	-1,467	4,189	
Older People Commissioner	1,701	1,687	1,701	-85	1,616	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £0.002m from Reserves - IFRS 16 (non-ringfenced); and Transfer out of £0.016m (to non-cash line) - IFRS 16 (Reduction RDEL 2024-25 Draft budget decreased by £85k
Older People Commissioner - Non cash	9	25	9	0	9	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £0.016m from Reserves - IFRS 16 (Depreciation) No change to 24-25 Draft Budget
Children's Commissioner	1,675	1,646	1,675	-84	1,591	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer out of £0.029m to Reserves (non cash) - IFRS 16 - Reduction of RDEL 24-25 Draft budget decrease of £84k
Children's Commissioner - Non cash	52	81	52	0	52	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £0.029m from Reserves - IFRS 16 (Depreciation) No change to 24-25 Draft Budget
Public Appointments	400	400	400	-248	152	24-25 Draft Budget decrease of £248k. The remaining budget in 2024-25 will be used to deliver a new pilot job shadowing scheme which will ensure pay parity for people who undertake job shadowing. There will be positive impacts in terms of Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, disabled and LGBTQ+ people who will be paid fairly for their part in job shadowing schemes.
Future Generations Commissioner Wales	1,695	1,695	1,695	-85	1,610	24-25 Draft budget decrease of £85k
Action: Communities	5,532	5,534	5,532	-502	5,030	
Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence	8,005	8,144	8,005	0	8,005	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £0.139m from CC MEG for Street life projects. No change to 24-25 Draft Budget
Action: Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and	8,005	8,144	8,005	0	8,005	
Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights	10,970	10,970	12,987	-3,214	9,773	24-25 Indicative Budget due to increase by £2,017k compared to the 23-24 budget 24-25 Draft budget decrease of £3,214m. Despite this reduction we are able to maintain delivery against all Programme for Government commitments supported within the BEL.
Cohesive Communities	4,710	5,081	5,580	-870	4,710	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £0.200m from Education MEG for ESOL REACH+Hubs; and £0.171m from CC MEG for the Refugee Well Housing project. 24-25 Indicative Budget due to increase by £870k compared to the 23-24 budget 2024-25 Draft budget reduced by £870k compared to the indicative budget.
Equalities, Poverty and Children's Evidence & Support	1,636	1,636	1,949	-313	1,636	24-25 Indicative Budget due to increase by £313k compared to the 23-24 budget 2024-25 Draft budget reduced by £313k compared to the indicative budget.
Chwarae Teg	366	366	366	-366	0	Chwarae Teg has now closed, so the whole budget of £366k has been removed, we have therefore removed the Chwarae Teg budget in 2024-25. We will work with stakeholders to co-design new activity in this area.
Action: Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights	17,682	18,053	20,882	-4,763	16,119	
Advice Services	11,675	12,811	11,675	0	11,675	2023-24 First Supplementary budget transfer in of £1.136m from Reserves for share of Financial Levy No change to 24-25 Draft Budget
Action: Advice Services	11,675	12,811	11,675	0	11,675	
Support for the Voluntary Sector and Volunteering	7,624	7,624	9,424	-970	8,454	24-25 Indicative Budget due to increase by £1.8m compared to the 23-24 budget 24-25 Draft Budget increase of £803k
Action: Support for the Voluntary Sector and Volunteering	7,624	7,624	9,424	-970	8,454	
Community Support and Safety	22,981	22,981	22,981	-7,473	15,508	24-25 Draft Budget reduced by £7.473m compared the indicative budget for 24-25. The saving is based on a reduction of Welsh Government funded PCSOs down from 510 at the end of 2023-24 to 300 by the end of 2024-25. These estimates and the saving realised in practice will depend on churn etc and could be lower.
Action: Community Support and Safety	22,981	22,981	22,981	-7,473	15,508	
Women's Justice & Youth Justice Blueprints **	1,092	1,092	1,092	-20	1,072	24-25 Draft Budget reduced by £20k due to uncommitted expenditure
Action: Female Offending and Youth Justice Blueprints	1,092	1,092	1,092	-20	1,072	
MEG: SOCIAL JUSTICE	136,248	139,492	139,248	-14,081	125,167	
to be added at 2nd Supp 23-24 Budget						
Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights - Non Cash	0	0	0	3	3	£3k from Reserves towards non-cash
MEG: SOCIAL JUSTICE	136,248	139,492	139,248	-14,078	125,170	

Formerly
International Development *
Female Offending and Youth Justice Blueprints**