

Executive Business Report

Birmingham City Council

City Council

2nd November 2021



Subject: Executive Business Report
Report of: Cabinet
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Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. On 10th September 2019, Full Council accepted the recommendations of the Coordinating O&S Committee review in respect of changes to the Full Council agenda.
- 1.2. Recommendation 3 of the review requested that the Executive provide an update to Full Council on its work via the provision of an Executive Business Report ('EBR'). EBRs will be provided to Full Council four times per municipal year and will include details of progress made in relation to Council strategic outcomes and priorities linked to two Cabinet Member portfolios.
- 1.3. Following the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020, previous EBRs (from June 2020 to July 2021) have been used to provide an update on the whole Council's response to the pandemic, including emergency planning, impact on services and plans for recovery. As the Council has now stepped down the emergency response to Covid-19, a decision has been taken to revert to the original purpose and format of EBRs.
- 1.4. This EBR provides an update on two Cabinet Member portfolios:
 - Health & Social Care; pages 2 – 20

- Education, Skills & Culture; pages 20 - 41

- 1.5. It also includes a brief update on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the Home to School Transport Service, both of which fall under the Vulnerable Children and Families portfolio. This is provided as an appendix to the main report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the report be noted.

3. Health & Wellbeing Portfolio

3.1. Adult Social Care

- 3.1.1. Since the last Executive Business Report update in July 2021, we have continued to see further lifting of Covid restrictions with a sense of normality returning to many areas of daily activity. For the Adult Social Care and Health system however, ongoing high demand means the system is already experiencing pressures that would not normally emerge till the peak of the winter period (around January time). As such this update will outline some of the pressures and priorities for the Adult Social Care directorate over the rest of the year, as well as highlight some of the very positive examples of how Council staff and partner agencies have worked together to respond to unprecedented demands and ensure our citizens are always at the forefront of our response.
- 3.1.2. The re-opening of day centres has continued to be impacted by ongoing Covid restrictions which still apply to our care settings, and we outline how this has affected the number of people receiving support both pre-pandemic and now. There is also an update on how we are supporting our vulnerable citizens post-lockdown, alongside progress made around Neighbourhood Networks.
- 3.1.3. The successful development of Neighbourhood Networks schemes, and the importance of these support networks to our Covid-19 response, was highlighted during the recent Pause and Learn Review. Further findings from this very positive peer review, led by the Director of Adult Social Care and the Lead Elected Member for Social Care at Coventry City Council, are presented for your consideration.

Pressures, Priorities and Positive Responses

Pressures

- 3.1.4. The Adult Social Care directorate continues to experience unprecedented pressures related to the Covid-19 pandemic, ongoing recovery, and longer-term increases in demand for support. The directorate is experiencing ongoing severe challenges in recruiting and retaining sufficient workforce to deliver our

statutory duties. Whilst the directorate has a growing reputation as an excellent place to work, positioned at the forefront of the development of adult social care, our rates of pay are lower than most of our neighbours. This lower rate of pay, combined with growing levels of inflation across the economy, means that too many of our social work, occupational therapy and specialist staff are reluctantly choosing to leave the Council and work for other organisations who can offer a higher rate of pay.

- 3.1.5. Increases in the price of fuel, food prices and general cost of living are not only felt by staff, but also our providers. Pressure on the care market is felt directly at the front door of social care and the increasingly difficult economic situation is putting further pressure on a market which is often already struggling to cope.
- 3.1.6. The care sector continues to experience difficulties in recruitment and the ongoing changing requirements related to the pandemic e.g. PPE, testing regimes for staff and visitors, enhanced infection control requirements. These difficulties, combined with the introduction of compulsory vaccination requirements, combine to form a serious threat to the viability of a number of providers at what is already the most difficult time of year.
- 3.1.7. Our hospitals are operating at a level of pressure normally only seen in the depths of winter. This is impacting workers who support the acute sector, early intervention services, and our providers. Staff are being asked to work long hours to respond to this need and many are anxious about how the system will continue to operate as demand is expected to continue to rise over the coming months.
- 3.1.8. As a system, the Council and partners in the NHS, care market and voluntary sector continue to work with relentless dedication to maintain a safe and responsive health and care system for citizens. However, we are collectively bracing ourselves and planning for a very difficult winter.

Priorities

- 3.1.9. Responding to the pressures on the health and care system is a key priority for the directorate over the next six months. Much of our ability to respond successfully to the evolving situation will be delivered through our ongoing focus on bedding in the changes made in Phase 1 transformation and pushing ahead with the implementation of Phase 2.
- 3.1.10. Last year we updated our vision in recognition of the tremendous progress made in implementing the original work programme, and to define Phase 2 of transformational change within the Adult Social Care directorate. However, our overall strategic vision for adult social care continues to focus on supporting adults in the city to be resilient, living independently whenever possible and

exercising choice and control so that they can live good quality lives and enjoy good health and wellbeing.

- 3.1.11. Implementation of Phase 2 transformation lies at the heart of our priorities for the rest of the year. As a city, and as a linked health and care system, the success of our response to the pandemic would not have been possible without the Phase 1 transformation and redesign of adult social care. The continuation of Phase 2 of this programme is critical to the Council continuing to meet demand and respond to the growing pressures on the sector.
- 3.1.12. Our revised vision includes some important additions which build on the progress made to date, including the continued development of our joint health and care response to early intervention, which is essential to maintaining our ability as a system to respond and to support recovery. Growth in demand, which hit critical levels during the pandemic, has not reduced in line with usual seasonal trends. Instead we have seen an ongoing level of demand which is already 34% higher than this time last year. The development and implementation of new models of care, at pace and in partnership, has been central to avoiding failure of the Birmingham health and care system.
- 3.1.13. Our joint work with children's services on transitions and preparation for adulthood is crucially important to maintain our current financial position. Having firmly established and proven the benefit of these services, we are not stepping up our offer of support. This will not only lead to greatly improved outcomes and life chances for young people in Birmingham, but will also play a crucial role in delivering savings targets.
- 3.1.14. The challenges we are facing to recruit both permanent and agency staff is a risk to the delivery of our strategic priorities, as our current rates of pay are lower than our neighbouring local authorities. Work is being prioritised to work towards improving the Council's position on this matter, but at the present time it continues to present as a significant risk.

Successes

- 3.1.15. Against this difficult backdrop, however, the directorate has continued to deliver some excellent outcomes for citizens. Staff have worked tirelessly to ensure the needs of our most vulnerable users have been safely and effectively met.
- 3.1.16. To note and celebrate the hard work and success of staff during the pandemic, the directorate recently held an online directorate recognition and achievement event. This event highlighted the vast array of services the directorate delivers, the unique challenges faced by staff, and demonstrated that those in need of support have always been put front and centre in our response.
- 3.1.17. The Chief Executive joined the Director of Adult Social Care to hear directly about some great examples of the excellent adult services being delivered to

our residents, which have been especially valuable in the past 18 months. Staff were passionate about their roles being 'more than just a job'. This ongoing energy and commitment to supporting our citizens was also recognised by external Peer Reviewers as part of the Pause and Learn Review of Adult Social Care carried out in July 2021.

- 3.1.18. The progress made by the directorate has been largely sustained throughout the pandemic. In recognition of this, we were pleased to learn that BCC, along with our Birmingham Integrated Care Partnership (BICP) partners, have been shortlisted at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards in the Health and Social Care category.

Support to Service Users: Day Centres in Birmingham

- 3.1.19. Ongoing Covid-19 restrictions continue to impact the full and safe re-opening of day services in the city.
- 3.1.20. The Day Opportunities service supports approximately 2000 citizens with a wide range of support needs, including older people, people with learning disabilities, autism, physical disability and people with mental ill health.
- 3.1.21. Following government guidance in March 2020, building-based day opportunity services (day centres) were closed. Since 26th April 2021, the process of re-opening building-based day opportunity services (day centres) has taken place in line with the relaxing of restrictions announced by Government in February 2021 and the 'Roadmap out of Lockdown'. The phased re-opening of internal and external day centres was also informed by the SCIE guidance 'Delivering Safe Reopening of Face to Face Adult Day Care'.
- 3.1.22. The table below indicates the pre-Covid and current capacity of day centres (as at 1st October 2021), which continue to operate at a reduced level to comply with Covid related requirements.

Name of BCC Day Centre	Total weekly occupancy figures (pre-pandemic)	Total weekly occupancy figures (current)
Alderman Bowen	110	52
Ebrook RC	74	22
Elwood RC	81	59
Heartlands RC	93	45
Harborne RC	81	46
Hockley SDC	111	57
Mosley RC	89	33
Fairway RC	30	20

Beeches Gold	22	0 (building remains closed due to restrictions)
Total	691	334
External Day Care (40 day centres)	1325	919

3.1.23. Outreach support continues for those citizens who cannot attend building-based day opportunity services, either due to ongoing restrictions or a choice to delay return for health reasons. Monitoring of both building-based and outreach activity will continue, to provide the service with intelligence on the impact on citizens and carers.

3.1.24. Feedback from day centres on the reopening process shows that clients are happy to return and regain some independence and activities of their choice. Many have enjoyed local walks and rebuilding their relationship with staff. Staff have shared that it has been good to see service users happy, interacting and having structure and routine again. The positive impact of reopening centres has also been reported by families and carers, who have noted an improvement in mental health and wellbeing of clients who have returned to centre.

Support to citizens and communities

Supporting the third sector

3.1.25. The close relationship between the Council and the third sector, which played such an vital role in the city's response to the pandemic, continues to grow. Commissioning officers are working with the sector to understand changing demands and how we can work together to respond. Work is also underway via the Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC) to support organisations to bid for additional external funding, supporting the sustainability of the sector whilst also meeting the priorities for the City and Adult Social Care.

3.1.26. Further support for the community and voluntary sector is planned, strengthening the focus on asset-based community development, compassionate communities and social justice. This will not only increase the capacity of the sector to support our most vulnerable citizens, but support our wider priorities for the sector and the delivery of our prevention agenda.

3.1.27. We continue to meet with BVSC every two weeks to review and progress both community recovery and economic recovery efforts, with an emphasis on how we can achieve longer term resilience based upon robust insights. The

thematic leads across key areas are also working together to prepare for the anticipated difficult winter period ahead and ensure the community and voluntary sector can support the pressures within the wider system.

Household Support Fund Grant Scheme

- 3.1.28. DWP has announced a national Household Support Fund grant scheme for local authorities. The expectation is that this should be used to support households in most need with food, energy and water bills or costs related to those items, including free school meals in holiday periods for eligible families.
- 3.1.29. Birmingham has been allocated £12.79m to cover the period 6th October until the end of March 2022. At least 50% of this funding must be spent upon families with children. Cross-directorate meetings are taking place to plan expenditure and ensure a joined up approach between Adult Social Care and Education & Skills directorates.

Developing our Neighbourhood Networks

- 3.1.30. Neighbourhood Network Schemes (NNS) play a key role in helping to prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal adult social care services (where appropriate). There is an expectation that social care workers get to know their locality, their local assets, and routinely link in with their local NNS provider.
- 3.1.31. Between 2019 and 2021, NNS have issued over 350 community grants, mapped over 1700 community assets, and created networks for organisations to link into sustainability and developmental opportunities.
- 3.1.32. Current NNS contracts are due to end in March 2022, with Cabinet approval for the service to be recommissioned and continue running for a further five years. There will be an option to extend for a further two years, subject to satisfactory performance and budget availability. Re-commissioning timelines are on track, with the live tendering process closing in November 2021.
- 3.1.33. From April 2022, new NNS services will include:
- The expansion of NNS to benefit younger adults aged 14-49 with a long-term disability (including learning disability, physical disability, mental health, autism, sensory loss or impairment), to complement the older adults 50+ service and to support the life course approach. This is subject to funding approval in February 2022.
 - A new city-wide NNS structure to benefit communities who are thinly spread across the city and for whom place-based model does not work
 - NNS Digital, a coordinated approach to community activities available across the city that can be accessed digitally. This will include digital inclusion projects commissioned by NNSs directly as well as their own digital presence

- The development of Compassionate Communities principles
- The introduction of the Asset Based Community Development model approach within NNS

3.1.34 These new additions to NNS services are based on feedback from stakeholders on how to further support Birmingham citizens.

Birmingham Pause and Learn Review

3.1.35 The transformation of adult social care services across the city was clearly evident to Peer Reviewers undertaking Birmingham's recent Pause and Learn review.

3.1.36 Peer Reviews are normally undertaken every two years, face to face, with a review team on site. However, due to the pandemic, ADASS has redesigned the process to develop a more flexible and light touch approach. This new form of Peer Review, called a 'Pause and Learn Review' is more focused but enables local authorities to continue to learn from each other and support sector led improvement.

3.1.37 The Birmingham Review Team was led by the Director of Adult Social Care and the Elected Member for Social Care from Coventry City Council, 2 Assistant Directors from Dudley and Stoke local authorities, and ADASS leads.

3.1.38 It took place in July 2021, incorporating Teams meetings with more than fifty Birmingham attendees across ten sessions, including: front line workers, Adults Management Team, Cllr Paulette Hamilton, and wider partners.

3.1.39 We received the feedback in August and shared the outcomes and our response during September 2021, with briefings and online sessions held across the Council.

3.1.40 The review team focused on two key lines of enquiry:

- To gather reflections from staff on how our approach to listening actively, connecting people and families to things that matter and how they work intensively with people in crisis to enable them to regain stability and control, has worked during the pandemic
- To identify where the offer to support people in their local community using preventative services such as neighbourhood assets, Family Group Conferencing and emerging Covid related community support, has been particularly effective and how this can be developed further including with third sector partners.

3.1.41 Colleagues from the Pause and Review found that:

- The commitment and passion to focus on prevention and early intervention was very visible.

- The shared purpose in working at a community and neighbourhood level was very powerful.
- Relationships and connections between commissioners and the voluntary sector are clearly strong with a real sense of mutual respect and value.
- Many individuals felt well supported by their managers and colleagues to deal with the impact of the pandemic on themselves and those they supported or cared for. This was much appreciated.
- The change in culture started pre Covid helped different teams offer mutual support to each other and the Out of hours team was mentioned on a number of occasions has been very supportive.
- The consistent message that prevention matters, has had a significant impact on behaviours and commissioning for outcomes rather than services. Staff feel energised with a shared purpose that helps them manage demands.
- The renewed focus on social justice and new collaborations in local neighbourhoods are examples of how people felt that ASC demonstrated the commitment to the population of Birmingham and tackling inequalities
- The pandemic has highlighted the importance of data and how when combined with local knowledge of assets and opportunities it really helps bring to life to the approach.
- Working in and around local communities is seen as key to success.
- Having a flexible and agile approach to work-life balance, with new freedoms, has really felt of benefit to individuals and teams.
- Continuing to implement the customer journey & strengths-based model helped us respond to the post pandemic challenges, including those faced by our diverse and mobile population.
- The work in neighbourhoods and the strong partnership with BVCS enabled a very rapid civic society response at the beginning of Covid-19.
- Digital inclusion and the right IT was recognised as a risk area early on and the city moved quickly to equip staff effectively.
- The importance of more regular communication within the directorate and with users and carers was recognised, and the improvements made to increase this were appreciated.

3.1.42 Recommendations from the review are presented in the below table, alongside the response from the directorate.

Recommendations	Response
Build on Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 of Transformation Journey underway.
Think about how to continue to support the workforce to avoid burnout and maintain work life balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to promote wellbeing offer, particular focus on supporting staff through winter pressures. 1-1 with all staff as part of New Ways of Working. Implementation of Directorate zones and dedicated work areas where required in main buildings.
Think about how to support the wellbeing of your NNW voluntary services workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NNS providers granted access to wider wellbeing support (e.g. MH staff helplines) Ongoing work with sector to identify any further forms of support.
Consider closer linkages of prevention offer with Social Prescribing and approaches to prevention by health colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work underway to reconnect workers to NNW offer Discussions are ongoing with health colleagues to progress work to integrate the prevention offer across health and social care.
Make sure that there is space for teams to be honest about pressures and how these can be managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is being led by the Operational ADs to understand and respond to any concerns in this area.
Keep close to subtle changes in need and demand; and people presenting at a later more traumatic stage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further work with staff to understand changes in needs and the nature and scale of this. Ongoing work with commissioners and Care Market to adapt offer to respond to any changes in need, demand and/or complexity.
Work with partners to reflect on future funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing investment in joint early intervention services, such as Discharge

model as COVID monies disappear and check resources are in the right place and sufficient to maintain quality of care provision and manage risks	<p>to Assess which identify, map and respond to needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue close alignment between emerging demand data and links to commissioners to shape care market response. • Progress work with MH and Transitions services to continue to improve and reshape services to better support young people and adults.
Reiterate to the workforce that they have freedom to shape and try out how they work flexibly as restrictions relax; why not lead the way for the Council?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is being led by the operational ADs to support staff as we reintroduce face to face visits, more direct contact between managers and colleagues and visits to care providers. • Guidance is now available to support these 1-1 discussions and ensure staff feel supported to do this in a safe way.
Celebrate and appreciate all your efforts of the past few years, recognising that the strong political leadership and the commitment at every level has introduced a new confidence in the ability of adult social care to deliver within the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series of briefing and engagement events to celebrating Pause and Learn feedback • Increased Communications to acknowledge achievements in Directorate, Council and wider media. • We have collated a book of staff achievements to recognise their incredible work during the pandemic and had a staff event, with the Chief Executive to recognise their dedication and work. • We have undertaken Teams events to acknowledge the excellent work and support delivered to citizens during Covid. • We are exploring how to celebrate the work of our amazing community organisations too.

Performance

- 3.1.43 The ASC directorate continues to support citizens to take control over how their support is provided, particularly by promoting the update of Direct

Payments. Whilst access to community resources has been impacted by the pandemic, we continue to be a high-performing authority, and comfortably inside the top quartile of authorities on this measure nationally. We recognise that for some individuals their preference will be for the council to directly commission and organise their care. To ensure we commission quality led care services, we continue to focus on working with providers rated as Silver and Gold, and we have performed above our target in this area and continue to see a slight upward trend.

- 3.1.44 At the start of the pandemic we saw an impact on our long-term admissions to care homes. Whereas we had previously seen steady positive progress in supporting more people to receive care at home (rather than in a residential or nursing setting), the pandemic resulted in a rise in admissions and a move away from our target. Our performance on reducing admissions to care homes has been improving quarter-on-quarter since the initial impact of the pandemic, and we are better than the median local authority on this measure. Performance relating to the percentage of people receiving care in their own home has been mixed but with an overall upwards trend over the last 12 months. We have several policies in place to reduce the number of people being admitted to care homes, including “home first” for hospital discharges, and the Three Conversations model for community referrals.
- 3.1.45 The number of people receiving Shared Lives services had increased from April 2021, but dropped again for September; however, this still represents an overall increase over the last twelve months. As well as making new placements, the service has to replace ones that come to an end, which often happens for positive reasons like the citizen acquiring the skills to allow them to live independently. The service has an ‘invest to save’ business case currently going through the signoff process to increase their capacity.
- 3.1.46 The proportion of clients reviewed, reassessed, or assessed within twelve months has improved month-on-month since April 2021, and is up nearly 4 percentage points on this time last year. Each locality team is now following a bespoke action plan and receives a list of reviews to carry out each month, which they address in meetings with their Head of Service.
- 3.1.47 The percentage of concluded safeguarding enquiries where the individual or representative was asked what their desired outcomes were, and the percentage where at least one was met during the enquiry, has fluctuated but nearly always remained above target. The safeguarding team has some identified capacity challenges, and senior managers are actively exploring mitigations for them.
- 3.1.48 Since 2019/20 Q3, we have seen increases in the number and percentage of parents or carers satisfied with the transition plan co-produced with their young people, as well as the number and percentage of young people transitioning

to the Integrated Transitions Team who feel that they can achieve their outcomes. This relates to a new proof-of-concept process which is still being established.

Finance

- 3.1.49 Adult Social Care has a £337m budget in 2021/22. This made up of £315m for third sector care provision and Direct Payments (£93m of which is recovered through client contributions), £81m for staffing, £70m of contracts for universal or preventative services, £30m of grant and partner income and £5m of internal recharges and use of reserves.
- 3.1.50 Recruitment and staff retention has been an issue this year, with the service spending £12m on agency staff to cover some vacancies, and underspending by £6m due to unfilled posts, which has been used this year to contribute to the Council's workforce saving target.
- 3.1.51 Care provision has seen demand at higher levels than historically, which is being closely monitored to evaluate whether it is a short-term surge post-restrictions or a new ongoing pattern. Much of this demand is being picked up by our Early Intervention work to ensure that longer term care packages are appropriate and focussed on promoting independence. However, there is still a pressure from this demand anticipated to be £3.4m by March 2022.
- 3.1.52 The service is investing in preventative initiatives through the Transformation Programme to reduce the ongoing growth in people needing, and cost, of services. It is recognised that this brings longer-term savings. The intention from next year is to spend around £3.3m a year for staffing and contracts to focus on Transition, community assets and complex care needs, with the dual benefit of better outcomes for residents and reduction in the financial pressure to the council.

3.2 Public Health

Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy Development

- 3.2.34 The Public Health Division is supporting the refresh of the Health and Wellbeing Board's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 'Creating a Healthier City'.
- 3.2.35 The Strategy, which sets out the key health and wellbeing priorities for the city for 2022-2030, has selected areas for action based upon the latest data, the public consultation on the Public Health Green Paper, the commissioned Covid impact ethnographic study, Covid insight surveys and findings from local seldom heard voices engagement. The strategy ensures that Covid-19 recovery is a cross-cutting element throughout.

- 3.2.36 The strategy is currently out for consultation until 10th December. The link for the consultation is [here](#). To support the consultation, the public health team are holding additional focus groups and engagement sessions and ward members have been offered an opportunity for public health officers to attend their ward forum if it falls within the consultation period.

Creating A Healthy Food City

- 3.2.37 A wide range of work is underway on the Food agenda. The Creating a Healthy Food City Forum is in the process of developing a Food Strategy for the city, and an initial outline has been reviewed by the Food Poverty Core Group and other key stakeholders and experts.
- 3.2.38 The Food Team has made connections with organisations and partnerships leading research and innovation across Birmingham. This includes the Mandala Consortium, whose focus is on transforming urban food systems for planetary and population health, with a project centered on the city of Birmingham. Living Labs from Food Trails, funded through the EU Horizon 2020 Programme, is addressing the call 'Food 2030 – Empowering Cities as agent of food system transformation'. Other key organisations leading work include: NIHR School for Public Health Research (of which the University of Birmingham is now a member), Centre of Economics of Obesity at University of Birmingham, Food Foundation, and a variety of academics, professors and researchers from universities and colleges across Birmingham.
- 3.2.39 Birmingham has been elected to one of two seats representing European cities in the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Secretariat. Birmingham is leading the pan-city thinking on cultural dimensions of the food system and the political narrative around Food Justice. On behalf of Birmingham, Councillor Hamilton launched a global city pledge on food justice whilst presenting at the Barcelona conference in October 2021. As part of this work, a food affordability tool has been developed to examine differences in food availability and prices across Birmingham. It is based on the Lancet EAT Planetary diet. The idea is that this will also be tested in Pune and Johannesburg to see if it is transferable to other countries.
- 3.2.40 Through a food resilience grant from Sustainable Food Places, The Active Wellbeing Society has been commissioned to develop a growing network, to deliver workshops and to explore how unused land could be used for growing.
- 3.2.41 The Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme is continuing to develop following a pause on activity during Covid-19. Partners have been commissioned to develop and evaluate an apprenticeship health and wellbeing curriculum. In addition, a healthy planning toolkit has been developed and the public consultation feedback is now shaping the final tool. Officers across BCC will meet to review how it can be embedded into planning policy. Finally, work is also taking place to explore the Birmingham food

system, and to capture data and insights about citizen's food habits and behaviours which will be used to guide the food strategy action plan.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

- 3.2.42 Birmingham City Council was invited to bid for up to £792,973 under the government's Mental Health Recovery Action Plan 2021-2022 to ensure the mental health impacts of Covid-19 were swiftly addressed. Funding was allocated to the top 40 most deprived local authorities, under a Section 31 grant (Local Government Act) following an expression of interest process overseen by Public Health England (PHE).
- 3.2.43 A range of interventions were selected using evidence to address mental health and wellbeing needs across the life-course. These included universal programmes alongside targeted interventions for certain groups, including ethnicity, populations by identity or behaviour, and faith groups. The interventions chosen were considered to have lasting legacies beyond the term of the funding.
- 3.2.44 Some of these projects are outlined in the table below:

<p><u>Projects aimed specifically at children and young people</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Mental Health Peer Support: Youth mental health peer support workers who will enable and increase access to mental health services in the 0-25-year age group and reduce stigma around mental health and associated barriers to existing care. • Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) Peer Support Programme: Delivering PIE training to 25 Peer Support workers who will support 300 young people with complex needs such as those experiencing homelessness or substance misuse. • New Start East Project: a whole school approach to mental health support covering 25 primary schools in two of our most deprived wards involving pupils, teachers, and parents.
<p><u>Projects aimed specifically at targeted groups</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cruse Birmingham Bereavement Support increasing equity of access: Bereavement service - targeted intervention to increase reach and uptake in the most deprived areas aimed at LGBT, Black African, Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, and Central and Eastern European populations. • The Mindful Muslim: Intervention offering peer-to-peer bereavement support for the Pakistani Muslim community facilitated by qualified and registered counsellors (adult population only). • The Wise Step Connector Programme: This intervention will deliver 'train the trainer' programmes to organisations and communities within the African, Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi,

Central and Eastern European, and Chinese communities to raise awareness and provide training to identify and support people at risk of suicide.

- Community Mental Health First Aid Training: Train the trainer targeted in community organisations within the most deprived quintile (IMD, LSOA), faith organisations and community groups supporting Black African, Black Caribbean, LGBT, Disabilities Groups, Asian, Central Eastern Europeans, and Chinese populations.
- Birmingham LGBT Mental Health Awareness: The interventions proposed are to increase counselling hours, undertake an LGBT needs assessment, develop strategic priorities, provide mental health awareness training to increase cultural competency, and provide an evaluation report focusing on the impact of these interventions. (Birmingham LGBT has sent an Eventbrite survey to providers and partners asking for feedback on this project.)
- Mental Wellbeing Support for Women with multiple complex needs: The intervention is targeted at women aged 35-50 years with multiple complex needs. Current service users include those within the criminal justice system, victims of domestic abuse, rape, sexual exploitation, and substance misuse.

Projects aimed specifically at adult population

- Birmingham Mind Being Well programme: Mental Health and wellbeing training targeted at people aged 18 plus who have mild to moderate mental health issues.

Projects for universal population

- Birmingham Mind Mental Health Helpline Volunteer Support: The funding will recruit a 30-hour volunteer co-ordinator to train the first group of 10 volunteers. Contracts have now been issued to providers. A webinar was delivered to providers demonstrating how PHE would like monthly reporting done. Providers requested a video to help them with this rather complex spreadsheet that was provided by PHE. Public Health colleagues will make a video on 17 September as a matter of urgency.

Public Health will fund the following projects from their core budget:

- The Time to Change Hub – a small contribution to help with running costs.
- Birmingham Mind – funding for a Data Analyst to work on the Helpline data.
- Breathe Education - Creation and delivery of online resources that offer evidence-informed educational interventions, self-help tools and guidance through a suite of educational modules, self-help

videos, webinars, and an archive of professional responses to frequently asked questions.

Community Health Profiles

- 3.2.45 In addition to Covid-19 specific community engagement, the Public Health Division Communities Team has developed a framework for profiling the health and wellbeing of Birmingham's communities. The team is looking into four specific areas: faith, ethnicity, LGBTQ+ and disability. Currently ten profiles are expected to be completed by March 2022, starting with Sikh and Bangladeshi communities. This detailed analysis and narrative will be used to inform need and service delivery in the post-Covid recovery phase.

Inequalities

- 3.2.46 Addressing inequalities remains high on the agenda for the Creating a City without Inequality Forum (CCWIF) that convenes members across systems to shape and influence work across the Birmingham landscape. The aim is to develop strategic action to tackle health inequalities by broadly working towards Marmot's six policy areas for reducing and mitigating inequalities across the life course.
- 3.2.47 In June 2021, the Forum refreshed its aims and objectives, and approved a new forward plan. Following this, the first CCWIF workshop took place in September 2021 and focused on tackling disparities associated with ill health, disability, complex needs, and employment under the Marmot's policy area of Creating Fair Employment and Good work for All. The discussions from the workshop informed the agenda of the associated forum that took place in October 2021, and several agreed actions are being progressed
- 3.2.48 The Forum also supports the Birmingham Poverty Truth Commission delivered by Birmingham Thrive Together (BTT), the aim of which is to strengthen the connection between the council, city partners and our citizens through learning from lived experience of poverty and incorporating those insights into policy and decision making.
- 3.2.49 Our Public Health Inequalities Team are leading on a joint review of the health inequalities experienced by Black African and Black Caribbean populations in Birmingham and Lewisham. This review, known as the Birmingham - Lewisham African and Caribbean Health Inequalities Review (BLACHIR), takes an in depth look at the evidence and lived experiences of inequality across the life course including the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The partnership between Birmingham City Council and Lewisham Council shares knowledge and resources through a collaborative review process.

- 3.2.50 An external advisory board, consisting of individuals with lived experience, and an academic advisory board were recruited to examine the available evidence and shape draft recommendations. The main objective of the review is to produce a joint final report that brings together the findings from all the themed reviews and a series of recommendations being referred to as opportunities for action. The final report will also include data analysis conducted by the review group throughout the 18-month period.

Infant mortality task force

- 3.2.51 An infant mortality task force has been convened and is moving forward work to develop an infant mortality action plan. An independent chair has now been recruited to lead the task force, to engage with partners around this agenda.
- 3.2.52 Two working groups are being established, focusing on clinical data and genetics alongside wider determinants and health inequalities. Both these areas will be underpinned by the latest research.

Training of Community Researchers

- 3.2.53 Training is complete for three of the community researchers' groups from the following communities:
- South Asian
 - Black African
 - Polish and Eastern European
 - Chinese

- 3.2.54 The final researchers will have completed their training by December 2021.
- 3.2.55 Support and supervision for this initial project is in place, ensuring safe oversight for researchers. The first project that the community researchers will work on is understanding cultural competence and cultural compassion from the community perspective.

Future Parks Accelerator

- 3.2.56 The Future Parks Accelerator programme has continued to highlight the benefits of green spaces within the City, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.2.57 Our Health and Wellbeing Pilot in the north of the city, in Witton Lakes, has gone well showing that citizens can benefit from connecting to nature both virtually and physically. Our virtual skills showcase has been well received, highlighting the range of jobs young people can access for a career in the environmental sector. Our work in Dawberry Fields has shown the positive impact that activating a park – through nature trails, family activities and volunteering opportunities – has on children and families in the area.

- 3.2.58 Covid-19 has shown just how important green space and nature are to people. Improvements have already been seen in how residents engage with green spaces across the three pilot sites. A successful Crowdfunding initiative led by the Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust on behalf of FPA led to £2,000.00 being raised for Dawberry Fields, our Children's pilot site, for Slow Worms (a rare native legless lizard present on the site). The money will pay for habitat enhancement and a nature trails to help bring this local wildlife to life.
- 3.2.59 Strong links have also been made with the Route To Zero (R20) Taskforce with the evolving vision for the FPA programme now becoming 'Birmingham: A City of Nature'. This will be one of the 5 city priorities.

Covid Response

Health Protection Response

- 3.2.60 Incidence, morbidity and mortality rates continue to decrease in Birmingham, hand in hand with an increase in vaccination rates. The Public Health team are focusing on reviewing the incidence of Covid-19, particularly variants of concern, testing, hospitalisation and morbidity, situation rates, common areas of exposure, vaccination rates and inequalities
- 3.2.61 Alongside Public Health England we are closely monitoring, following up and managing cases which are variants of concern. The Test and Trace team are scenario and contingency planning, for the following three potential scenarios:
- Enduring transmission, where the incidence rates remain higher than the national average for long periods of time.
 - Multiple ongoing outbreaks, many of which are variants of concern.
 - A third wave of the virus in the UK, with a very large increase in incidence rates.

Testing

- 3.2.62 Public Health continues to lead the development and implementation of a testing strategy for Birmingham.
- 3.2.63 The ease of test access and use, combined with the increase in speed before seeing a result, has meant a proportionally greater increase in self-administered lateral flow testing. Nationally there has been a move to reduce lateral flow testing by providers in fixed sites, shifting to a model where residents collect tests from community sites and pharmacies to bring home for testing in addition to ordering these tests online for home delivery. All residents are now being advised to test regularly and upload their results nationally.
- 3.2.64 The Council is also piloting home testing kit collection pop-ups in supermarkets and other high footfall areas at weekends to increase the reach of distribution.

These have been very well received and were extended at some sites into weekday pop-ups. Where possible we are alerting members the day before to help promotion of these temporary sites.

4 Education, Skills & Culture Portfolio

4.1 Schools

Reopening of schools

- 4.1.1 Schools reopened for the start of the new academic year in early September 2021, following the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions for educational settings.
- 4.1.2 In advance of schools reopening, the council produced an outbreak management plan template for schools to use. A webinar for school leaders with the Director of Public Health also took place on the first day of term and was very well-attended with positive feedback received.
- 4.1.3 We have continued the support to schools by holding several webinars in the first few weeks of term. These have included a focussed session on ventilation, support with contact tracing and managing pupil attendance. Supporting schools via webinars has been a key part of BCC's response to the pandemic and these will continue throughout the academic year. The presentations and recordings from all our school webinars are shared with all schools and posted on the council's website.
- 4.1.4 Current government guidance is that pupils under 18 do not need to self-isolate while waiting for a PCR test result if they are the contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19. Schools are also not operating bubbles for pupils this term. Schools are continuing to work with Public Health Birmingham, BCC Education and Skills and the UK Health Protection Agency where they have confirmed cases of Covid-19.
- 4.1.5 As has been the case throughout the pandemic, officers are closely monitoring attendance through the data schools provide in their daily attendance returns to DfE. As at 29th September 2021, overall attendance in Birmingham schools was 90.7% compared to an average of 89.7% for core cities, 88.3% for the West Midlands and 89.8% for England.
- 4.1.6 Attendance levels in Birmingham have begun to be impacted by Covid-19 cases during the first few weeks of term, as across the rest of the country. As of Wednesday 29th September, 1.7% of Birmingham pupils were absent from school for reasons related to Covid-19, compared to 2.5% nationally. Officers meet with senior officials from the Department for Education (DfE) regularly to discuss school issues, including attendance. Encouraging regular attendance will be prioritised in the coming weeks and months.

4.1.7 Schools have been provided with clear guidance from the City Council and Public Health about reporting confirmed cases of Covid-19 in their settings. In accordance with national guidance, schools who have encountered an outbreak will, with advice from Public Health, consider reintroducing control measures such as additional testing, face coverings in communal areas or limiting parental attendance at the setting.

4.1.8 The Covid-19 vaccination programme for children aged 12-15 has begun and officers from Education and Skills have been working with NHS colleagues to support schools with this programme. A risk assessment template has been provided to schools and BCC has arranged two webinars for schools on the vaccination programme with NHS colleagues.

School improvement

4.1.9 The City Council recently awarded the contract for school improvement to the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP).

4.1.10 BEP held its annual conference for Birmingham school leaders on 4th October 2021, focusing on the quality of school governance, working with local maths hubs and science learning partnerships, effective Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, and the role and remit of new Teaching School Hubs. There was also an update from Ofsted's Senior HMI for the West Midlands and plenty of opportunities to share best practice from across the city's schools.

4.1.11 BEP's key priorities in delivering the contract are centered around improving standards at the end of the primary phase and developing a cadre of leaders to drive progress.

Schools causing financial concern

4.1.12 Officers are continuing to support and challenge schools who are in financial difficulties. Improvements are beginning to be seen, and data reported to Schools Forum indicated that the number of local authority (LA) maintained schools in deficit has decreased and is now 28 (11.9% of the total number of LA maintained schools). The cumulative value of deficits has decreased by £2.401m to £6.323m.

4.1.13 Early indications are that the pandemic has led to a reduction in expenditure on items such as exam fees, premises, and utilities, which has led to larger underspends being incurred than in previous years. Schools have also been working with the Council's Schools Financial Service to focus on their financial management responsibilities to ensure balanced budgets.

4.1.14 This will remain a focus for activity over the remainder of the academic year.

Anti-racism work

- 4.1.15 School workshops have taken place with brap (Birmingham Race Action Partnership) to explore what it means to be anti-racist in Britain today and what is involved in offering an anti-racist education to children and young people.
- 4.1.16 The ongoing offer from brap from September 2021 is 'Education is the Common Wealth', to support understanding and appreciation of Commonwealth citizenship in Birmingham. We are continuing to research the impact of this work with schools and the University of Birmingham.

Commonwealth Games schools programme

- 4.1.17 Schools were provided with information about the Commonwealth Games education programme before the summer break and a presentation was delivered at the recent Birmingham Education Partnership conference. Primary schools have also been provided with information on how to arrange a visit to their school by Perry, the Birmingham 2022 mascot.
- 4.1.18 Pupils from a number of Birmingham schools were invited to be flagbearers at the launch of the Queen's Baton Relay which took place at Buckingham Palace on 7th October 2021. Student ambassadors from Prince Albert High School visited Alexander Stadium as part of the QBR launch to watch the Queen deliver her message and were interviewed by the BBC.

Summer holiday activities

- 4.1.19 Birmingham Holiday Activities 2021 programme 'Bring it on Brum' sought to address holiday hunger, inactivity, isolation and learning loss, by children:
- Having access to safe, non-stigmatising places to go for positive activity
 - Eating more healthily over the school holidays
 - Spend time with friends and being more active during the school holidays
 - Taking part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing along with their wider education attainment
 - Being safe and not socially isolated
 - Being ready to return to school, college or to move on to work
 - Supported with healthy recipes and cooking on a budget
 - Be signposted and supported (where required) to local early help/family services

- Have the opportunity to continue participating in sport and physical activity beyond the holidays.

4.1.20 Across the city, a whole host of activities took place over the summer holidays in schools, leisure centres, youth clubs, community venues and parks to ensure that children, young people (and their parents) had fulfilling, active, fun-filled and healthy school holidays. Activities included indoor and outdoor games, cookery skills, arts and crafts, sports, fitness and dance, health and wellbeing; quizzes, park activities and nature trails.

4.1.21 243 providers delivered provision across 278 sites in Birmingham. Over 30,000 children participated, 70% of whom were eligible for free school meals and 78% were from disadvantaged households. Over 365,000 meals were provided as part of the programme, ensuring children had warm, nutritious food during the holidays.

4.1.22 The success of the programme is still being evaluated and will be built on for activities during the Christmas holidays.

Virtual Schools

4.1.23 In July 2021, DfE announced an extension of the role of the Virtual School Head. The Virtual School Head role for children with a social worker is a strategic leadership responsibility and sits within BCC's Education and Skills Directorate.

4.1.24 Virtual School Heads are now strategic leaders who champion the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. This means that they will help to:

- make visible the disadvantages that children with a social worker can experience, enhancing partnerships between education settings and local authorities to help all agencies hold high aspirations for these children.
- promote practice that supports children's engagement in education, recognising that attending an education setting can be an important factor in helping to keep children safe from harm.
- level up children's outcomes and narrow the attainment gap so every child can reach their potential. This will include helping to make sure that children with a social worker benefit from support to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

4.1.25 Virtual School Heads are not being asked to work with individual children and their families, respond to requests from parents or carers to offer individual advice, intervention or support, or take responsibility for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who do not require or need a social worker.

- 4.1.26 To enable coordination and strengthen partnership, Birmingham's Virtual School Headteacher will be developing a strategic board with governance to achieve the new duties. Birmingham's Virtual School recently bid successfully to join two national DfE pilots. The first is developing a model of success for the use of Pupil Premium for Post 16 young people to secure a successful education pathway. The second is a family reading pilot to improve reading progress measures in Years 5 and 6.

4.2 Jobs and Skills

Jobs and Skills Taskforce

- 4.2.1 The Employment and Skills Service is supporting the development of the Council's Covid-19 Economic Strategy Taskforce Action Plan. The Plan will identify emerging evidence and actions for the Council and partners across the city, to tackle unemployment both in the context of Covid-19 and in areas with historically high levels of unemployment and claimant counts. These proposed actions are currently being developed.
- 4.2.2 Over the next 18-24 months, partners will share progress on ongoing actions through day-to-day joint working with the Council, as well as developing new actions jointly.
- 4.2.3 Actions will focus on those groups most in need of support. These include young people aged 18-24, who have seen the fastest rise in claimant numbers locally during the pandemic (76%), as well as other disproportionately impacted groups such as Black, Asian and minority ethnic workers, lower skilled/income occupations and temporary/casual workers.
- 4.2.4 The recently published 'Breaking Down Barriers' report explores youth unemployment in Birmingham in the context of Covid-19, as well as the broader impact of the pandemic on young people's physical and mental health, financial status and opportunities. The report sets out ten recommendations with clearly identified actions to improve the quality and visibility of the support offer across the Council.
- 4.2.5 As part of the Taskforce Delivery Plan we are commencing delivery of recommendations arising from the report, including:
- working in partnership e.g. with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) and local community organisations on information portal options for jobs and skills and work experience.
 - linking to the GBSLEP team, who have gained initial funds to create a local youth employment wage subsidy programme which will consist of developed learning from the Kickstart model.

- 4.2.6 We are also exploring options with new providers bringing innovation in other parts of the country for curriculum-based careers platforms that are designed with industry leads for earlier careers content in schools and employer-links that go right through the education stages to jobs.
- 4.2.7 Immediate taskforce actions include:
- Jobs Fairs: To provide immediate support, the Employment and Skills Service is working with West Midlands Combined Authority and Jobcentre Plus to deliver a regional scale Birmingham Jobs Fair for all Birmingham residents on 2nd November. Generously hosted by Aston Villa FC, the fair will host 50 employers/training providers. The service will provide workshops and help surgeries to support a target of 1000 residents on the day, enabling 500 to progress (job/training etc) as a result of attending.
 - Employer partnerships expansion: Moving focus from small-scale frontline delivery for over-25s (World of Work Project) to prioritise building employer partnerships, forging links with the Council's capital development and supply chain partners to link all the jobs created to local communities.
- 4.2.8 We already have excellent working arrangements in place with employers who are linked to the Council due to planning and development opportunities and we use our sector knowledge to lead and develop jobs and skills commitments. We also work with providers to monitor jobs created and whether local people gained them. In 2019 this resulted in around 700 jobs successfully gained by local people. Prior to this work, construction teams would often be brought in by contractors from other areas and local people did not gain access to the vacancies.
- 4.2.9 We are also working on a plan with Procurement colleagues to provide the same driving force to the rest of the Council's supply chain, to ensure that unemployment residents are linked in with new job opportunities.
- 4.2.10 The Employment and Skills Service continues to support the Council's role as a partner in the Birmingham Anchor Network. Current projects include achieving more inclusive and community-based recruitment into public sector roles. This is as part of the work by the Integrated Care Services (previously the Strategic Transformation Partnership), a collaboration of NHS Trusts and Social Care providers which is moving apace with Birmingham and Solihull Councils providing the area link for community-based organisations to be part of a delivery framework.
- 4.2.11 University Hospital Birmingham are driving this exciting systems-change work which will see removal of unnecessary recruitment barriers such as qualification levels and previous NHS experience, and truly allow residents

with transferable experience and skills to apply via local supported routes. This will be launched in November with training and job recruitment in early 2022. Adult Social Care are commencing involvement in a similar working group with other authorities later this month.

4.2.12 The directorate is working with the CWG Jobs and Skills Academy to promote training pathways alongside the Volunteer programme - this includes links to the Youth Programme and the focussed NEET support/Functional Skills delivery for 17-year olds (joint development work with the 14–19 Tracking Service).

4.2.13 We are also linking to the CWG cultural programme team to provide an offer of advice and support to the array of arts and events companies involved. The CWG team are running a volunteer programme around the Culture programme, and the providers will be encouraged to provide legacy via links to business start-up (referrals to Library of Birmingham team) and job creation/traineeships with advice from Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Apprenticeship Hub.

Youth Employment

Kickstart

4.2.14 As part of the national Kickstart programme for unemployed 16-14 year olds, the Council has pledged to deliver 50 placements for young people in Birmingham. Placements will last for six months, and include a salary top-up from Minimum Wage to the Real Living Wage.

4.2.15 Eight placements have been offered or filled as part of this commitment so far, with a further 21 interviews to be held by 14th October. Remaining placement opportunities are either out to advert or in development.

4.2.16 We have applied to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to offer 100 more placements within the Council, and have a joint action plan with HR to achieve this.

4.2.17 We have also supported external businesses to bring forward 38 placements so far, with 70 more placement opportunities at the application stage.

Youth Promise Plus (YPP)

4.2.18 The Youth Promise Plus employment project has been extended to December 2023. The project funds the Council's Careers and Youth Services for young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), as part of a partnership with five other agencies. The partnership provides routes to employment, education and training for young people, linking in with mentoring, training and work experience opportunities.

4.2.19 YPP engaged just over 700 unemployed/NEET young people into support from January-June 2021, with around 300 young people moving into

employment/ education or training. This is strong performance for this point in the year.

Youth Hubs

- 4.2.20 We have supported Jobcentre Plus to open a city-wide network of Youth Hubs, as well as the rapid development of a central Hub at Library of Birmingham. The central hub is delivered by Jobcentre Plus and the Employment and Skills Team alongside project partners including the Prince's Trust.
- 4.2.21 Officers attended a Ministerial Round Table with Mimms Davies MP in October 2021, to share learning and best practice. The target is to support 200 young people per week by December 2021, through the provision of weekly events and support workshops in a friendly and dynamic environment. Initial feedback from young people accessing Youth Hubs has been positive.

Birmingham Careers Service

- 4.2.22 Birmingham Careers Service (BCS) delivers an impartial careers information advice and guidance service for young people who are aged 16-19. The service also delivers a traded service for schools who wish to purchase a guidance service for their students and plays a major role in the delivery of the Youth Promise Plus project.
- 4.2.23 Over spring and summer 2021, 1513 careers guidance interviews and careers plans were produced from Year 11 referrals within our traded schools. Over 5,709 students aged 16-18 have had impartial careers advice given on a one to one basis during 2021 so far.
- 4.2.24 Birmingham Careers Service has recommenced face to face in person delivery of impartial careers information advice and guidance following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. The development of digital and agile routes for support will continue, including the website, webinars, Microsoft Teams sessions, and social media channels.
- 4.2.25 In response to the increasing demand for services and new challenges around NEETS and youth unemployment, we have revised our public service delivery. We now offer a drop-in service from three main locations in the city (including an increased presence of three days a week at the Library of Birmingham) plus the Factory & Lighthouse Youth centres. Delivery via appointment basis for young people is available at 14 other locations across the city.
- 4.2.26 We have seen an increased demand for our impartial careers' guidance service from 16-19-year-old NEETS. Despite this, all referrals of young people are allocated an individual careers adviser within four days, with engagement commencing in line with a young person's individual needs.
- 4.2.27 There is also an ever-increasing interest and demand for the Careers Information and Guidance (CIAG) traded service from schools, colleges and

learning providers across Birmingham recognising the BCS brand stands for quality, independence and impartiality. We currently trade with 30 mainstream or special schools offering a careers guidance service in line with what the institutions require from us to meet the needs of their pupils. Development of the digital service will also increase both the volume of and geographical reach within the market.

- 4.2.28 Throughout the pandemic, BCS maintained contact with all schools, encouraging the referral of all Year 11, 12 and 13 pupils who are at risk of becoming NEET. This will assist in managing resources appropriately and responding correctly to this key time of year as young people are starting their next destinations after leaving school and college. Monitoring against key performance indicators around NEET, Not Knowns and starter information is crucial and in place.
- 4.2.29 BCS is the major contributing service to reducing the 16-18-year-old NEET figures as a result of the statutory requirements it discharges on behalf of BCC around enabling assisting and supporting young people to enter into employment, education or training.

14-19 Participation and Skills Team

- 4.2.30 14-19 Participation and Skills Team are responsible for reporting on statutory duties for young people's participation through the Education Act 1996, Education and Skills Act 2008 and Children and Families Act 2014.
- 4.2.31 The cohort size of 16-18-year olds in Birmingham is 31,018 young people. This is approximately 1,600 more young people than last year, and cohort size is will continue to increase in future years.
- 4.2.32 The 14-19 Participation and Skills Team are currently in the business-critical element for September Guarantee and Annual Participation Survey. These are the reporting monthly periods that the DfE publish on an annual basis around participation, NEET and Not Known young people 16-18 years and up to 25 with an education health and care plan (EHCP).

September Guarantee

- 4.2.33 September Guarantee monitoring recorded that 91.8% of young people in Years 12 and 13 in Birmingham had received an offer to participate in education or employment with training. This equates to 97% of young people in Year 12 and 85% of young people in Year 13. To date this year, 92% of the combined cohort have offers to participate from September 2021 which exceeds the final combined position last year.
- 4.2.34 98% of Year 11s into Year 12s have offers recorded. There are more offers recorded per person than in previous years on the NCCIS (National Client

Caseload Information System) reporting system, also meeting and exceeding the national average from previous years.

- 4.2.35 88% of Year 12s into Year 12s have offers recorded. This is again more offers recorded per person than in previous years on the NCCIS (National Client Caseload Information System) reporting system. The aspiration is to close the gap with the national average of 93%, and work is being undertaken to record as many offers as possible.

Annual Participation Survey (APS)

- 4.2.36 Information on enrolments has been requested from General Further Education colleges earlier than in previous years to test the market to see if it would reduce the number of young people whose participation status is currently not known. This is a new stage in the APS cycle.
- 4.2.37 As a result, for the first time in over a decade the percentage of young people whose participation status is 'not known' has reduced from 65-70% down to 20.05%. Whilst this still leaves Birmingham in the bottom reporting quintile with the DfE around its statutory duties, it has demonstrated that education settings are gathering information on offers and conversion sooner than in previous years. Through established relationships with local authority colleagues, providers are sharing information in a more timely manner which ultimately reduces the volume of not known young people and supports the wider safeguarding agenda.
- 4.2.38 Earlier reporting has also supported early identification of those young people at risk of disengaging, and Birmingham Careers Service have early intervention strategies in place to support the impartial advice and guidance on the local offers to raise participation.
- 4.2.39 NEET is currently below the national average and in the previous year plateaus out between 2.5-3% of the overall cohort.
- 4.2.40 This year is the first time that the Year 13 'Not Known' figure has been below the Year 12 figure in over a decade. This could be because of the lessons learnt from College Collaboration Fund projects (funded projects to provide educational providers with additional one-off funding to improve data collection and share best practice and providers working more closely with the LA). Other contributing factors may include provider dialogue to concentrate more resource to support 'Not Known' young people, and the use of enrolment data to support recording young people on apprenticeship programmes.
- 4.2.41 Data capture is strengthening across the 14-19 team with internal and external partners.
- 4.2.42 The below figure shows the position as at 6th October (all figures are subject to change, awaiting confirmation from the DfE).

Summary of NCCIS Cohort Years 12 and 13 by Participation, NEET and Not Known Status							
Date Run: 06/10/2021							
	NEET		Participating		Not Known		Cohort
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Yr12	149	0.97%	12006	78.18%	3174	20.67%	15357
Yr13	371	2.37%	12250	78.10%	3051	19.45%	15686
Total	520	1.68%	24256	78.14%	6225	20.05%	31043

- 4.2.43 The 14-19 Participation and Skills Team are also working with existing Post-16 delivery providers to meet the provision gaps in the city – e.g. expand the hospitality offer and other sector areas in readiness for CWG.

Birmingham Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund

- 4.2.44 The apprenticeship levy is payable by employers with an annual pay bill of more than £3 million at a rate of 0.5%. As a levy-paying employer, the City Council can gift up to 25% of its annual levy fund to small and medium businesses and non-levy paying schools to pay for the training and assessment costs of an apprenticeship.
- 4.2.45 This fund will be launched in October and Birmingham City Council will give around £700,000 worth of unused apprenticeship levy funds to help fund apprenticeships and support businesses, as well as support employers to pay for immediate apprenticeship training costs.
- 4.2.46 The original plan was to focus on the council's supply chain, voluntary, community and social suppliers and schools. However, as the pandemic has had such a huge impact on the city's core economy, including previously thriving leisure, retail and hospitality providers, as well as our creative sector, transport providers and some manufacturing sectors, there has been a change of focus.
- 4.2.47 The Council's revised aims for gifting the levy are therefore:
- To create apprenticeship opportunities in known skills shortage areas, such as the Health & Social Care sector, Engineering and Digital and Creative Sectors.
 - To support smaller employers across the city and wider conurbation to recover and reskill/diversify following the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic with apprenticeships targeted at Birmingham residents.

- 4.2.48 The Council's Employment and Skills team is working in partnership with Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's Skills and Apprenticeship Hub to deliver the scheme.

Birmingham and Solihull Redundancy Taskforce

- 4.2.49 BCC currently Chairs this multi-partner group, which aims to reduce the impact of redundancy by promoting joined-up effective support to employers and employees across the Birmingham and Solihull areas. This is achieved by confidential sharing of information about companies where there is a risk of redundancy, or redundancies have been reported to Jobcentre Plus.
- 4.2.50 The group also shares latest research and economic data to inform actions and uses partnership working to remove obstacles to delivery and find solutions to problems/ technical queries as well as producing targeted public information and fostering mainstreaming and dissemination. The group has created an information leaflet promoting support offered at the end of furlough which is available for all the partnership to use and promote.

4.3 Youth Service

- 4.3.1 Birmingham Youth Service are working closely with the Commonwealth Games team to develop a menu of opportunities in local communities for young people to be fully engaged in the games. This includes creating local youth hubs in youth centres to make the games accessible and inclusive to young people.
- 4.3.2 Birmingham Youth Service are delivering two externally funded programmes that address the increasing issue around youth violence. The one is around young people as peer researchers, change makers and is focussed on social action, targeting 582 young people. The second externally funded programme will develop a new approach to working with young people around youth violence, including a new mentoring toolkit.
- 4.3.3 From April to September 2021 there have been 32,000 attendances at our youth projects and we have had meaningful contact with over 3,000 individual young people aged between 11–19 years old.
- 4.3.4 Birmingham Youth Service also delivered on the Healthy Activities Programme 'Bring It On Brum' which focused on healthy eating and ensuring young people had access to healthy food, as well as physical activity and an enrichment programme. This proved to be a resounding success.
- 4.3.5 Young people have been actively involved in supporting Public Health in the development of their initiatives, including the recruitment of BCC senior officers, the development of a serious youth violence strategy and redevelopment programmes. The service is working hard to ensure that the

young people's voice is fully represented in some of the major initiatives in the city.

4.4 Birmingham Adult Education Service (BAES)

- 4.4.1 Since September 2021, there have been 10,500 enrolments in BAES courses. This is 4,600 more enrolments than at the same time last year. This is the result of BAES commitment to supporting the city recovery through an intense learning campaign.
- 4.4.2 Learner Enrolments in the academic years 2019-20 and 2020-21 decreased due to the pandemic. However, the service has seen a strong enrolment trends in English (1884 enrolments), Maths (2723 enrolments), Digital (1111 enrolments), SEND (261 enrolments) and Health and Social care (620 enrolments). The current enrolment numbers as at October 2021 match the enrolments achieved in October 2017-18. This has been possible through the individual support that our learners received through the pandemic year, which helped them achieve and progress into the next level for this year. We have recruited 48% more new learners than last year.
- 4.4.3 Our Health and Social care provision has attracted more learners than 2018-19. The majority of the current enrolments (450) are in Level 2 and Level 3 courses. These include our Healthcare Support - Level 3 Diploma, Understanding Autism and Understanding Mental Health at Level 3 and Working in the Health Care Sector Level 2 amongst others. These courses have a high rate of employment outcomes and are valued by learners who are seeking employment or looking to change career as a result of the pandemic.
- 4.4.4 During the pandemic the Service launched the Route to Work programme (2020/21 academic year year) with more than 1,000 enrolments. This programme is aimed at learners looking for work, to complement the skills they are learning in a vocational course, English, Digital, Maths or ESOL. The programme is now open to members of the public and enrolments are expected to reach 2,000 by the end of this year.
- 4.4.5 BAES will run events and workshops related to the 'Time to Be Bold' Campaign and the CWG Culture programme starting in November and leading up to the games.
- 4.4.6 BAES has supported the CWG volunteering programme, running information sessions in collaboration with CWG and WMCA between May and July 2021 in Birmingham. Dudley Adult Learning and Wolverhampton Adult Education also offer these sessions, with Birmingham leading their organisation. BAES ran courses in Volunteering, workshops with a volunteering theme and "Interview Preparation for The Commonwealth Games Volunteering Opportunities" workshops. These programmes attracted approximately 200

enrolments between May and July 2021, and we expect a further 200 potential enrolments between October 2021 and May 2022.

- 4.4.7 To support the city's cultural recovery from Covid-19, BAES has reviewed its arts and culture programme and is currently offering a variety of arts and culture courses taking place in Adult Education centres across the city, with a potential to attract over 250 enrolments.
- 4.4.8 BAES will also offer a festival of languages and culture, titled 'Cultural Exchanges' that will take place during December 2021 at the Library of Birmingham (Brasshouse Centre). We expect a participation of over 500 learners in these cultural exchanges.
- 4.4.9 BAES is running a number of Sector-Based Work Academy Programmes in the Green sector, construction, digital marketing and logistics.
- 4.4.10 Finally, BAES will be leading on the roll out of the Digital Inclusion plan for Birmingham in partnership with stakeholders with public, private and voluntary sector (strategy and funding approved by Cabinet in Sept 2021). The delivery team is under recruitment and activity is set for January 2022 start. The launch event takes place on 30th November 2021.

4.5 Library Services

Library of Birmingham

- 4.5.1 September saw the first full calendar month of full library opening hours, plus access to all services throughout the building including public terraces. Visitor figures totalled 46,000 for the month which represents a return to pre-Covid numbers.
- 4.5.2 The Volunteer Selection Centre for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games is operating at the Library of Birmingham from September until the end of February 2022. It is open 6 days a week (Mon-Sat) with around 400-500 people visiting each day. It is expected that over 25,000 people will visit in total.
- 4.5.3 A range of initiatives are currently being offered around jobs and skills support at the Library. These include:
 - British Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC)
 - Enterprise for Success – Business Start-up Support in partnership with GBSLEP
 - DWP Youth Hub – based on lower ground floor
 - Birmingham Careers Service – operating several times a week

- LoB Business learning team provide programme of workshops/events/activities in all libraries
- Access to employment related resources including; databases, workbooks, ESOL material

4.5.4 The Library is working in partnership with the University of Birmingham (UoB) and more than 40 local community organisations to deliver 'Everything to Everybody', a community engagement project to modernise Birmingham's Shakespeare library. The project team from LoB and UoB have secured extra funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to extend the project by an extra year, increasing the grant by £116,200 to a total of nearly £800,000.

4.5.5 Community engagement workshops and events have restarted with a blended approach combining physical and virtual attendees. On 9th October, during National Libraries Week, the first LoB-wide project Family Day will be delivered. It is a co-production between the 'Everything to Everybody' project team, staff from the Children's library, and local heritage engagement organisation Mrs History.

Community Libraries

4.5.6 The total visits to community libraries stood at 21,366 for the first week in October, which is a 41% reduction for the same week pre-Covid in 2019. Community libraries in the region (Dudley and Warwickshire) have similarly seen around 50/60% reduction in footfall compared to pre-Covid levels.

4.5.7 33 community libraries in Birmingham are currently operating with a full-service offer. The lease for the new Aston Library was signed in early October so work is now underway to open this library in November. Similarly, the library located at the Touchbase building in Selly Oak will reopen in December following facility alterations.

4.5.8 In September 2021, Community library memberships stood at 351,000, an increase of 3% on figures for September 2019.

4.5.9 3,122 children were recorded in community library buildings and through the online offer as a result of the Summer Reading Challenge 2021, a six week summer programme.

4.5.10 Birmingham's Business and Intellectual Property Centre is launching a neighbourhood-based offer at Sutton Coldfield Library on 21st October offering bespoke support for business start-ups. This will be rolled out to other community libraries such as Acocks Green, Handsworth and South Yardley.

4.5.11 Perry Common Library has partnered with Witton Lodge Community Association, meaning that the library is now able to open an extra day per week to offer health, wellbeing and employment advice.

- 4.5.12 Sutton Coldfield Library is working in partnership with the Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council to evaluate the Heritage and Archive collection, held within the Library, with a bespoke Archive project.
- 4.5.13 Community libraries are aiming to deliver 330 workshops in community libraries between 1st April 2021 and 31st December 2021 as part of the Step On Programme. Developed with the Birmingham Centre for Arts Therapies, this programme aims to support residents to be creative through tutor-led activities such as art, movement, music, drama and mindfulness. As at 30th September, workshops across the community library estate have attracted 1,100 participants. Weekly STEP-ON sessions have been developed at 8 community libraries.
- 4.5.14 Directly targeting the well-being of children and young people, 35 STARZ workshops consisting of dance, music, drama and play have taken place at 11 community libraries on Saturdays and during school holidays.

4.6 Culture

Cultural Sector Recovery

- 4.6.1 The viability and sustainability of Birmingham's cultural sector at large has been 'touch and go' over the last 18 months, primarily because the business models of our cultural organisations rely heavily on earned/trading income (which was decimated during the pandemic). This contrasts with many European city cultural organisations that are heavily subsidised by the state/local regional authority. Consequently, many of our arts organisations have depleted their general reserves which places them in a precarious situation in being able to meet any further challenges.
- 4.6.2 Culture Central, Birmingham's cultural sector's membership organisation, report that many cultural organisations have lost a lot of their previous cultural sector workforce and 50-70% of organisations are struggling to recruit to public facing and technical roles as well as more senior roles. These challenges have been compounded by complex changes to VAT and increased costs generally that make managing costs, admin and customer expectations more challenging.
- 4.6.3 Whilst the film & TV sector in the city managed to continue with some projects (despite Covid-19 restrictions), and have almost come back to pre-Covid levels of activity, freelancers and independent artists/creative practitioners were hit particularly hard (despite the Government Self-Employed Scheme). In a local survey, 71% said they would struggle to survive. Many freelancers and independent artists were forced to seek out other job opportunities and may be lost to the sector.

- 4.6.4 There is no doubt that the Government's Cultural Recovery Fund (successfully administered by Arts Council England) has been the significant factor in sustaining the majority of subsidised (and many private) cultural sector organisations across the city. The City Council has also played its part in maintaining its Support To The Arts grant funding and maintaining Birmingham Museums Service Contract fee. In addition, some funded cultural community activities were able to be delivered online, such as Birmingham Heritage Week and Black History Month.
- 4.6.5 The council's culture team have been directly supporting Culture Central's Cultural Recovery Unit, providing advice, guidance and support. This includes arranging webinars and seminars online on topics such as identifying financial support, HR, and legal and governance protection. The Head of Cultural Development is also a member of a regional authorities' Culture and Tourism Officer Group, coordinated by the WMCA, meeting regularly to share intelligence and advice to support the sector across the West Midlands.
- 4.6.6 During the last eighteen months, council officers processed and administered a wide range of different Government funding streams, many supporting the cultural sector. These include Business Rates Relief, Contract Supplier Relief and funding from Reopening High Streets Safely Fund and the current Welcome Back Fund (which have enabled delivery of cultural activity to bring back customers/visitors in town centres and high streets across the city). However, many support packages such as the Job Retention (Furlough) Scheme are coming to an end and the third (and last) round of Cultural Relief Funding will only support those organisations at risk of collapse.
- 4.6.7 The impact of the pandemic has not gone away and, whilst cultural activity has restarted in earnest and venues are opening back up, organisations are reporting lower than usual ticket sales indicating potential issues with consumer confidence/ cost barriers. There is still caution and lack of confidence across certain audience demographics to return to events in person, especially indoor venues. Organisations continue to operate socially distanced performances with increased costs for Covid-19 measures which also has a negative impact on their income.
- 4.6.8 In comparison to pre-Covid, it is still too early to say what the downturn in audiences (and income) will be, and we don't yet know if there will be another resurgence of the pandemic/reintroduction of restrictions this winter. Therefore, it will be important to maintain the council's investment in our cultural sector to not only sustain a healthy cultural infrastructure to deliver a successful cultural programme for CWG's 2022 but also, to develop the cultural offer that is so important to the growth of the Tourism and Visitor Economy for the city in the longer term.
- 4.6.9 There is no doubt that our funded arts sector will be keen for the city to maintain its investment in their operation, as all of them will be reapplying to Arts Council England in 2022 to retain their National Portfolio Organisation status from 2023 - 2026.

- 4.6.10 While Local Authorities have been sighted on a Heads of Terms for the Government's 'UK Shared Prosperity Fund', we have yet to understand how the Levelling Up agenda will manifest itself in Birmingham e.g. proposed investment in communities and places, including cultural facilities.
- 4.6.11 In the meantime, we await a decision about a joint regional authorities' submission led by Culture Central to the Community Renewal Fund (a Pilot scheme to UKSPF). If successful, this will result in circa £0.5m investment into two Cultural Action Zones (one in the South and another in the North of the city) to animate empty shop units, providing cultural activity in different spaces to attract visitors/shoppers and, provide development and skills training for creatives.

Commonwealth Games 2022 (CWG) Cultural Programme

- 4.6.12 The CWG's Organising Committee Cultural Programming Team are responsible for coordinating the commissioning and delivery of the CWG's Cultural Programme which will run from March 2022 to the end of the Games. This includes the £2m funding from BCC invested in the local Creative City Grants Programme
- 4.6.13 The cultural programme has now officially been branded as 'Birmingham 2022 Festival'. There will be a soft launch of the proposed programme in November 2021 with the main announcement coming in January 2022
- 4.6.14 The Cultural Programme team have established regular feedback meetings with senior city council members and officers to update on the main programme developments
- 4.6.15 The City Council's culture team is assisting the OC cultural programme team, advising on delivery and facilitating projects on the ground. The service also convenes a monthly internal officers event group to coordinate and process the myriad of events taking place across the city over the next twelve months.
- 4.6.16 The city council culture team is directly investing £100,000 in 2021-22 across ten independent Birmingham cultural organisations, for cultural projects that were developed in consultation with local communities
- 4.6.17 The City Council and CWG's Cultural Programme team have coinvested in a major international cultural project coming to Birmingham (Edington) on 28th October. This is being considered as a 'pilot' project for the CWG's cultural programme.

Birmingham Cultural Compact/Cultural Strategy

- 4.6.18 Due to the additional activity required to deliver the 2022 Commonwealth Games, and the unforeseen challenges for the cultural sector presented by the pandemic, the creation of a new Cultural Strategy for the city has been delayed. The further development of Birmingham's Cultural Compact has also been delayed, compounded by the lack of capacity within BCC and Compact partners to recruit a new independent chair for the Compact.

- 4.6.19 Funding was secured from Arts Council England to support the work of the Compact. One initiative, following on from the national Cultural Investment Enquiry, has been to co-commission a piece of work with Coventry City Council on investigating the feasibility of viable fiscal innovations for the cultural sector. A consultancy practice (BOP) was appointed in July and their findings will be presented in the New Year.
- 4.6.20 In addition, a brief to review the outcomes of the previous Cultural Strategy and consult with city partners to inform the framework of a new strategy will be commissioned in October. It is envisaged that 2022 will be the platform year to launch a new Cultural Strategy for the city.

4.7 Museums & Heritage

- 4.7.1 A draft refresh of Birmingham's Heritage Strategy has been consulted with the sector and awaits incorporation into a new Heritage Strategic Planning Document for the city – including the convening of a new Heritage and Conservation Panel for Birmingham
- 4.7.2 The council is recruiting a new Museums & Heritage officer to help monitor the museums contract, coordinate Birmingham's Heritage Group and lead on Public Art matters.
- 4.7.3 Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG) remains closed due to major rewiring works at Council House and Extension. Phase 1 of the 1885 wing is due to reopen in March 2022. Works will continue through to 2023.
- 4.7.4 BCC is applying for up to £5m from a Government MEND Fund scheme to enable infrastructure repairs and improvements to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. The decision on this funding will be announced in February 2022.
- 4.7.5 Thinktank Museum at Millennium Point celebrated its 20th Anniversary in September including the launch of a new 'Climate Change' Gallery and development area for young people.
- 4.7.6 Following a request from Sutton Coldfield District Council, BCC is in the process of handing over the District Council's civic regalia/silver from the city council's collection where it has been held under the custody and curation of Birmingham Museums Trust.
- 4.7.7 A 'Museum of Youth Culture' and new 'Museum of Birmingham Music' have been proposed as part of a new development taking place at Upper Trinity Street in Digbeth.
- 4.7.8 Work is progressing with Birmingham Museum Trust and The Science and Industry Museum Group on the vision and feasibility of a new museum for the city. Findings will be presented in Spring 2022.

4.8 Festivals and Cultural Events

- 4.8.1 Birmingham Weekender 2021 successfully took place over August Bank Holiday Weekend. Organised by Hippodrome Theatre's Festival team in partnership with Grand Central and Bullring. This was one of the first major public festival events taking place in the city since the end of Covid-19 restrictions.
- 4.8.2 Birmingham International Dance Festival (BIDF) 2020 finally took place both online in June 2021 and in live sites across the city in September. Planning for BIDF 2022 is already underway and the ambition is that this will be a transitional year for a new annual international festival as one of the cultural legacies from 2022.
- 4.8.3 Birmingham Heritage Week 2021 took place from 9th – 19th September. The festival, which coincides with the National Heritage Open Days, has grown exponentially since its inception in 2017 and is now a ten-day event.
- 4.8.4 Black History Month launched at Legacy Centre in Aston on 18th September 2021, followed by a launch online on 1st October. The organisers (Black Story Partnership) have coordinated a wide range of events and activities across the city. This year's launch marked a return to live events and featured inspiring speakers and creative performances, with many drawing on their and the wider community's experiences. The event was attended by a live audience and is also available to view online. As well as reflecting the city's diversity and heritage, this year's programme also reflects on the continued impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. Birmingham's Black heritage and its citizens' own stories also raised awareness of the challenges and the perceptions that have restricted their access to opportunities, progress and participation in our society.
- 4.8.5 Amal 'The Walk' is a large-scale puppet representation of a nine-year-old refugee girl walking across North Africa and Europe looking for her mother. This event to highlight the plight of migrants and refugees started in Turkey in July and has been making its way across North Africa and Europe coming to several UK cities including Birmingham (Erdington Town Centre) on 28th October, before culminating at the Manchester International Festival.
- 4.8.6 The World Reimagined is a national arts education project on the Transatlantic Slave Trade taking place with schools, businesses and communities across key cities including London, Bristol, Leeds, Swansea and Birmingham. This project will culminate in September 2022 with a trail of large globe sculptures in the city centre after the CWG's – coordinated by 'Wild in Art' who brought the previous painted animal sculpture trails to the city.
- 4.8.7 Birmingham Pride, which brought tens of thousands of people into the City over the event weekend of 25th-26th September 2021, was a resounding success and one of the most successful Pride events in history. A significant amount of money was also raised for charity, details of which will be released over the coming weeks.

4.9 Tourism

Birmingham Visitor Destination Plan

4.9.1 Birmingham City Council appointed a new Tourism Officer in April 2021.

4.9.2 In September 2021, the City Council held an internal roundtable with BCC officers on initial research findings, and discussed recommendations for next actions/proposed initiatives in the development of the Plan. Work is now taking place against the following initiatives:

- The commissioning of a feasibility study for a City Attractions Pass
- The creation of two business advice hubs, in the form of an Accessibility Tourism Portal and a Sustainable Tourism Portal
- The development of attractions workshops to develop local audiences and understand West Midlands Cultural Mapping data
- Re-engaging with coach operators, identifying and distributing the information and resources required for the travel trade to return to Birmingham after the pandemic and major construction works.
- Work with West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) to develop Familiarisation Trips, educating the travel trade on Birmingham's tourism, heritage and cultural offer.
- A JRR Tolkien Experience Scoping Project, supporting the University of Birmingham and Arts Council England in assessing the feasibility of a JRR Tolkien-inspired attraction or experience.

4.9.3 The next stage is stakeholder consultation, which will take place during October 2021. Consultation will consist of a minimum of ten 1-to-1 meetings with leading industry members, a focus group with BIDs and four focus groups with members of visitor economy businesses and heritage attractions.

4.9.4 Therefore, the presentation and wider consultation of the draft Visitor Destination Plan framework document has been put back to November 2021, with the final version due to be presented in January 2022.

Business and Tourism Programme

4.9.5 Following a lengthy procurement process, West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) is working with a number of marketing agencies to develop campaign strategies for domestic and international tourism markets. BCC will be asked for feedback on draft strategies, campaign creative and tactical delivery.

4.9.6 BCC attended the UKInbound Annual Convention in September to promote Birmingham and the Commonwealth Games to domestic and international travel buyers. Representatives from the Council will also be attending a CWG's Queens Baton Relay Regional Tourism summit at Birmingham Airport on the 8th October.

- 4.9.7 WMGC and the Council are developing a Commonwealth Games Visitor Map, working alongside partners in BCC, TfWM and the CWG Organising Committee. The map is due for publication in February/March 2022 in time for the Cultural Programme.

Appendix 1. SEND Update

1. Vulnerable Children and Families Portfolio Overview

- 1.1. Since the formation of the new Vulnerable Children and Families portfolio in August 2021, we have provided a number of briefings on current progress.
- 1.2. We are totally committed to transparency and ensuring our children, young people and their families are involved in the process of shaping much needed improvements in our services. We will be sharing regular updates on:
 - Progress that has been made as well as providing an update on areas where we have not made as much progress as we might have liked
 - ‘You Said, We Did’, giving an update on feedback we have received and what we have done about it
 - Information on opportunities for co-production or feedback so that we can hear from children and young people, families, schools and other stakeholders
- 1.3. Birmingham City Council and the Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) take the findings of the Local Area revisit extremely seriously, and are working hard to address all issues raised in order to deliver an improved service for families.
- 1.4. The journey towards turning around our SEND services will take time. Based on learning from our own improvement journey in children’s social care, and similar transformation programmes that have taken place in other local authorities, it will take several years until our services reach the level we aspire to for Birmingham’s children and families.
- 1.5. We will ensure that we have key milestones mapped out, and will be robustly monitoring these to ensure timely improvements are being made. To ensure that we provide some key improvements for our children and young people sooner, we will be focusing on ensuring priority improvements are closely monitored and sustained.
- 1.6. There is a clear need to understand the legacy of the past - but we also need to move forward to address pressing issues including: the backlog of reviews, recruitment of permanent staff against the backdrop of a national and regional shortage of skilled and experienced case workers, and the need to improve IT services. We also need to address the conception that Birmingham is currently not seen as a good place to work in SEND.

- 1.7. Nevertheless, we are seeking assurances and robustly questioning the plans that are being put in place, to ensure we can address all these and deliver an improved service.

2. Inspection Revisit and Immediate Next Steps

- 2.1. The SEND Local Area Inspection Revisit took place in May 2021 and identified that insufficient progress had been made by the local area in all but one of the thirteen areas of weakness identified.

- 2.2. As a result of the findings of the May 2021 revisit, the Department for Education (DfE) have appointed a Commissioner, John Coughlan, to hold the local area to account and work with us on the required SEND improvements.

- 2.3. One of the Commissioners first tasks is to write a report for the Education Minister, which will consider the Council's ability to ensure that SEND services will improve. It is anticipated that this will be completed by end of January 2022.

2.4. Accelerated Programme Plan

- 2.4.1. The DfE, in conjunction with NHS England, have also requested that the local area prepare an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP), which will have to demonstrate how the local area will resolve the 12 outstanding areas of significant weakness identified in the original inspection in 2018. The latest draft is attached as Appendix 2. The plan is a working document and will be continually revised.

- 2.4.2. The APP will be approved by the Improvement Board, which will be chaired by the DfE Commissioner.

- 2.4.3. The APP will have clear targets and milestones and will be regularly monitored by the Improvement Board in order to ensure that it is having the planned impact and improving the experience of children, young people and their families and improving outcomes.

- 2.4.4. The service area began work on the APP by holding four parent and carer events during August and September 2021. These were attended by a total of over 150 people, both in person and online. The events allowed parents and carers to feedback on their experience and express their feelings. We will include all this feedback in the APP and are grateful to the Parents and Carers Forum (PCF) for their help with these events.

- 2.4.5. Some issues which require more urgent attention are already being addressed. In particular, the restructure of the Special Educational Needs Assessments and Review Service (SENAR) operations team is being accelerated, and we are currently recruiting additional case workers to meet

demand. This will enable case work to be done more quickly and give greater access for parents and carers to individual officers who know their child well. This will also enable better communication between the service and schools.

2.5. Together We CAN!

- 2.5.1. A new improvement programme is being launched to deliver the actions in the APP. Following feedback from the SEND Youth Forum/RISE Youth Forum that they do not feel that the term 'SEND' represents them, the partnership has joined their campaign to replace its usage with Children with Additional Needs (CAN).
- 2.5.2. As a result, we will begin to use CAN in all appropriate situations including the Improvement programme. We will, however, continue to use SEND where it is currently required under the Code of Practice and as required by the DfE.
- 2.5.3. The name of our programme highlights the fact that improving the experiences of our children and young people with SEND and their families is a priority for all of us and something we all need to work together to deliver. It also emphasises our commitment to co-production, and to ensuring that the voice of children and young people and their families is at the heart of all we do.
- 2.5.4. We have heard strongly from parents and carers the message 'Nothing About Us Without Us', and we will commit to ensuring that every parent and child voice is heard, valued and informs our work.

2.6. Local Authority Progress Update

- 2.6.1. Since May 2021, the Council has been working on improving the Special Educational Needs Assessments and Review Service (SENAR). In September 2021, we asked families what the most important improvements they would like to see were.
- 2.6.2. This feedback is shown in the below table, alongside the action that we are taking in response.

You Said	We Did/ Are Doing
Improve communication: answer calls and emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A Head of SENAR Operations has been appointed to work alongside the current Head of Service to transform the SENAR service, by improving processes, increasing the service capacity and

You Said	We Did/ Are Doing
	<p>working more closely with families and professionals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruiting more staff to work in the SEND Service and carry out vital casework. I have been informed that recruitment of experienced staff in the current market is difficult the service have worked with a number of agencies. As a result, 22 out of the extra 30 posts agreed have been filled and most will start work in late October / early November when DBS and other checks are completed. There are still carrying a high number of vacancies at present, so we are recruiting both internally and externally to cover this. Until the new structure of SENAR is designed and approved most of the appointment will be of agency staff but we are considering permanent recruitment options. ▪ The service are working on a comprehensive communications plan to all young people, families and schools so they are clear on who to contact. This will information will be published as soon as it is finalised. ▪ The service has realigned all the interim staff to permanent senior case officers and team managers.
<p>We need a named, accessible plan co-ordinator for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The SENAR team are working in locality teams – North, South, East & West – with a clear management structure in each team. The area teams have been allocated schools and young people dependent upon postcodes. This will ensure that there is ownership of cases within the service. We will communicate this to families and education settings soon. ▪ Additional staff have been recruited (see above) ▪ The Parent Link service is aligned alongside our resolutions team to provide further support to parents and young people when they have an issue – the service are looking at how parents can use the service to find resolutions to their issues as quickly as possible. ▪ The business support structure has also been realigned to facilitate better support to the service, additional posts are being recruited into this area to ensure adequate support functions are in place.
<p>Professionals need better data, so that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The service is reviewing the case management system (NEXUS) to establish new more streamlined processes. A project is underway and

You Said	We Did/ Are Doing
errors happen less frequent	will conclude in April 2022. This will also include a parent portal and schools' portal.
Ensure that there is timely and appropriate provision and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The service is working through the internal process around reviews and assessment to ensure that we streamline the work to help us achieve 100% compliance with the timelines set in the SEND Code of Practice and have a more positive outcome for families and young people. ▪ The service are improving decision-making processes to ensure consistency of outcomes are managed by professionals and experts within the SEND service, working in partnership with Health and Social Care. Giving autonomy for smaller decisions back to the senior case workers who know the young person rather than everything being held up in a multi-agency panel.
We need coproduced fit for purpose EHCP plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The service have recruited an expert in the SEND Code of Practice to ensure that all staff are acting within the guidelines set within the code – this officer is building a comprehensive training programme for all current officers alongside an induction programme for all new starters.

2.7. Health (CCG) Progress Update

- 2.7.1. In Birmingham, healthcare services work together with partners to best support children, young people, adults and their families, and to improve health services for everyone across the city.
- 2.7.2. The feedback provided to health services from the September 2021 engagement exercise is provided in the below table, alongside the actions that are being taken in response.

You Said	We Did/ Are Doing
Waiting lists are too long for Community Therapy services and Autism Assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extra resources have been used to support with reducing all waiting lists ▪ Transformation work is taking place to support Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) services ▪ There is active involvement in progressing a whole system autism pathway ▪ Services are using virtual ways of assessing for autism and offering therapy appointments

You Said	We Did/ Are Doing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trialling a faster way of completing assessments for autism for children under 7 years ▪ Services are completing reviews of the children on the autism waiting lists ▪ All waiting lists are regularly monitored to try and make sure the plans are working ▪ The average waiting times for Speech and Language Therapies initial assessments have reduced from 24.1 weeks (March 2021) to 7.6 weeks (August 2021). ▪ The maximum waiting times for Speech and Language Therapies intervention have reduced from 128 weeks (March 2021) to 95 weeks (August 2021).
What support is available for families that are waiting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advice lines are available for families whilst on the waiting list for all therapy services ▪ Information advice and guidance is available online ▪ Linking with the iKnow project to make intervention / support packages available for families during their wait (link with Birmingham university) ▪ https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/childrens-healthcare/services/
We need better access to Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) support services. We need more support post diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Pre-Post Autism Diagnosis support offer is in development ▪ Health are working with the Communication and Autism Team (CAT) and a few mainstream primary schools in the city to pilot 'Autism in schools project'
Out of hours support for Mental Health crisis does not always meet the needs of Children and Young People with Learning Disabilities and Autism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forward Thinking Birmingham (FTB) offer 24/7 Mental Health crisis support to 0-25 year olds in Birmingham ▪ Reviewing how their out of hours Crisis provision supports people with Autism and Learning Disabilities ▪ Work is happening with partner agencies to ensure that all children and young people are supported well at the right time by staff who have the right knowledge and expertise ▪ During weekday hours (9-5) FTB teams have duty lines. The number to contact is 0300 300 0099.

You Said	We Did/ Are Doing
Invest more in MH support for parents and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in Mental Health Services has taken place and is ongoing NHS, voluntary and other services are working together to make sure investment leads to better outcomes for children, young people and adults in Birmingham and Solihull
<p>What is the update on health appointments and social distancing guidance?</p> <p>How much is virtual now and what can parents expect?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most Health providers in Birmingham are offering a mix of face to face and virtual or telephone appointments The type of appointment offered to a child or young person and their family is typically based clinical need, whether it is possible for it to be virtual and if it is safe for it to be face to face. Many providers still have a one visitor/parent/carer policy for appointments however; if this is not suitable it is often possible to request for others to attend by getting in touch ahead of time.

2.8. Birmingham Children's Trust Progress Update

- 2.8.1. Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT) have invited the Council and health partners into the new SEND Early Help Hub. As part of this Hub, professionals will signpost families for help and support, offer Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) advice, and support families to navigate the local offer.
- 2.8.2. The Early Help Hub is expected to open in November 2021.

3. Home to School Transport Service

- 3.1. The Home to School Transport Services provides a service to approximately 4,000 children every day across Birmingham. For the vast majority of our children and young people the service provided is good; however, we recognise that improvements are needed, and they are being progressed.
- 3.2. The oversight and input of all stakeholders, including children, young people, and families, is key to the improvement of services.
- 3.3. An update of current performance is set out in Appendix 3.

- 3.4. Members are aware that we are continuing to pilot 365 Response, an app that allows parents to make direct contact with the service. The Home To School Transport Service is conducting a wholesale data cleanse, as well as continuing to test the system and evaluate the pilot to ensure everyone's information is up to date before this new service is launched.
- 3.5. Earlier this year, a more robust system of compliance was introduced by the Council (using a revised contract) to compel transport providers to ensure that none of their drivers can drive with a positive DBS unless they have received clearance from our HR panel. For the avoidance of doubt, when we use the term 'positive DBS' this means that a driver may have committed an historic criminal offence.
- 3.6. Transport providers are also legally obliged (pursuant to the terms of the contract they have with us) to provide information in relation to their driver's DBS checks to the Council by way of an application for an identification badge which they must wear when operating Council contracts. In addition, on a monthly basis, operators are obliged under their contract to provide management information which includes details of their drivers/guides, their DBS status and details of routes they have operated on. This management information is reviewed by Council Officers to ensure compliance with the above requirements. Further on-site compliance visits take place where required and if any provider is found to be in breach of these requirements the contract can be suspended, in whole or in part, or terminated, depending on the severity of the non-compliance.
- 3.7. Earlier this academic year, we found that two of our contractors had not complied with their contractual obligations to alert the Council to the positive DBS of their drivers. This was discovered as a result of our routine compliance checks. It is on that basis that we have taken proactive action to terminate a contract with one provider and suspended a contract with another. The service area were able to replace these suppliers at short notice due to contingency plans that we have in place.
- 3.8. There is still more to do to get the service operating more effectively for our children and young people, but this is a much improved picture which has been aided by better communication between the operators, the service, schools and parents and carers.

SEND Improvement Programme

DRAFT Accelerated Progress Plan

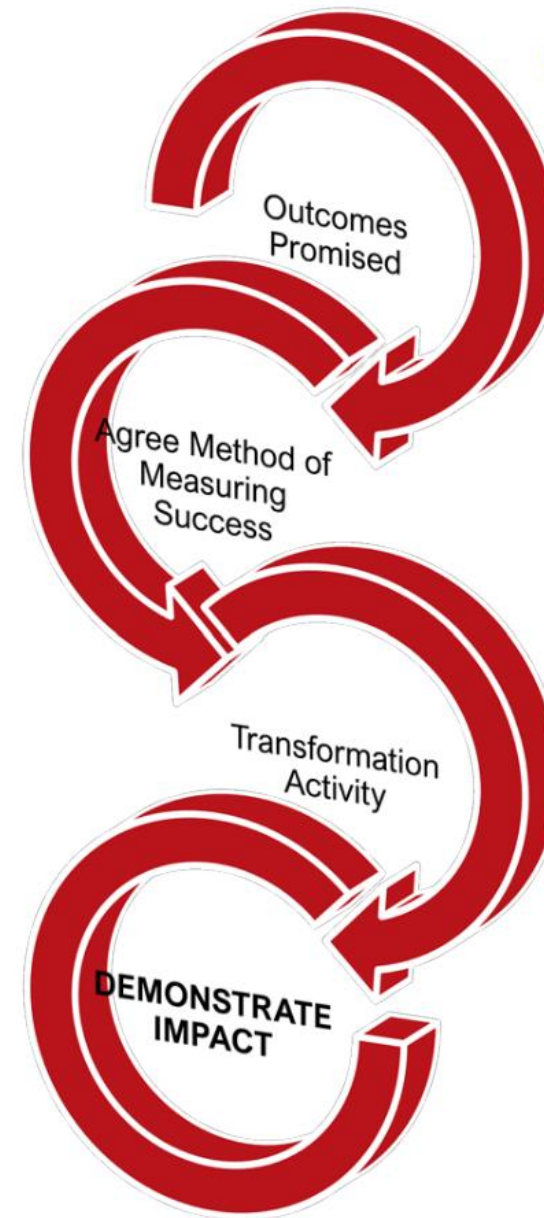


Introduction

- The focus of this presentation is to present the proposed methodology and put forward a proposal for how the SEND Improvement Programme (SIP) could be structured, managed and monitored. This in effect will be the Local Area's Accelerated Progress Plan.
- The Local Area accepts that insufficient progress has been made against 12 out of the 13 Areas of Significant Weakness identified in the 2018 Local Area SEND Inspection.
- This outcome was due to insufficient co-production, engagement and accountability since the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was approved in January 2019.
- The Local Area is committed to fully co-produce a new SEND Improvement Programme (SIP) based on identifying desired outcomes, which will be appropriately scrutinised by an Improvement Board chaired by the DfE appointed Commissioner.

Methodology

- The Local Area has identified 4 Objectives for CYP with SEND in Birmingham.
- As the Objectives are now agreed, the workplans will be aligned to be able to meet those objectives, and to measure the progress against achieving the desired benefits.
- Each Objective will have its own sponsor, project plans and benefits to be realised.
- The Programme will be held accountable by a multi-partnership Board who has the DfE Commissioner as chair.



Feedback received from young people (RISE Youth Forum)

We are Additional Needs,
not Special.
#additionalnotspecial

Prefer mini-assessments,
helps with preparation
and managing our anxiety

We would like support
with work experience.

We want tailored
support for exams

Provide support
on how to revise
for exams.

We need
alternative ways of
learning

Improve support for
anxiety and mental
health

We want professionals
to talk to each other

We need more awareness
in schools on what
“additional” means

Don't want to be
defined by my
additional need.

We want more
opportunities for extra-
curricular activities.

We are all individuals
with different needs
and abilities.

We would like the SEND
Improvement
Programme to be called
“Together we CAN”
(Children with Additional
Needs)

Feedback received from parents/carers

Have more opportunities for parents to meet professionals

Have a clearly explained process that we all understand

Be transparent on funding and ensure education settings provide the right support

Ensure that there is permanent staff working for our children

Provide coproduced fit for purpose EHCP plans

Provide genuine multi agency working

Speedy access to diagnosis and treatment

Ensure that there is timely and appropriate provision and support

Improve communication: answer calls and emails

Stop sending EHCPs to the wrong people

Appropriate social care respite and support

Apprenticeship for autism school leavers

Having a named, accessible plan co-ordinator

Reduce waiting times for services like S&L, OT, etc.

Invest more in MH support for parents and children

More specialist training for mainstream schools

Feedback received from education settings

We would like more of these reflective conversations to keep the momentum going

Need to ensure professionals understand their remit

The authority needs permanent staff

We need clarity on top-up funding for EHCPs

We need to keep SEND Support Provision Plans

We need interim emergency funding to be able to support pupils

Need to ensure that we decrease the number of children awaiting placements

Need better transition planning from one phase to the next.

Need a fair and transparent funding system

We need support, so that we reduce part-time timetables

Feedback received from the voluntary and community sector

We would like to be more involved

We need more support for 14-19 olds

Focus on Early Intervention

The processes for parents and professionals need to be clearer

We need more respite provision in Birmingham

Invest more in Art Therapy

Parents come to us when the professionals are not responsive

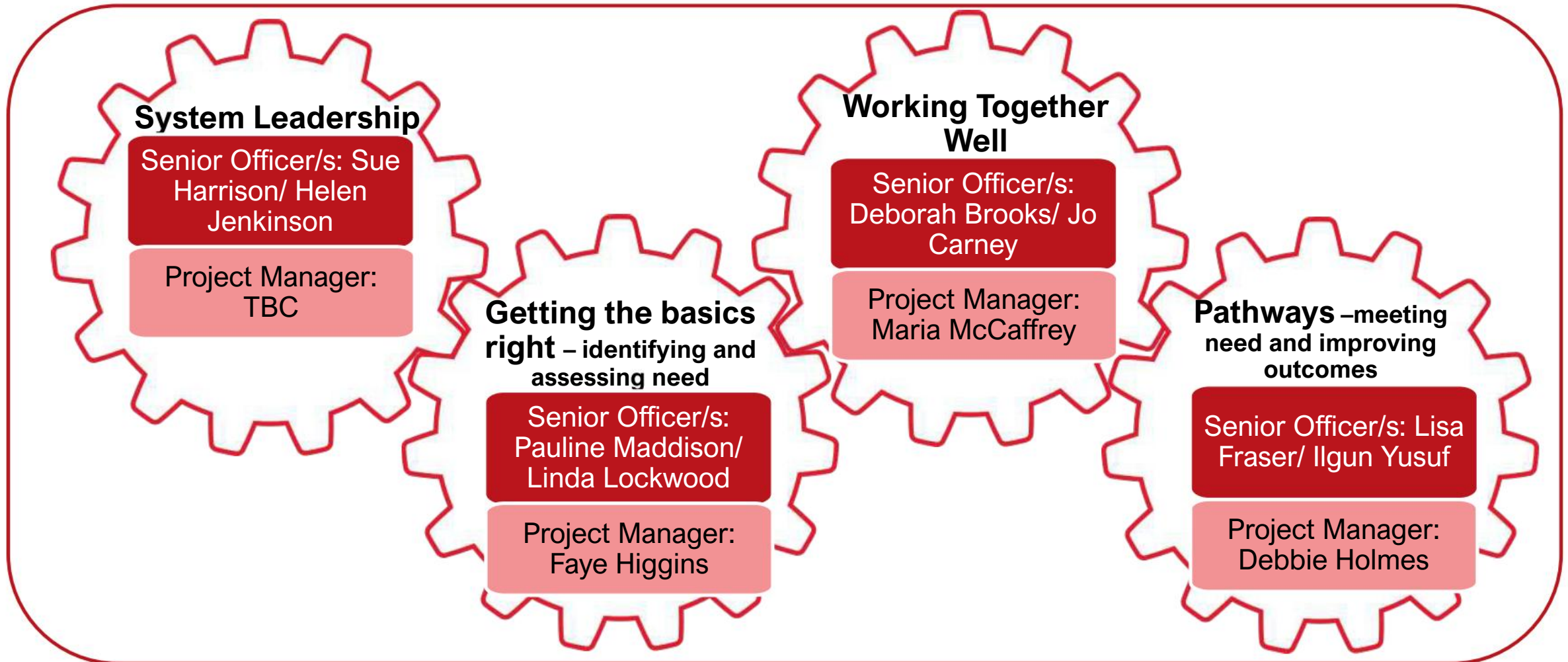
The process to get support needs to be shorter

Support education settings to understand needs better

Proposed Objectives and Projects

Theme	Area of Significant Weakness	Improvement Projects at a glance
System Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy Inter-agency working Local Offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the SEND Strategy Develop a Joint Working Protocol with Standard Operating Procedures across the partnership Develop and Implement a Learning and Development Strategy across the partnership Improve the Local Offer Website Improve Data Management
Getting the basics right – identifying and assessing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination of Assessments Quality of EHCPs Waiting Times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a sustainable SENAR service Improve the EHNCA and Annual Review Processes Upgrade the Case Management System Agree a Quality Assurance Framework Improve waiting times for Therapies and Neuro-Developmental Pathways
Working Together Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-Production Parental Engagement Parental Satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a co-production and engagement framework and plan Set up a Voluntary Sector Partnership Group Develop and implement a communications strategy Launch Parent Portal as part of the SENAR Case management System Upgrade Agree and sign a Partnership Compact Review and Strengthen the role of SENDIASS
Pathways – meeting need and improving outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Progress Attendance and Exclusions Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Inclusion Strategy Deliver the Developing Local Provision project Review the Children Out of School Process for CYPs with EHCPs Review the allocation of the HNB 14-19 Review of Employment Pathways for YP with SEND Review of Internal Processes to ensure that CYPs pathways are correctly tracked

Objectives



Governance



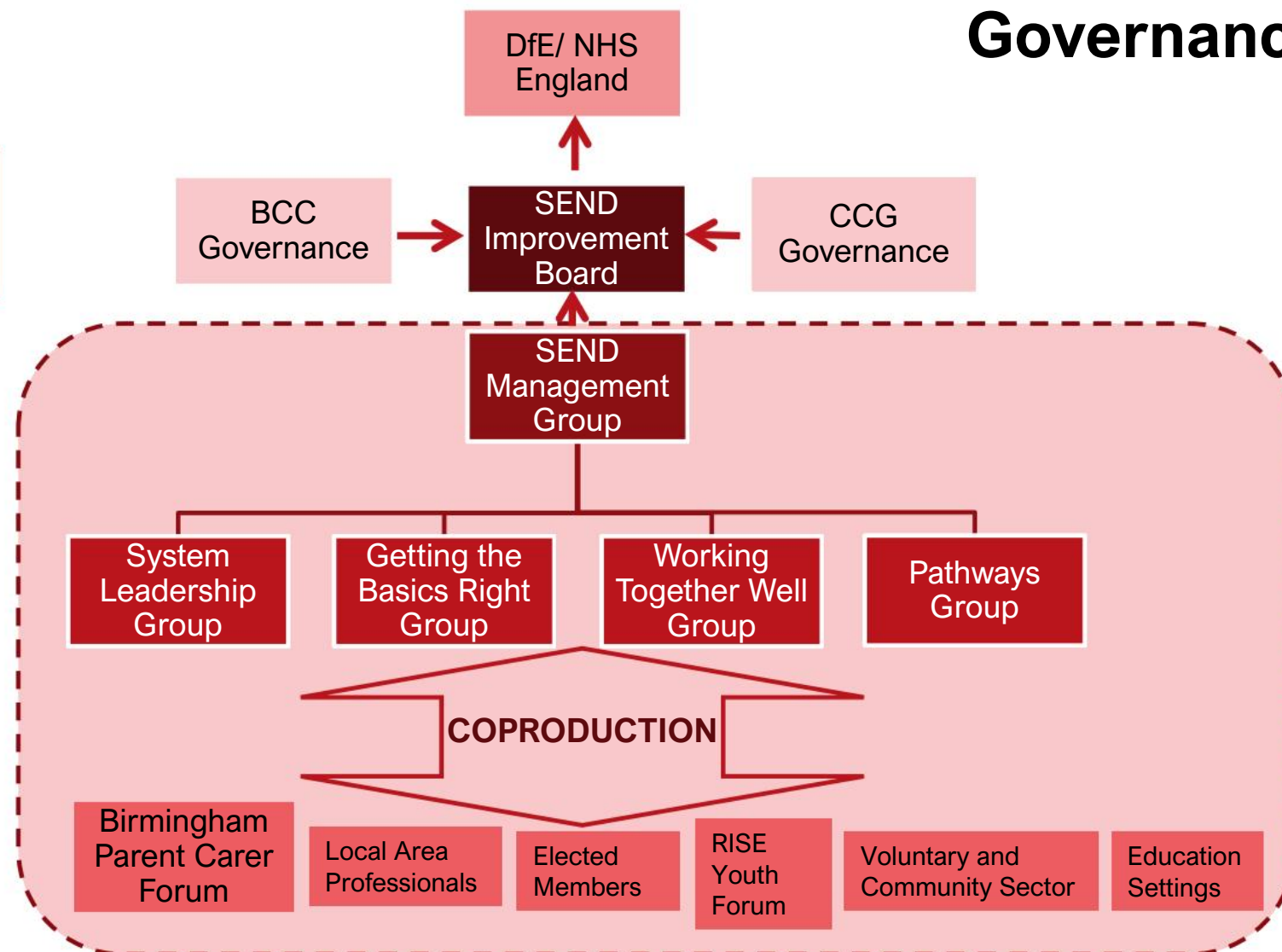
**Birmingham
RISE Youth
Forum**



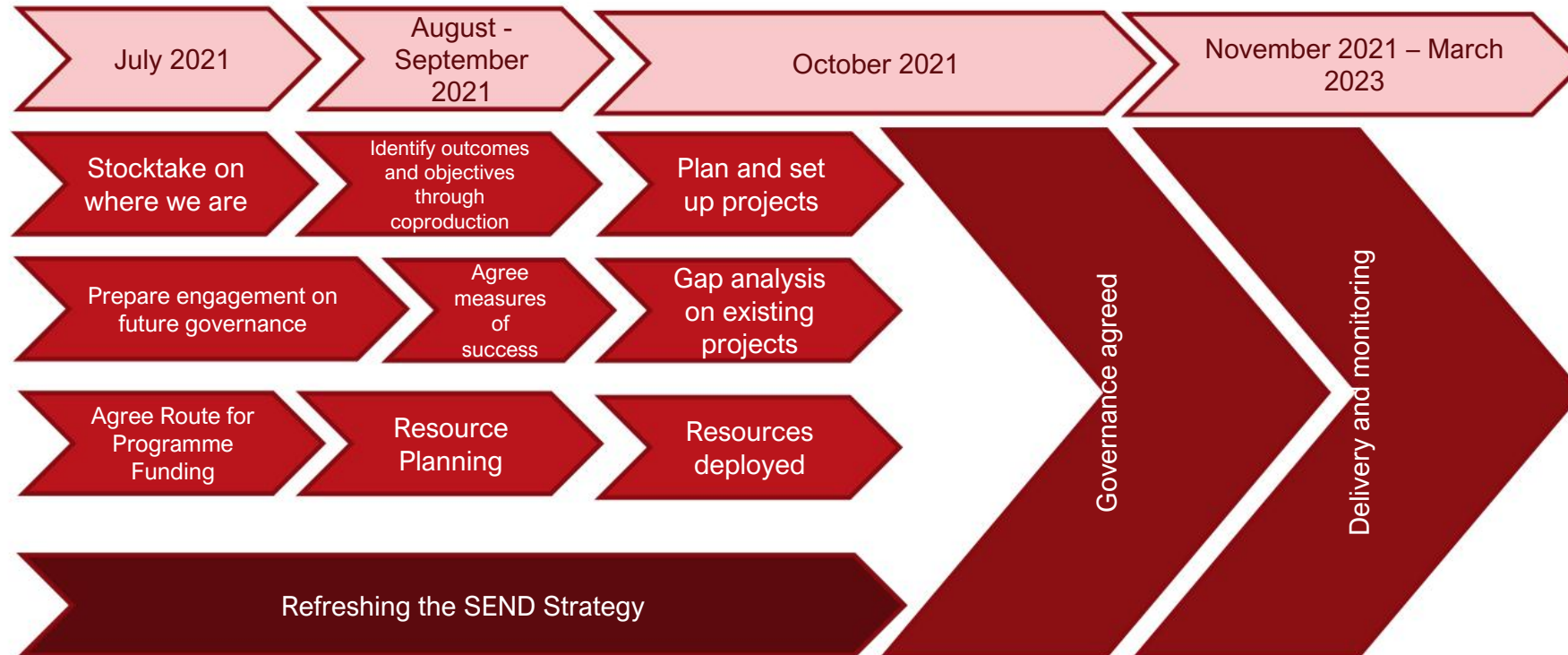
BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST



Birmingham and Solihull
Clinical Commissioning Group



Timescales



Objectives/ Projects/ Key Measures of Success

Objective 1 - System Leadership (SEND Strategy, Inter-agency Working, Local Offer)

Project	Responsible officers	By When
Develop a new SEND Strategy	AD Commissioning	30 Aug 2022
Develop a Joint Working Protocol with Standard Operating Procedures across the partnership	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing/ Director of Nursing and Quality/ Director of Practice	1 Mar 2022
Develop and Implement a Learning and Development Strategy across the partnership	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing/ Director of Nursing and Quality/ Director of Practice/ HR&OD Departments	1 September 2022
Develop a Workforce Strategy	Director of Education and Skills	1 April 2022
Improve the Local Offer Website	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing/ Director of Nursing and Quality	31 December 2022 (ensuring compliance with COP15)
		1 September 2022
Review of Data Management and Introduction of New Data Management and Performance Policy	Transformation Director, Education and Skills	31 Mar 2022

Objective 1 - System Leadership (SEND Strategy, Inter-agency Working, Local Offer)

Impact measures and KPIs	Area of Significant Weakness that it relates to
% of professionals in the partnership that understand the vision	SEND Strategy
% of pupils with EHCP educated in mainstream environment	SEND Strategy
% EHCNA advice received within 6 weeks	Inter - Agency Working
Attendance monitoring at mandatory SEND training	Inter - Agency Working
Satisfaction rates Local Offer Website through a dedicated survey	Local Offer
Local Offer Website Traffic monitoring	Local Offer

Objective 2 - Getting the basics right – identifying and assessing need (Coordination of Assessments, Quality of EHC Plans)

Project	Responsible officers	By When
Improve EHCNA process by looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coproducing the 20 week process - Coproducing the templates and letters 	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	31 Mar 2022
Improve Annual Review process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coproduce the general annual review process - Coproduce the phase transfer processes 	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	31 Mar 2022
Upgrade SENAR Case Management System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update the system - Launch the schools portal - Deliver training to staff and partners - Complete data cleansing activity 	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	22 Apr 2022
Build a sustainable SENAR service capable of delivering good outcomes for CYP with SEND, in accordance to the CFA14 and COP15.	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	31 May 2022
Agree a Quality Assurance Framework	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing/ Director of Nursing and Quality/ Director of Practice	1 Mar 2022

Objective 2 - Getting the basics right – identifying and assessing need (Waiting times)

Project	Responsible officers	By When
Develop recovery trajectory planning to support the robust management of waiting lists (for all therapy services)	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG)/ Divisional Director (BCH)	Ongoing
Continue to improve the process for monitoring and managing waiting lists	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG)/ Divisional Director (BCH)	Ongoing
<u>Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) transformation to the Balanced System</u> - reduce waiting times and embed a system wide approach to SLCN, developing an integrated approach to continuous monitoring of wait times during the transition period.	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG)/ Divisional Director (BCH)/ AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	Phased transformation commencing Sept 2021 – March 2024
<u>Joint Commissioning arrangement for SLCN</u> – Continue to monitor impact resulting from the formalised arrangement between BSol CCG and Birmingham City Council.	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG) / AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	ongoing
<u>Increase capacity to support autism assessments</u> (over 7year olds) - Commission additional capacity from Healios (phase 3) for autism assessments – Healios will be able to see a further 850 children.	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG)/ Divisional Director (BCH)	November 2021
<u>Improve the ASD assessment process and wait times to ensure children under 7yrs old are assessed in a timely manner</u> – development of a new timetable for under 7-year-old waits (ASD assessments).	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG)/ Divisional Director (BCH)	Jan 2022 (linked to 0-16 pathway below)
<u>Improve timeliness of ADHD assessments</u> - continue to monitor implementation of a new tool and upskilling of staff (CDC and ND staff) to support utilisation of the tool in order to speed up the assessment process for ADHD and reduce waiting lists.	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG)/ Divisional Director (BCH)	New process commenced Oct 2020 ongoing
<u>Development of a 0-16year old ND pathway</u> - including recruitment strategy in line with national staff shortage issues e.g., clinical psychology and working on an exit plan for Healios.	Director of Joint Commissioning (CCG)/ Divisional Director (BCH)	Implementation Jan 2022

Objective 2 - Getting the basics right – identifying and assessing need (Coordination of Assessments, Quality of EHC Plans, Waiting Times)

Impact measures and KPIs	Area of Significant Weakness that it relates to
%EHCPs issued within 20 weeks	Coordination of Assessment
Family Satisfaction with the EHCNA process	Coordination of Assessment
SENCO Satisfaction with the EHCNA process	Coordination of Assessment
% Annual Reviews actioned within 4 weeks of the meeting	Coordination of Assessment
% of EHCPs rated good and outstanding	Quality of EHCPs
% of CYP who complete their secondary phase transfer by the 15 th of February	Coordination of Assessment Quality of EHCPs
% of EHCPs NEET	Quality of EHCPs
Average and longest wait for OT	Waiting Times
Average and longest wait for SLT	Waiting Times
Average and longest wait for PT	Waiting Times
Average and longest wait for ND	Waiting Times

Objective 3 - Working Together Well (coproduction, parental engagement, parental satisfaction)

Project	Responsible officers	By When
Design a co-production and engagement framework and plan	Coproduction Officer	31 Dec 2021
Set up a Voluntary Sector Partnership Group	Director of Education and Skills	31 Dec 2021
Design and implement a communications strategy	Comms from BCC, CCG and BCT	1 Feb 2022
Launch Parent Portal as part of the SENAR Case management System Upgrade	Transformation Director, Education and Skills	1 Feb 2022
Agree and sign a Partnership Compact	Coproduction Officer	31 Dec 2021
Review and Strengthen the role of SENDIASS	Director of Education and Skills	31 Mar 2022

Objective 3 - Working Together Well (coproduction, parental engagement, parental satisfaction)

Impact measures and KPIs	Area of Significant Weakness that it relates to
% of parental surveys returned	Coproduction Parental Engagement Parental Satisfaction
% of parental satisfaction measured through the parental surveys	Coproduction Parental Engagement Parental Satisfaction
% of education settings responding positive to surveys	Coproduction
% of partner organisations responding positive to surveys	Coproduction
Number of appeals lodged at SENDIST	Parental Satisfaction
Number of Complaints	Parental Satisfaction
% of Complaints that were satisfactorily dealt with	Parental Satisfaction

Objective 4 - Pathways – meeting need and improving outcomes (academic progress, attendance and exclusions, employment)

Project	Responsible Officer	By When
Develop an Inclusion Strategy	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing/ AD Education and Early Years	1 Sept 2022
Deliver the Developing Local Provision project	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	1 Sept 2021 – Start 31 Jul 2022 – Review First Year 31 Jul 2023 – Review Second Year
Review the Children Out of School Process for CYPs with EHCPs	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing/ AD Education and Early Years	1 May 2022
Review the allocation of the HNB	AD SEND, Inclusion and Wellbeing	31 Dec 2021
14-19 Review of Employment Pathways for YP with SEND	AD Employment and Skills	1 Sept 2022
Review of Internal Processes to ensure that CYPs pathways are correctly tracked	Director of Education and Skills/ Chief Nurse/ Director of Commissioning and Corporate Parenting	31 Dec 2021

Objective 4 - Pathways – meeting need and improving outcomes (academic progress, attendance and exclusions, employment)

Impact measures and KPIs	Area of Significant Weakness that it relates to
Attainment and Progress data EHCPs	Academic Progress
Attainment and Progress data SEN Support	Academic Progress
Attendance for SEN Support and EHCPs	Attendance
% of the Unknowns in the NEET category	Attendance Exclusions
% of Special Schools rated Good or Outstanding	Academic Progress
% of Mainstream Schools rated Good or Outstanding	Academic Progress
% of Early Years rated Good or Outstanding	Academic Progress
% of CYP with EHCPs that attend settings rated Good or Outstanding	Academic Progress
% of Take up of 2 Year Old Offer	Attendance
% of permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions for EHCPs	Exclusions
% of permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions for SEN Support	Exclusions
% young people with LD in paid employment or apprenticeship	Employment

Home to School Transport Service Update



Start of new Academic Year 2021 - 2022 Headlines

- Intense Mobilisation and Operational Readiness activities undertaken throughout summer
- Some letters and communications were sent out later than we would have wanted due to problems with data
- Schools returned through staggered starts from 3rd Sep; all schools are now returned
- Operational readiness and existing compliance checks identified the need to terminate a transport provider and then commission a new provider just weeks before start of term to safeguard our service users
- Mobilising a new provider at short notice led to a downturn in performance which is now stabilising
- Overall service performance has continued to improve daily and has been operating within tolerance for the few weeks
- The HTS service has mobilised successfully (**week ending 24th Sep**):
 - 1052 daily routes operating (99.17%)
 - 3517 pupils who needed to travel were transported (99.82% - note that not all pupils travel every day)

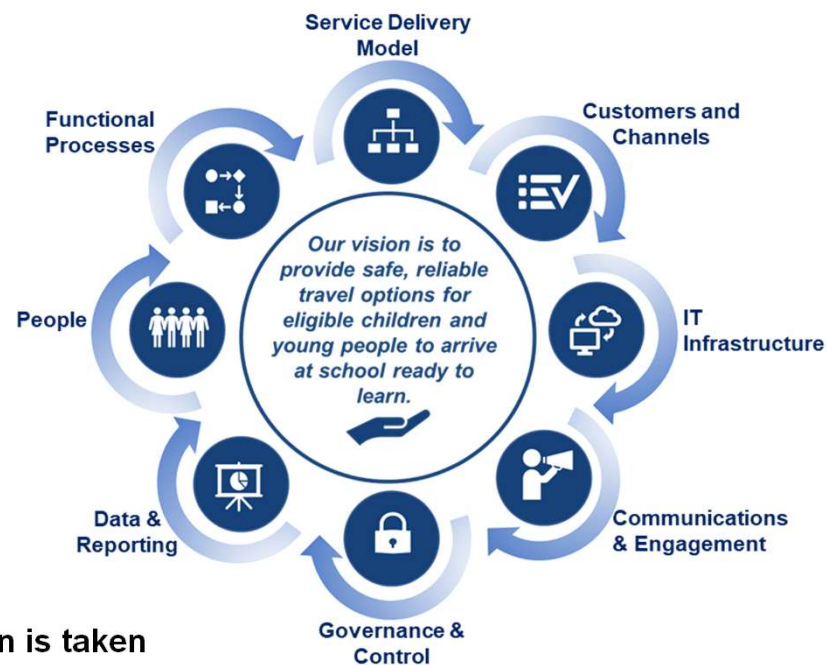
Summary of Key Progress

- **Safeguarding** – there are **5 safeguarding cases**:
 - 3 relate to incorrect drop-off details; all were resolved at school and pupils were safe at all times
 - 2 new safeguarding issues raised identified this period are under review
- **Complaints** – **34 complaints with none overdue as at 24th Sep**
 - As is usual at this time of year, there is an increase in complaints and these are dealt with as part of normal operational service and tracked through the Complaints process following which a Complaints Response is issued
- **Telephone calls**
 - **95% of calls answered on Fri 17th Sep**, for the whole of the week 88.5% of phone calls were answered (**831** answered out of **939** received); on average the service receives 600 calls a week.
 - Week ending **Fri 24th Sep, 93.59%** calls answered throughout the week (**over 96% achieved each day Tues to Fri**).
 - The service doubled its call handling capacity for the start of term, which included both service resource and also support from other areas of the council
- **Routes** – **99.17%** of routes were **delivered** and **99.82%** of **pupils transported**, that needed to be. **99.13%** of routes delivered were delivered **on time**.
- **Bus pass applications** – As is normal for this time of year and despite encouraging parents to apply early, the service is receiving an increase in applications for mainstream Bus Passes after the start of term.
 - Significant work undertaken to eliminate outstanding bus passes, including late applications and the current number awaiting assessment is 291 (at the same time last year this was 1106).

Ensuring safeguarding – enforcing contractual compliance

Providing safe, reliable travel options

- Participation in Safeguarding Stocktake forum
- HTS Safeguard Review
- Establishment of the Compliance team and processes
- Clear Governance & Controls
- Regular gateway reviews to check and challenge DBS status
- Our systems and processes work to safeguard our service users
- Termination of non-compliant transport provider
- **The service does not run until we are appropriately assured**
- **If issues are highlighted following mobilisation then compliance action is taken**



Providing safe, reliable travel options

- Compliance team identified issue with existing transport provider during review of Operational Readiness/ Management information.
- Decision taken to terminate this contract to protect safeguarding standards
- Immediate and robust procurement exercise undertaken - HATS Group awarded contracted just over 2 weeks before start of term
- Expedited mobilisation of vehicles, staffing, and route information undertaken – HATS have undertaken this process numerous times without issue (but this time had to proceed with an uncooperative predecessor)
- However, due to compressed timescales a number of challenges emerged:
 - 55 trained drivers did not arrive for work on Day 1 and 2 of the new operation
 - Current contact information for all parents/carers needed to be checked and where not available supplied by schools to be able to advise all parents of new arrangements (not all families share this information with the Service as a matter of course)
- Impact of these challenges led to pause of HATS mobilisation on Wed 8th Sep
- Daily calls commenced with HATS Group to resolve issues and check progress of phased reintroduction of service
- Impact of these issues did have some impact on the ability of parents using other contractor services to immediately contact the Service in first few days (which improved in the days after the mobilisation pause).
- Ongoing improved service levels and transition to operational BAU

HATS Performance Fri 24th Sep:

100% routes ran to 6 schools: 123 routes with 756 pupils transported

Providing safe, reliable travel options

- HTS is on a journey to improve its services and we've already commenced an internal review of how we performed
- We have recently sent out a survey to schools to ask them about the service last year to help us improve the service this year
- We held an event for parents impacted by the mobilisation of the new provider
- Head of Service is engaging with schools directly to review and support resolution of issues
- Staff have two sessions planned from October to review lessons from this period
- We will use the knowledge and understanding from this experience to inform continuous improvement, key actions include:
 - Improving our annual service plan
 - Developing annual communications and engagement plan – to mitigate unclear or inaccurate information via social media channels
 - Improving our data and functional processes
 - Ensuring sufficient staff available for call-handling



Benefits of 365 Implementation:

- **Safeguarding** of our children at the centre of all activities on 365
- **Better information** for leaders and senior management teams
- Single source of the truth
- Joined up working practices
- Real time data on transport of children and operators transporting our children for parents and schools

Current Activities:

- Formal Decision Points introduced which evaluate testing take place before next activity can start
- Validation of new academic year pupil and route information prior to transfer into 365
- Implementing a route change control process to ensure the information remains accurate at all times
- Correct data is being loaded and maintained in 365
- Operators and their drivers are being engaged about use of 365
- Monitoring system performance to ensure it delivers BCC contracted requirements

Providing safe, reliable travel options

- Review and refresh of original implementation plan undertaken
- Constrained resources were redirected over summer to support the start of academic year
- Significant data validation undertaken and upload to the system progressing to support extended pilot
- Whilst this impacted project delivery timeline, it has also provided opportunity to understand upstream dependencies for 365 on data quality
- Regular engagement activities now scheduled with supplier
- Project undertaking assurance checks against available functionality and its performance to support HTS service requirements
- Phased release of functionality subject to rigorous testing
- Exploring opportunities to harness other product modules to exploit system fully