

Children, Young People & Skills Committee

Date: **9 November 2020**
Time: **4.00pm**
Venue **Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall**

Note: in response to current Government Regulations this meeting is being held as a virtual meeting for councillors and accessible via Microsoft Teams. Public speaking and engagement opportunities will be made available.

The meeting will also be webcast live to the internet.

Members: **Councillors:** Clare (Chair), Hills (Deputy Chair), Allcock (Opposition Spokesperson), Brown (Group Spokesperson), Grimshaw, Hamilton, Lloyd, McNair, Nield and Simson

Contact: **Lisa Johnson**
Democratic Services Manager
01273 291228
lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Electronic agendas can also be accessed through our meetings app available through ModernGov: [iOS/Windows/Android](#)

This agenda and all accompanying reports are printed on recycled paper

AGENDA

34 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declaration of Substitutes: Where Councillors are unable to attend a meeting, a substitute Member from the same Political Group may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting.

(b) Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the committee lawyer or administrator preferably before the meeting.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public: To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: *Any item appearing in Part Two of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.*

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

35 MINUTES

7 - 22

To consider the minutes of the meetings held on:

- (i) 14 September 2020 (copy attached)
- (ii) 26 October 2020 (Special) (copy attached)

36 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

37 CALL OVER

- (a) Items 40 – 49 will be read out at the meeting and Members invited to reserve the items for consideration.
- (b) Those items not reserved will be taken as having been received and the reports' recommendations agreed.

38 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

23 - 24

To consider the following matters raised by members of the public:

- (a) **Petitions:** to receive any petitions presented to the full council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions:** to receive any questions submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 3 November 2020;
 - (i) Provision of Vegan Food at Schools
- (c) **Deputations:** to receive any deputations submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 3 November 2020.

39 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

To consider the following matters raised by Councillors:

- (a) **Petitions:** to receive any petitions submitted to the full Council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions:** to consider any written questions;
- (c) **Letters:** to consider any letters;
- (d) **Notices of Motion:** to consider any Notices of Motion referred from Council or submitted directly to the Committee.

40 LAUNCH OF SEND STRATEGY 2021-2026

25 - 80

Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)

Contact Officer: Georgina Clarke-Green
Ward Affected: All Wards

41 HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT: FINDINGS OF THE MEMBERS POLICY PANEL

81 - 130

Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)

Contact Officer: Jo Lyons *Tel: 01273 293514*
Ward Affected: All Wards

- 42 PROGRESS REPORT ON HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT SERVICE 131 - 182**
Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)
Contact Officer: Jo Lyons Tel: 01273 293514
Ward Affected: All Wards
- 43 YOUTH PARTICIPATION 183 - 198**
Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)
Contact Officer: Deborah Corbridge Tel: 01273 29
Ward Affected: All Wards
- 44 YOUTH SERVICE GRANTS PROGRAMME 199 - 202**
Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)
Contact Officer: Deborah Corbridge Tel: 01273 29
Ward Affected: All Wards
- 45 SCHOOL OFSTED PRESENTATION 203 - 208**
Update on recent Ofsted Inspections
Contact Officer: Mark Storey
- 46 ANTI-RACIST SCHOOLS 209 - 220**
Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)
Contact Officer: Sam Beal Tel: 01273 293533
Ward Affected: All Wards
- 47 ADDITIONAL CONDITION FUNDING ALLOCATION**
Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy to follow)
- 48 EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS 221 - 228**
Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)
Contact Officer: Mohammed Bham
Ward Affected: All Wards

49 COMPLEX ADOLESCENT STRATEGY 2020-21

229 - 250

Report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning (copy attached)

Contact Officer: Anna Gianfrancesco

Tel: 01273 293966

Ward Affected: All Wards

50 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

To consider items to be submitted to the 17 December 2020 Council meeting for information.

ACCESS NOTICE

In response to the current situation with Covid-19 and the easing of Regulations, this Committee meeting will be held virtually via Skype and web cast simultaneously.

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fourth working day before the meeting.

For those members of the public wishing to actively take part in the meeting a link will be emailed so that they can join the meeting.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

WEBCASTING NOTICE

This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. Data collected during this web cast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Therefore, by joining the meeting via the link provided you are deemed to be consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for the purpose of web casting and/or Member training. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured, they should ensure they do not use the skype video facility and provide a static image.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Lisa Johnson, (01273 291228, email lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Date of Publication - Friday, 30 October 2020

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS COMMITTEE

4.00pm 14 SEPTEMBER 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING - SKYPE

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors: Clare (Chair), Hills (Deputy Chair), Allcock (Opposition Spokesperson), Brown (Group Spokesperson), Grimshaw, Hamilton, Lloyd, McNair, Simson and Shanks

Co-optees: Mr T Cristin, Mr A Muirhead, Ms K James and Ms L Townsend

PART ONE

13 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declarations of Substitutes

13.1 Councillor Shanks was present in substitution for Councillor Nield

(b) Declarations of Interest

13.2 Councillor Shanks declared that she was a trustee of Brighton Youth Centre and a trustee of Sussex Clubs for Young People.

Councillor Simson declared that she was a trustee of the Deans Youth Project

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public

13.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any of the items listed on the agenda.

13.4 **RESOLVED:** There were no part two in the agenda.

14 MINUTES

14.1 It was noted that paragraph 2.1 should read 2 March 2020 rather than 15 June 2020.

14.2 **RESOLVED:** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2020 (as amended) were agreed and signed as a correct record.

15 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

15.1 The Chair gave the following communication:

Welcome to this virtual meeting of the Children Young People & Skills Committee. Please note that this meeting is being webcast and is capable of repeat viewing.

This is my first committee as Chair. I wanted to start by thanking Cllr John Allcock for his time as Chair and Lead Member.

Our city's schools reopened earlier this month for pupils after a very long time away since they first closed in March. I would like to extend my ongoing thanks to all that work in education in the city. They have responded impressively well over the past 6 months and I have seen how well supported our children, young people and families have been. They continue to manage many uncertainties.

We have had some positive cases in our city's schools so far, including of some of our young people. Our public health team will continue to monitor and do what they can. But if school return is going to ensure our children are kept safe then the Government must provide a better testing capacity. Billions of pounds have been given to private companies like Serco, while public health budgets have been cut. The Government must give the support and funding to local authorities to manage test and trace more effectively than they are managing.

As part of the schools reopening I have followed the Schools Streets initiative in 13 of our city's schools, which provides temporary timed closures of roads close to schools' entrances during drop-off and pick-up times, during term time. The road closures are managed by parents and carer volunteers and I want to extend our thanks to them for their support. I visited Brunswick Primary on Friday and saw children playing in the streets outside the school and safely social distancing and it was great. And I'd love to see this expanded if we can – but we are currently short of volunteers so please do get involved if you can. It is a challenge to provide and in London boroughs where they've had successful school streets they've been able to fine drivers rather than rely on volunteers to staff them and I hope we get the powers to do that in future.

I was proud of how the city managed and performed in the recent A level and GCSE results which came out over the summer. Students across Brighton & Hove were able to celebrate a strong performance across the city. Students, school and colleges should be very proud of how they managed a very challenging exam and results season.

I also want to acknowledge all of the work our children's safeguarding and disability services have been doing working throughout the pandemic and summer, ensuring our young people are kept safe and supporting carers. Over the summer it was a chance for many families to have a rest and to support those with children with SEND, we worked with the Parent and Carers Council and the city park's team to ensure there was some dedicated park space for those families to use. PaCC also asked Brighton & Hove City Council's SEN Team to see if they could help with helping to organise extra activities over the holidays. A real range of exciting and stimulating activities for children and young people SEND were delivered across the city both online and face to face.

Since the Notice of Motion that was brought to the last committee meeting a programme work has started with a group of BAME teachers in the city to produce an anti-racist strategy for our schools. We will hear more detail in a report to this committee in November. I want to make sure that if we do this, we do this right and we commit the right funding and resource to do it. It cannot be a tokenistic act. You will also note my colleague Cllr Hills has submitted a letter on a fantastic project today and we've also met with many parents and campaigners doing similar things across the city to tackle racism through arts and learning.

I wanted to end by ensuring that committee members knew that due to the change in administration there has been an adaptation to the home to school transport Member Policy Panel. This will now be chaired by Cllr John Allcock and we look forward to receiving the Panel's recommendations back to this committee in November. I will remain a member of the panel.

There have been a couple of changes to the agenda:

1. Item 23 on the agenda 'Central Youth Hub' has been withdrawn from today's meeting. The matter will now go to a Cross Party Working Group for discussion before coming to this Committee.
2. Item 24 Youth Review. I am conscious that this item will be of particular interest to the young people attending this meeting, and so will move this item up the agenda to be considered after Item 20 Foundations For Our Future.

16 CALL OVER

- 16.1 **RESOLVED:** All items were called and reserved for discussion.

17 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

17(a) Petitions

- 17.1 There were no petitions.

17(b) Written Questions

- 17.2 Ms S Kyriacou submitted a question but was unable to attend the meeting and so it was agreed that the question and response would be provided in writing to her. The question was:

Why is Stanford Infants included on the list of schools to be reduced in size?

- 17.3 The Chair gave the following response:

The proposals before us today are coming for final councillor approval prior to going to consultation. These have been drawn up by a cross-party working group to address how we tackle the issue of having too many school places in the city. The inclusion of schools on the list aims to tackle a city wide issue with a city-wide approach.

When pulling together the proposals, councillors looked at the planning areas that are used for school place planning and council pupil forecast. Stanford Infant is within the central city planning area and has 162 surplus school places in September 2022 and 194 surplus places in September 2023.

Consideration was given to each schools in this planning area and which could reasonably reduce in size. Our priority is ensuring that we keep all schools open and therefore we avoided including one form entry schools.

Larger schools are more able to reduce in size with less negative financial impact, where possible throughout the city we have also tried to avoid consultation on two form entry schools in the planning area. The only three and four form entry schools in this area are Stanford Infant School, Balfour Primary School and Downs Infant School all of which have been included within the proposals.

17(c) Deputations

17.4 There were no Deputations.

18 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

18 (a) Petitions

18.1 There were none

18 (b) Written Questions

18.2 There were none

18.3 (c) Letters

18.3 The Chair noted that there was a letter from Councillor Hills and invited her to speak to the letter.

18.4 Councillor Hills thanked the Chair and read her letter and asked that the Committee support the Multicultural School Book Fund.

18.5 The Chair thanked Councillor Hills for the letter and said that the project were doing some amazing work, and was sure that all councillors would agree that additional books for schools were always welcome and that increasing diversity of school bookshelves was fantastic. The Chair suggested working on a joint statement with other groups about the project and ask them to promote it through their channels. She said that the administration was working with the Council's Communications Team on this matter which included preparing a video which would be shared in due course. There would be a report on this project at the next meeting of the Committee.

18.6 Both opposition parties supported the initiative and the proposals in the letter.

18.7 **RESOLVED:** That the proposals in the letter would be taken forward.

18 (d) **Notices of Motion**

18.8 There were none.

19 SCHOOL OFSTED PRESENTATION

19.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning, which provided information on the Ofsted inspection of Hertford Junior School. The item was introduced by the Head of Education Standards & Achievement. The Committee were advised that Ofsted inspections in its current form were currently on hold and were unlikely to resume until the new year, and so there had been no new judgements since the Committee last met. However, before lock-down there had been an inspection of Hertford Junior School but their grade had been held back by Ofsted until June 2020 when it was announced that the school had moved from a Grade 2 to a Grade 3.

19.2 Cllr Shanks asked what support was being provided to assist the school and was advised that the school was being supported by the School Improvement Board, School Partnership Advisors and senior officers within the Council.

19.3 Councillor Brown noted that one of the issues raised by Ofsted was that there was a lack of expertise amongst the teachers and a lack of training for staff and asked what steps the Council were taking to address that. The Head of Education Standards & Achievement said that specific support would be provided, and in addition the Council had a 'Every Child is a Reader' programme.

19.4 Councillor Simson asked for confirmation that the Head Teacher at Hertford Junior was also the Head Teacher at Hertford Infant, and if that was correct and therefore was the same management team, whether the Council were monitoring the reading ability of children moving from the Infant to Junior School. The Head of Education Standards & Achievement confirmed it was the same Head Teacher and noted that the Infant School had been inspected by Ofsted last year and had received a Good judgement. He added that the School Improvement Board did cross over both the schools and the work at both schools was being monitored.

19.5 **RESOLVED:** That the the report be noted.

20 FOUNDATIONS FOR OUR FUTURE – THE FINAL REPORT FROM THE SUSSEX WIDE CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSON'S EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICE REVIEW

20.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director, Families, Children and Learning and the Clinical Commissioning Group regarding the '*Report of the Sussex-wide review of Emotional Health and Wellbeing Support for Children and Young People*', which was an independently authored report which had been jointly commissioned by Sussex Clinical Commissioning Groups, the three local authorities in Sussex and Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. The Review had been independently chaired throughout its duration. The report was introduced by Mr S Appleton who was the independent Chair of the review.

- 20.2 The Executive Director Families Children & Learning advised that an Oversight Group had been set up which comprised of the three Directors of Children's Services from Brighton & Hove together with colleagues from East and West Sussex and the Chief Executive of the Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (Sussex-wide provider of CAMHS provision). The purpose of the group was to oversee the implementation of the recommendations in the report and the creation of a Programme Director who would be responsible for the improvement of emotional health wellbeing and specialist mental health services across the area. The Director suggested that the Committee may wish to have a regular update from the Oversight Group and the Programme Director on progress made against the action plan. The Oversight Group had already met and agreed that it would be Chaired by Mr Gallimore Director of Children's Services at East Sussex County Council, and Co-Chaired by Ms Allen Chief Executive of Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.
- 20.3 Councillor Hills asked why the number of children receiving treatment after the initial consultation was 46% but the national average was 69%. Mr Appleton said difference would be due to different thresholds and criteria for accessing specialist services.
- 20.4 Councillor Simson asked when changes to the service were likely to happen. The Executive Director Families Children & Learning said that when the Programme Director was appointed, they would be responsible for taking the recommendations forward.
- 20.5 Councillor Lloyd referred to the map showing the list of services in the City and asked who produced it, and if it included all the available services. Mr Appleton said the map was produced by the project team within the CCG and should include the relevant services but would be updated as necessary.
- 20.6 Councillor Shanks asked if support for young people now returning to school would be available where needed. The Executive Director said it was and the School's Wellbeing Service was providing support for children and their families. Councillor Shanks asked how the proposed recommendations in the report would be monitored. The Director said that the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) in partnership with the CCG were responsible for decision making on this matter, but this Committee could receive copies of reports considered by the HWB. The Chair agreed that that would be useful.
- 20.7 Councillor Grimshaw noted that if children were being supported by CAMHS they would have to transfer to adult services once they turned 18 and asked if there was some way that they could be supported during that transition. Mr Appleford agreed that it was a national as well as a local problem and said that there had been attempts to smooth the transition through national guidance, and the Royal College of Psychiatrists were also looking at this issue.
- 20.8 Mr Muirhead noted that children with neurodevelopmental disorders could wait up to two years from referral to an assessment of their needs, which was much longer than other referrals, and asked if the Oversight Group could develop targets to monitor progress. Mr Appleford agreed that there was a disparity in the timelines and that was something which the implementation of the recommendations would address.

20.9 The Executive Director Families Children & Learning confirmed that the recommendations in the report would be translated into an action plan and Programme Director would be responsible for the implementation of that action plan.

20.10 RESOLVED: That the Committee –

- (i) Noted the Independently Chaired Report – Foundations For Our Future.
- (ii) Noted the Concordat which underpins the partnership commitment to act upon the recommendations.
- (iii) Noted the paper and discussion that was held at the Health & Wellbeing Board on 28th July 2020.

21 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2022/23

21.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning regarding the proposed school admission arrangements for the city's Schools for the academic year 2022-23. The report was introduced by the Head of School Organisation.

21.2 Councillor Hamilton referred to paragraph 3.5 of the report which stated that the consultation would run for 9 weeks from 5 October 2020 to 27 November 2020 and said that it should read '8' weeks. The Head of School Organisation said he would check the dates and amend as necessary.

21.3 Councillor Hills asked how the consultations would take place. The Head of School Organisation said that meetings relating to individual schools would be held online together with the online portal but it was important that, in line with the EIA, arrangements were made to ensure that everyone was able to take part in the consultation but how that would happen was still being considered. In response to a request from the Chair, it was agreed that members of the Committee would be advised via email on how the consultation would take place.

21.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed to –

- (i) Make no changes to the council's admission arrangements or school catchment areas (where applicable).
- (ii) Consult upon a change to the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Balfour Primary School from 120 to 90 pupils.
- (iii) Consult upon a change to the PAN of Benfield Primary School from 60 to 30 pupils.
- (iv) Consult upon a change to the PAN of Brunswick Primary School from 120 to 90 pupils.
- (v) Consult upon a change to the PAN of Downs Infant School from 120 to 90 pupils.

- (vi) Consult upon a change to the PAN of Goldstone Primary School from 90 to 60 pupils.
- (vii) Consult upon a change to the PAN of Moulsecoomb Primary School from 60 to 30 pupils.
- (viii) Consult upon a change to the PAN of Stanford Infant School from 90 to 60 pupils.
- (ix) Consult upon a change to the PAN of West Blatchington Primary School from 60 to 30 pupils.
- (x) Consult upon a change to the PAN of Hove Park School and Sixth Form from 300 to 180 pupils.
- (xi) Make no changes to the “relevant area”.

22 SCHOOLS FUNDING 2020/21

22.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning regarding school’s funding for 2020/21. The report was introduced by the Head of Finance (Children's & Adults).

22.2 Councillor Shanks noted that schools could bid for additional funding and asked for more information on that. The Head of Finance advised that schools could bid directly for that money, and so far £178,000 had been reimbursed for issues such as increased premises costs, free school meals and additional cleaning costs etc.

22.3 Councillor Simson referred to the de-delegation of budgets for issues such as insurance and contingency and noted that some schools had opted out of Council insurance this year and asked if those schools would still have their budgets de-delegated. The Head of Finance said that four schools had opted out of maternity leave and long-term sickness cover, and the de-delegation related to buildings and contents insurance which no schools had opted out of.

22.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed –

- (i) To note the funding streams utilised to fund schools.
- (ii) To note the latest position relating to school balances as at the end of the 2019/20 financial year and licensed deficits agreed for the 2020/21 financial year.
- (iii) To note the additional government financial support to schools for Covid-19.
- (iv) To note the anticipated future school funding arrangements for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

23 CENTRAL YOUTH HUB - YOUTH INVESTMENT FUND

This item was withdrawn from the agenda

24 YOUTH REVIEW

- 24.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning which provided information on the Youth Review, and the impact on the process due to Covid-19. The report was introduced by the Integrated Team for Families Manager.
- 24.2 Councillor Lloyd asked how more people could be encouraged to complete the survey and suggested that advertising on social media may help. He noted that the new restrictions stopped groups of more than six people meeting up, and asked if that meant that youth work would be put on hold and if it was how would they ensure that young people were supported. The Integrated Team for Families Manager accepted that the number completing the survey was low with around 1% of young people in the City responding, but said that the Council wanted this to grow and to continue to hear from young people in the future. Youth Workers were continuing to support young people through online platforms, as well as through initiatives such as Walk and Talk. Mental Health was an important area and the Council were working with the CCG to coordinate service to support young people.
- 24.3 Mr Muirhead, through the Chair, quoted the National News Agency which said: “Despite the recent change to social gathering restrictions as of 9 September 2020 we can confirm that as an essential service the youth service sector activity can continue unchanged where Covid secure to NYA guidance standards”. The Integrated Team for Families Manager agreed that services would continue but they would still be limited.
- 24.4 Councillor Brown said that it had recently been agreed by a cross-party group that the Council were not currently in a position to go ahead with the Brighton Youth Centre (BYC) on-site proposals and that more time was needed to explore all the options before making a decision, and she therefore proposed a small amendment to Recommendation 2.4. The amendment was to say that BYC was one of the key youth providers, as all the youth providers in the City were important, and to confirm that all options would be explored. The Chair noted that no amendment had been submitted prior to the meeting as required but agreed to allow it.

Councillor Brown proposed the following amendment to Recommendation 2.4:

2.4 That the Committee agrees Brighton Youth Centre (BYC) to be recognised as **one of the a the** key youth providers in the city and for the Council to decide how to support with its refurbishment or rebuild **by exploring all options**.

- 24.5 Councillor Simson seconded the proposed amendment
- 24.6 Councillor Allcock noted that there had been severe cuts to youth spending across the country and many youth centres had closed and youth service provision reduced. The Council’s 2020-2023 Corporate Plan agreed to deliver high quality youth services where possible and despite budget pressures the Council had provided funding of over £5 m to youth services. Giving young people a voice was important and welcomed Recommendation 2.2 to involve them in the decision-making process.

- 24.7 Councillor Hills referred to the action plan and asked how members could ensure that it was led by young people. The Integrated Team for Families Manager said that the young people wanted the opportunity to be involved in the decision making, and she would make sure that everyone who wanted to could.
- 24.8 Councillor Grimshaw noted that only 1% of young people in the City had responded to the survey and asked what percentage of the young people in the City attended the BYC. The Integrated Team for Families Manager said that she didn't know what the percentage was but would find out.
- 24.9 Councillor Simson referred to the Youth Service Review and noted that there were some omissions and asked if the names of all the providers could be included. The Review stated that young people travelled across the City to attend the BYC and asked if there was data to show how far they travelled and why they chose to do that, as that information could assist neighbourhood services to know what facilities they could provide more locally. A report was due to come to the next meeting of this Committee in November, and asked if that would allow sufficient time to form a budget for next financial year or whether it would be necessary to roll over the funding which was in place now. The Integrated Team for Families Manager said that the names of all of the providers would be given and apologised for the omission, she agreed that it would be useful to know why young people travelled to go to BYC and that would be asked in the future. With regard to where the young people lived, she referred to page 330 of the report which had a map showing the home location for young people accessing activities delivered in the Central area of the city, and said that with regard to the financial side the Council were still waiting for information on the Youth Investment Fund and that would not be known until after the matter was considered by Committee in November.
- 24.10 Mr Muirhead said some young people with SEND did access mainstream services but there was a cohort of people with additional needs who weren't accessing the services and felt that the recommendations in the report did not necessarily meet that gap, and asked if their needs could be met when recommissioning youth services. The Chair said the administration was keen to see the redevelopment of BYC as currently there was only one room which those with a physical disability could access, and that needed to be addressed.
- 24.11 The Committee voted on the amendment and it was agreed.

24.12 RESOLVED: That the Committee –

- (i) Noted the findings and recommendations of the Youth Review.
- (ii) Agreed to young people (via Youth Wise) developing an action plan that will further the involvement of them in decision making processes and this to be brought back to Committee in November.
- (iii) Agreed that the findings and recommendations of the Youth Review will inform the Youth Service Grants recommissioning process and the proposed framework for this is brought to Committee in November.

- (iv) Agreed Brighton Youth Centre (BYC) to be recognised as one of the key youth providers in the City and for the Council to decide how to support with its refurbishment or rebuild by exploring all options.
- (v) Agreed that neighbourhood provision should remain and not be impacted on if any future investment towards a central youth hub is agreed.

25 PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON CLOSURE OF MAINTAINED NURSERY CLASS AT HERTFORD INFANT SCHOOL

25.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning regarding the regarding consultation on closing the maintained school nursery class at Hertford Infant School. The report was introduced by the Childcare Strategy Manager. The Committee were advised that in the report it stated that the proposed closure date was 'to be advised', but following conversations with the Head Teacher it was proposed that the closure date would be at the end of the next school year and so would be in July 2021.

25.2 Councillor Lloyd asked what the implications may be for other nursery schools in the area, and if the nursery were to close would that be a permanent closure. Childcare Strategy Manager said that children didn't necessarily go their local nursery, but there were two other nurseries in the Hollingdean area which would have capacity to take additional children and there was sufficient provision across the City. If it was agreed to close the nursery it would be permanent, and if it wanted to re-open there would need to be a consultation.

25.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed –

- (i) That in accordance with DfE statutory guidance *Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools (October 2018)* committee considers the request of the school to start the process to close the nursery class, taking into account the information in this paper.
- (ii) That, subject to findings from the initial consultation stage, a decision on whether or not to proceed to statutory notices with full proposals is made at a special meeting of the CYPS committee.
- (iii) That at the end of the statutory notice period, a decision on whether or not to proceed with closure of the nursery class is taken at the January 2021 Children, Young People and Skills Committee.

26 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

26.1 **RESOLVED:** That no items be referred to the next meeting of Full Council

27 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

27.1 There were no Part Two items

The meeting concluded at 6.40 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS COMMITTEE

4.00pm 26 OCTOBER 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING - SKYPE

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors: Clare (Chair), Hills (Deputy Chair), Allcock (Opposition Spokesperson), Brown (Group Spokesperson), Grimshaw, Hamilton, Lloyd, McNair, Nield and Simson

Co-optees: Ms K James and Mr A Muirhead

PART ONE

28 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declarations of Substitutes

28.1 There were none.

(b) Declarations of Interest

28.2 There were none.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public

28.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any of the items listed on the agenda.

28.4 **RESOLVED:** There were no part two in the agenda

29 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

29.1 The Chair gave the following communication:

There has been a lot of conversation over the last few days about free school meals during half term, following a Parliament vote to not fund vouchers.

I know colleagues will agree, and as Chair I want it on record that no one should feel shamed for needing help with food and to stress that the council, and a great many

businesses and volunteers in our city, are here and able to help. Food poverty is a deeply devastating and sad reality for too many families, now being exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. No child should go hungry.

In Brighton and Hove we have had a strong focus on food poverty for a long time and since the early days of the pandemic have been running a food hub out of the Brighton Centre in partnership with Brighton and Hove Food Partnership. They are able to make deliveries direct to families who need it, and our schools and social work teams already do work to support families in need. These services receive direct funding from Brighton and Hove City Council and have also been in receipt of increased support throughout the pandemic as need has increased.

Anyone who needs this who is not already reached by our teams can use the information on the council website, the BH food partnership website or just calling 01273 293 117. Calls before noon will have a same day delivery of a food package.

Chomp have also run food groups during school holidays in our city for a while too, and while they can't do that so much now because restrictions surrounding the pandemic, they have raised an incredible amount of money to assist with local efforts. We have also seen many local businesses come forward to offer support and we are incredibly grateful for that. Holiday hunger is a focus of our corporate plan and we will continue to work with food partners to do all we can to alleviate this in the city.

I am grateful to councillor colleagues and know that so many of us share the disgrace that children are left to go hungry in one of the wealthiest countries in the world. While we remain hopeful that the government may bow to pressure to help children across the UK facing holiday hunger, I would be grateful if colleagues could share this information about the council's existing support services, to help reach more people.

What is important is ensuring that no child goes hungry.

30 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

30(a) Petitions

30.1 There were no petitions.

30(b) Written Questions

30.2 There were no Written Question

30(c) Deputations

30.3 There were no Deputations.

31 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT**31 (a) Petitions**

31.1 There were none

31 (b) Written Questions

31.2 There were none

31.3 (c) Letters

31.3 There were none

31 (d) Notices of Motion

31.4 There were none.

32 HERTFORD INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL - FORMAL CONSULTATION ON CLOSURE OF NURSERY CLASS

32.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning regarding the closure of Hertford Infant and Nursery School nursery class and a change to the school's lower age range from three to four years. The report was introduced by the Childcare Strategy Manager and was accompanied by the Chair of Governors of Hertford Infant School.

32.2 Councillor Grimshaw noted that the Hertford Nursery School offered the weekly 15 hours of free childcare without the requirement to purchase additional sessions and asked if other local providers offered the same option. The Childcare Strategy Manager said that two local nurseries Cherry Tree Nursery and St Joseph's Nursery both offered the option to only attend for the 15 hours of free childcare.

32.3 Councillor Grimshaw asked how the consultation had been advertised as she was concerned that people weren't aware that it was taking place. The Childcare Strategy Manager advised that it was through the school and the Council's website, and meetings with parents had been held at the school to discuss the proposals.

32.4 Councillor Nield noted that due to the current pandemic it wasn't known if other nursery providers would be forced to close and asked whether it would be possible to re-open Hertford Nursery in the future if it was needed. The Childcare Strategy Manager said it could and the current process would be undertaken but in reverse.

32.5 Councillor McNair asked if closing Hertford Nursery would benefit the other nearby nursery schools. The Childcare Strategy Manager said that it might, but parents didn't always choose a nursery close to their home, as other issues such as place of work or location of other family members impacted on their choice.

- 32.6 Councillor Hills noted that the Statutory Notice would be advertised in the Brighton & Hove Independent newspaper but understood that the paper was not currently being published and was concerned that people would not be aware of the matter and therefore not take part in the consultation. The Childcare Strategy Manager said that she would check the newspaper and added that there would be a further four weeks of the consultation and therefore still time for people to respond.
- 32.7 Councillor Simson said that many children would apply for a place at the primary school where they had attended a nursery school and asked if the possible knock-on impact to applications for the school had been considered. The Chair of Governors at the school said that it had been considered, but children currently at the primary school had attended many different nursery schools and so it was not felt that closing the nursery would impact on applications to the school. The Childcare Strategy Manager noted that places at the school were allocated in line with the published admission criteria and no priority was given to children who attended a nursery attached to a school.
- 32.8 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee agreed to move to the formal representation period and publication of statutory notices to raise the school's lower age range from three to four years with the formal closure of the nursery class from 1st September 2021.

33 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 33.1 **RESOLVED:** That the report not be referred to the next meeting of Full Council.

The meeting concluded at 4.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for questions submitted by a member of the public.

The question will be answered without discussion. The person who asked the question may ask one relevant supplementary question, which shall be put and answered without discussion. The person to whom a question, or supplementary question, has been put may decline to answer it.

The following written questions have been received from members of the public.

(1) Provision of Vegan Food at Schools

We are in the middle of a climate crisis, where at least 60% of the worlds carbon emissions come from animal farming (including egg and dairy farming). Today's children need to move towards a more plant based diet to have a future on this planet, and we need to be encouraging them to do so. Therefore, I am asking the committee to ensure veganism is no longer side-lined as a 'special diet' in schools and that a vegan choice is available every lunchtime to all children in all schools, to enable them to make more responsible food choices.

Ms J Pearson-Klein

Subject:	FINAL Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2021 – 2026		
Date of Meeting:	Children, Young People and Skills Committee 9 November 2020		
Report of:	Deb Austin Interim Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Georgina Clarke-Green	Tel: 01273 292257
	Email:	Georgina.ClarkeGreen@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The report provides an analysis of the feedback from the recent consultation of the city's draft new SEND Strategy.
- 1.2 The committee to note and endorse the new final SEND Strategy (Appendix 1).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That CYPS committee note the feedback from the consultation and endorse the final SEND Strategy which includes a new timescale for delivery.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The purpose of the city's SEND strategy 2021-2026 is to deliver on a city-wide agreed vision for the commissioning and delivery of SEND services, providing a framework against which provision can be measured and improved.
- 3.2 After an extensive co-production process with a range of stakeholders, the draft SEND strategy was presented to the CYPS Committee on the 15 June 2020 for the committee to note the draft strategy and the planned wider consultation process. The aim of the consultation was to ensure that we had captured the voice of the wider SEND community in the final document.
- 3.3 The consultation process started on the 19 June 2020 and finished on the 18 September 2020. It was facilitated through a survey monkey published on the Brighton and Hove City Council Website. The weblink was widely publicised through a range of partner agencies and internal networks listed below:
 - PaCC
 - Amaze
 - Clinical Commissioning Group

- Head teachers
- SENDCos
- FCL Comms

3.4 In addition to the survey monkey, there has been a focussed piece of work with the BAME Community undertaken by PaCC, Amaze, A Seat at the Table and the Hangleton and Knoll Project. A report captured feedback from an online survey (completed by 60 BAME families and sent to 500+ families on the Compass Disability Register) and a series of one to one semi-structured phone interviews with 25 families from various communities and ethnic backgrounds.

3.5 Two focus groups were organised for councillors so that members had an opportunity to consider the draft SEND Strategy in more detail, ask questions of officers and provide feedback on the document.

3.6 Once the consultation had finished, the feedback was collated and key reoccurring themes identified. A group of key partners that comprised representatives from the CCG, local authority and PaCC and Amaze met on the 23 September 2020 to consider the feedback and propose a series of amendments to the draft that reflected the views submitted through the survey. PaCC have also further consulted their steering group. Amendments are highted in Appendix 1 in Final SEND Strategy.

3.7 Summary of the feedback

3.8 There were 59 respondents to the survey and 2 email submissions, one from the Safeguarding and Care team within the local authority and the other from the Clinical Commissioning Group. The feedback from the BAME community and Councillors have also been included.

3.9 The table below sets out the category of respondent alongside the corresponding % of the total response rate.

How are you responding to this consultation?				
		Frequency	Percent	*Valid Percent
Valid	A Brighton & Hove resident	6	10.2	10.2
	A parent or guardian of a child affected by the draft strategy	27	45.8	45.8
	A teacher or head teacher at one of Brighton & Hove's SEND schools	3	5.1	5.1
	A teacher or head teacher at another of Brighton & Hove's schools	7	11.9	11.9
	Support staff at one of Brighton & Hove's SEND schools	3	5.1	5.1
	A local stakeholder or representative of a local business, community or voluntary group	6	10.2	10.2
	Other	7	11.9	11.9
	Total	59	100.0	100.0

*Valid % means that 'no response' to a question is removed from the equation. All % referred to in the report are valid %.

3.10 The 'Other' category consisted of:

- Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service (SLT representation)
- Staff in Children's services
- Representative from the Supported Employment Team BHCC
- Vice-Chair Governors, West Blatchington Nursery and Primary School
- Parent of a disabled child and a stakeholder in a voluntary organisation

3.11 There were 14 overarching questions in total. Questions 1a and 1b focussed on the vision and ambition of the SEND Strategy. In total, 91.4% of the respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree with the vision and ambition set out for the strategy. Therefore, the wording has remained the same as in the draft strategy.

3.12 Questions 2a to 13b were about each of the six priorities:

- Inclusion
- Early Identification and Intervention
- SEND Pathways
- Achievement and Outcomes
- Transition and Preparing for the Future
- SEND Sufficiency

Each priority had the following set of questions:

- a) Do you agree or disagree that **Priority** is an issue for children, young people with SEND, adults with learning disabilities and for their families in the city? (Quantitative measure)
- b) Why do you agree or disagree that **Priority** is an issue? (Qualitative measure)
- c) Do you agree or disagree that the actions set out in this priority area will make a positive change for those with SEND in the city? (Quantitative measure)
- d) Why do you agree or disagree that the actions set out in this priority area will make a positive change? (Qualitative measure)
- e) Do you feel anything is missing from the strategy for this priority area? (Qualitative measure)

The full data set for the quantitative measures and a summary of the comments for each of the qualitative measures are included within Appendix 2.

3.13 Quantitative data

3.14 It was clear from the quantitative data across all priorities that between 80% and 95% of respondents strongly agreed or tended to agree that these are priority issues for children, young people with SEND, adults with learning disabilities and for their families in the city. Therefore, it has been decided by the core stakeholder group that the six priorities remain as they are and no changes have been made.

3.15 In terms of question (c), between 59% and 70% either strongly agreed or tended to agree that the actions set out in that priority area will make a positive change for those with SEND in the city. However, between 18% and 28% neither agreed or disagreed with the statement with less than 10% of respondents tending to disagree or strongly disagree with the proposed actions. The only anomaly was Priority 2: Early Identification and Intervention - where 14% of respondents tended to disagree and 2% strongly disagreed.

3.16 Qualitative data

3.17 There were a number of themes that came through the qualitative data. These were the following:

- Training on a range of issues
- Funding
- Covid19
- Assistive technology
- Engagement with harder to reach communities such as BAME, LGBTQ+
- Waiting lists for a range of health services
- A whole family approach with particular focus on siblings of children and young people with SEND and young carers
- Support for parents/carers to navigate the system
- Acknowledgement of care status
- Better communication between all agencies and with the SEND Community
- Post 16 and post 19 provision and services
- Representation of the voluntary sector

3.18 The above have now been incorporated into the final SEND Strategy either through amending an existing action or by adding a new one (see Appendix 1 – all additions and amendments in **bold**).

3.19 Respondents were asked ‘How much do you agree or disagree with the proposals for the governance of the SEND Strategy?’. In total, 58.5% either strongly agreed or tended to agree with the governance arrangements. However, a large percentage, 30%, neither agreed or disagreed. This may be due to the community not being familiar with the SEND Partnership board or the Adult Learning Disability Partnership Board (their respective memberships and roles). This issue will need to be addressed quickly by the boards so that the SEND Community are confident that the organisations responsible for delivering the actions are properly held to account.

3.20 There are a variety of comments in reference to the governance arrangements. The lack of voluntary sector voice was noted and it is important to clarify that the voluntary sector is technically represented on the SEND Partnership Board by Amaze who currently hold the elected Community Works seat. There is no timescale for the actions, but each priority workstream will produce a detailed action plan, listing milestones, measures of success and key leads for more detailed proposals. However, it is anticipated that all actions in the document will be completed by the end of the calendar year 2026.

- 3.21 The funding implications of achieving such an ambitious strategy was also mentioned. These concerns have been captured and reflected upon in a stand-alone item in the main body of the new SEND strategy in addition to a narrative around how risks to strategy implementation will be monitored and mitigated. This also highlights that there is much within the strategy that isn't dependent upon additional funding; rather, there needs to be a change to the way services are designed/delivered and how agencies collaborate to make more efficient and effective use of existing resources.

ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.22 Stakeholders agree that the city needs a new SEND Strategy. It is best practice for a local area to have one in order to agree local priorities, commissioning arrangements and to enable success and progress in SEND services to be measured.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 4.1 A key principle of the development of the new strategy is to ensure that the voice of children, young people and adults with SEND is heard and incorporated. The draft SEND strategy was developed through a co-production process. It involved a large number of discussions and focus groups with a range of stakeholders and interested parties. This includes parents, carers, children and young people, adult service users, parent support groups, statutory service providers, the education sector, the independent sector and community and voluntary sector colleagues.
- 4.2 The recent consultation has provided significant additional feedback with many comments and views being added to the final SEND strategy document. Some Priority actions have also been amended to reflect more accurately the views of stakeholders (Appendix 1).
- 4.3 We have also incorporated the learning from a wide range of other steps taken in the city to capture feedback. This includes the biannual Safe and Well at School Survey which provides valuable feedback from pupils who are in receipt of support in school. We are also able to learn from the surveys and other activities undertaken by our parent/carer support groups in the city such as Amaze surveys and PaCC workshops. Focussed pieces of work have also taken place with the BAME community to ensure that their voice is heard and reflected throughout the document.

5. CONCLUSION

The SEND Strategy 2021-2026 has been a truly co-produced piece of work which reflects the aspirations of the SEND Community and those services, provisions and organisations that support it. The delivery of such an ambitious strategy will present challenges, particularly in light of the Covid pandemic; however, there is a determination across the city to overcome any barriers so that we can work together to meet the objectives. Our aim is to ensure that Brighton and Hove is one of the very best places to live if you have a special educational need or disability.

6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 6.1 Future strategies and priorities will need to be considered in conjunction with available budget. In terms of council finance, the scope of services included crosses both Council General Fund and Dedicated Schools Grant budgets. As part of the Dedicated Schools Grant settlement for 2021/22 the Government has announced an additional sum of £730m nationally for high needs. For Brighton and Hove, this equates to an increase in the High Needs Block (HNB) allocation of c. £2.9m. This additional resource will give the LA some capacity to develop strategies in line with agreed priority areas. However, there are existing significant and growing pressures that also need to be addressed within this funding settlement.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steve Williams

Date: 15/10/2020

Legal Implications:

- 6.2 In September 2014, the introduction of the Children and Families Act brought about major reforms to the way local authorities and other organisations support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years is the related statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people. This places a duty on the local authority to consult children with SEND and their parents or carers when reviewing local SEN and social care provision.
- 6.3 The public consultation exercise outlined in this report will meet the common law duties in respect of procedural fairness, as well as duties set out in the statutory guidance that children, young people, their parents and carers must be consulted in determining the council's strategy for SEND.

Lawyer Consulted: Sandra O'Brien

Date: 16/10/2020

Equalities Implications:

- 6.4 The ability of residents with disabilities to access services and make progress has been a key consideration in the development of this new strategy. Improving outcomes for all in the city with SEND is a key priority for all partners and will be monitored as part of this work.
- 6.5 Many protected characteristics feature heavily in the strategy, we have worked closely with our partners and parent groups to ensure that we reflect the diversity in the city.
- 6.6 One of the strategic actions in the 'Sufficiency of SEND Services and Provision' priority is to carry out a city-wide SEND sufficiency project. This will involve further developing datasets and reporting we currently have around SEND Services.

- 6.7 We will monitor Equalities Impact as the strategy is implemented and reviewed on a regular basis by the SEND Partnership Board. Any actions identified from this process will be incorporated into the SEND Strategy priority action plans, where appropriate. This will ensure that those actions will be part of the regular monitoring of progress and scrutiny of data.

Sustainability Implications:

- 6.8 An agreed SEND Strategy within the city allows for more informed commissioning in this area, supporting best value for public resources.

Public Health Implications:

- 6.9 Early discussions on the new SEND Strategy development have taken place to ensure it is aligned with the city's existing Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

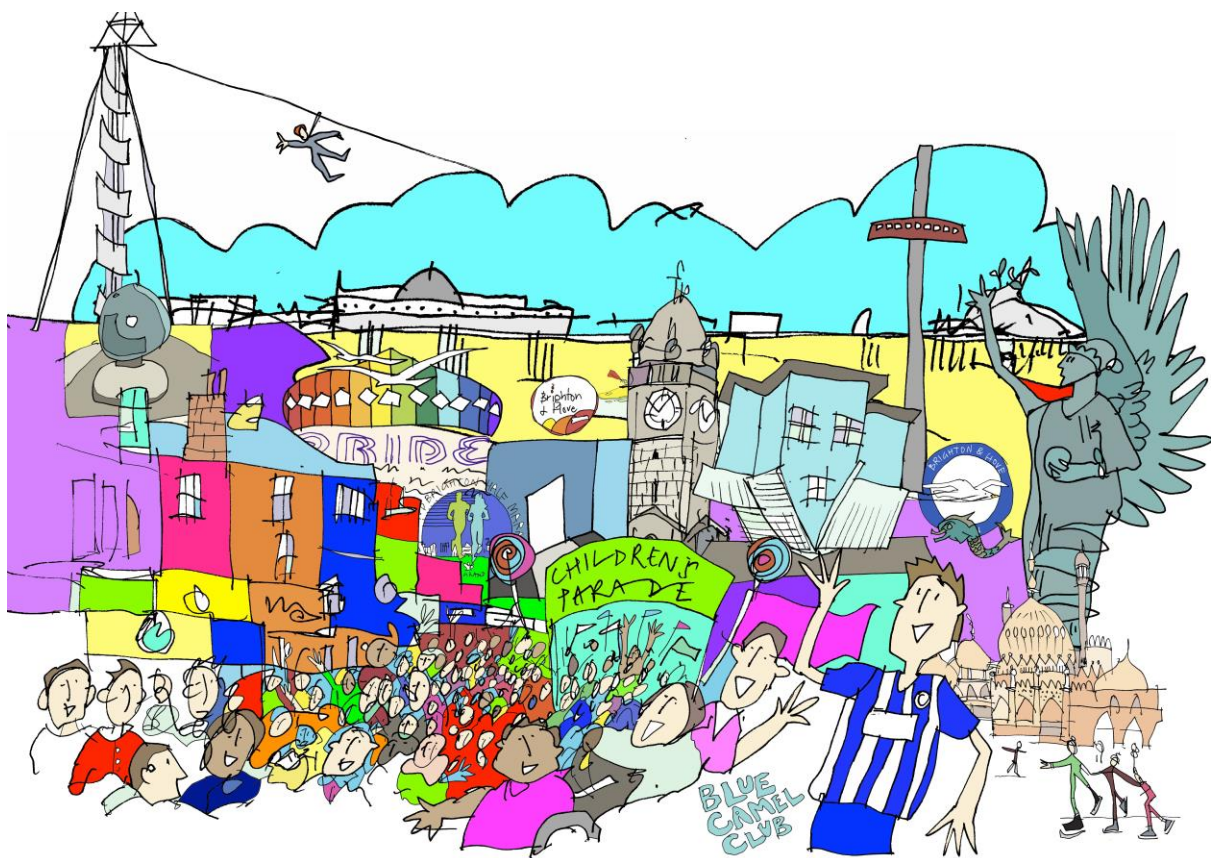
1. Final SEND Strategy 2021 – 2026
2. Survey feedback

APPENDIX 1 – All amendments and additions in response to the consultation are in bold.

Brighton and Hove

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy

2021 – 2026



Contents Page

Introduction	3
What children, young people and young adults tell us	4
Our 2021 vision	5
Local context	6
What families tell us	8
Our ambition is that all children and young people with SEND and their families are able to say	9
Our priorities for the next 5 years	10
Profile of Need: Education	11
Profile of Need: Health	14
Profile of Need: Care	16
Priority 1: Inclusion	18
Priority 2: Early identification and intervention	21
Priority 3: SEND Pathways	23
Priority 4: Achievement and Outcomes	25
Priority 5: Transitions and preparing for the future	27
Priority 6: Sufficiency of SEND Services and Provision	30
Appendix 1: How we will make sure this is delivered.	32
Appendix 2: Links to other strategies	33
Appendix 3: SEND Partnership Board Members	34
Appendix 4: Adult Learning Disability Partnership Board Members	35
Appendix 5 – Funding and Risk Assessment	36
Appendix 6 - Covid19	37
Glossary of terms	38

Introduction

Welcome to the Brighton and Hove co-produced citywide strategy which has been developed to enhance the outcomes and life chances of children and young people with SEND and adults with Learning Disabilities across the city. Although the Local Authority (LA) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are the leads for the strategy, its success will undoubtedly lie in the effectiveness of the partnership between all stakeholders, in particular our families.

The strategy sets out our co-produced six key priorities and refers to the partnership between the LA, CCG, families, schools and settings, other agencies and services in Health and Social Care, including Adult Services and the voluntary and community sector. The new strategy will be steered by the SEND Partnership Board which is co-chaired by the Assistant Director for Health, SEN and Disability and the Commissioning Manager from the Clinical Commissioning Group (membership is listed in the appendices). The progress against the actions specific to adults with learning disabilities will also be monitored by the Learning Disability Partnership Board. All partners will be accountable for delivering on the actions that have been identified and agreed and the progress against each of the actions will be monitored through the relevant boards.

It is vital that this is a meaningful, accessible, engaging and thought-provoking document. The city's Parent and Carer Council, (PaCC) and Amaze have worked very closely with the LA and the CCG to engage a wide range of stakeholders in order to ensure that the key priorities reflect the needs of the SEND community. Central too is the voice of children and young people, in addition to those adults with Learning Disabilities. With this in mind, the use of graphic facilitation has enabled those who are not always able to express their thoughts to be visually represented: their views are therefore illustrated throughout this document.

We very much hope that you find our strategy ambitious, aspirational and a reflection of our core aim: to achieve the best outcomes for the city's most vulnerable children, young people and adults with Learning Disabilities.

Deb Austin
Executive Director Families, Children & Learning

Georgina Clarke-Green
Assistant Director, Health, SEN & Disability, Families, Children and Learning

Fiona England, Chair of Parent Carer Council

Katie Chipping, Senior Partnerships Manager, Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group

What children, young people and young adults tell us



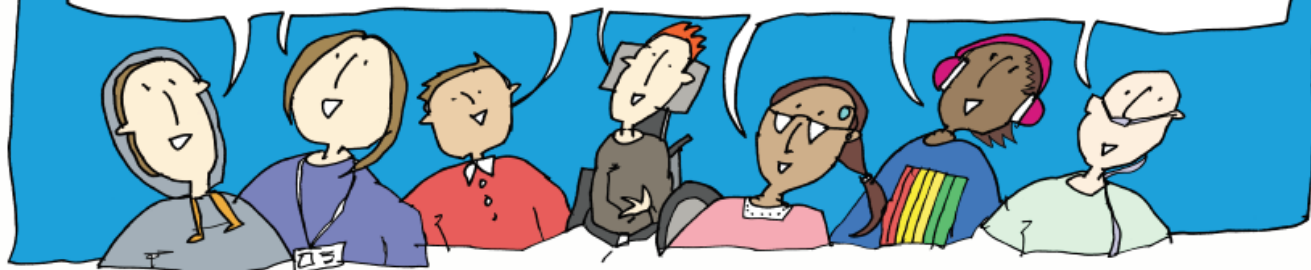
We worked with children, young people and young adults in three areas with a wide range of abilities and additional needs using graphic facilitation. Three questions were asked during this process and responses were captured in words, colours and images. These questions ranged from 'What do you think about the 6 priority areas?' to 'What makes a good life?'

We also asked children, young people and young adults what images would be needed to make this strategy reflect Brighton and Hove. As young people shared their ideas, they were drawn in real time on a large piece of paper. The drawings were summarised to make sure nothing was missed and that the images made sense to the children and young people. These images were transferred to a digital format used in the SEND Strategy document.

We are committed to ensuring that the voice of children and young people continues to be heard throughout the delivery of this strategy. Therefore, each priority area will need to demonstrate how they are engaging with children and young people with SEND, young adults and adults with learning disabilities whilst implementing each of the action plans. This will be monitored through the SEND Partnership Board.

Our 2021 vision

Our children and young people with Special Educational Needs and adults with Learning Disabilities will achieve the very best that they can so they can lead happy, healthy and good lives.



'Better outcomes, better lives'

Local context

Brighton and Hove is proud to be an inclusive city. Our mainstream schools have a range of specialist facilities, both in the primary and secondary phases, that support children and young people with a variety of needs including: Autism; Sensory Impairment; Speech, Language and Communication Needs; Specific Learning Difficulties. We have an outstanding specialist nursery for young children with SEND at the Jeanne Saunders Centre and two outstanding special schools: Downs View and Hill Park within our three complex needs hubs. We also have a range of well-regarded support services such as Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service.

The city is fortunate to have an active and representative parent carers' forum – the Parent Carers' Council (PaCC) which is hosted and supported by Amaze, a charity that is commissioned to provide the local Special Educational Needs Information Advice and Guidance Service (SENDIASS). Collectively, they reach a large proportion of families with children and young people with SEND and target their services and outreach support in order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities. Amaze holds data on about 70% of the eligible population on the city's Children's Disability Register, The Compass, which provides an easy mechanism for gathering views across the city or targeting specific communities. This is supplemented by additional consultations and specific engagement work undertaken by PaCC which has elicited a good response.

Our Social Care Specialist Community Disability Service supports our children and young people with SEND and the city's adults with a Learning Disability. This is provided through three assessment and care 'pods' that are age banded as follows: 0-13, 14-24 and 25+ years. The model is designed to place focus on transition for young people between the ages of 14-24 to ensure they have consistent and seamless support in a time in their lives when they will experience many changes. This service works closely alongside our colleagues in Safeguarding and Care.

Brighton and Hove has good and outstanding in-house residential provision that supports our most vulnerable children, young people and adults with a disability. The city has two respite/short breaks homes for children and young people and nine residential homes that provide specialist residential care and supported living.

The Shared Lives scheme supports adults and young people over the age of 16 who are unable to live independently. The scheme currently offers 59 people the chance to stay in the community through being looked after within a family home.

The city's day centre for adults with Learning Disabilities based at Wellington House provides an innovative range of activities for those service users who need a stimulating programme throughout the day and is greatly appreciated by the families of the service users it supports.

Sussex Community Foundation Trust (SCFT) provides health input for many children and young people with SEND. The health visiting team is key in the early identification of children with developmental concerns and provision of support for their families. Child Development Services in Brighton and Hove includes Speech and Language

Therapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Community Paediatricians, Audiology, and Specialist Nursing The multidisciplinary team at Seaside View Child Development Centre comprises community paediatricians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, specialist speech and language therapists, a specialist nursing team and audiology and clinical psychologists. They provide assessment and intervention for children and young people with a range of developmental concerns and disabilities including: Developmental Delay; Learning and Speech and Language Difficulties; Social Communication Difficulties; Physical Disabilities; Sensory Impairment.

Child Development Services are delivered in the child development centre, at special and mainstream schools, nurseries and at home. The community speech therapy team provides assessment and input for children in clinics, nurseries and schools. with a range of needs including dysfluency, autism, hearing impairment, complex needs

Neurodevelopmental assessment of those with suspected Autism over the age of 11 and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is undertaken by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) within the Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust. Here, there is close working within the teams and with hospital services (both local and tertiary), the community nursing team and General Practitioners (GPs).

Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT) provide the CAMHS in our City. Services are available across locations such as GP surgeries, clinics, hospitals and schools. The specialist teams in CAMHS undertake assessment and provide treatment for children and young people up to age 18 who have emotional, behavioural or mental health problems. There is close working across the range of community and wellbeing support services.

We are also very lucky to have a strong voluntary and community sector within the city which provides families with a wide range of valuable services. In terms of Adult Learning Disability services, we have, amongst others, Speak Out which is an independent advocacy charity for people with Learning Disabilities and Grace Eyre which provides a wide range of services including day activities such as yoga, art and cooking, supported living and a Shared Lives Project. Our children benefit from other services such as Extratime which runs high quality, affordable clubs, holiday schemes and family events activities for children and young people with and without disability aged 4 – 25 years. Here, children and young people with SEND have an opportunity to have fun, try new things and socialise with their friends. **Barnardos Link Plus also provides highly valued short breaks for disabled children.**

What families tell us

The Brighton and Hove community is already providing some excellent provision and high-quality support, provision and services to many families with children and young people with SEND.

“I just wanted to thank you hugely for the amazing support you have given to my son over the last 5 years and the incredible commitment and dedication you have shown to his care. You have seen him through many difficult times and a lot of highs and lows and seen him grow and develop and start to self-manage his behaviours better. I certainly believe that he has come a long way and you have played a hugely important part in this so thank you so much for that.”
(Parent)

However, we also hear consistent themes when delivering our services and support to families, so we are keen that this new strategy provides an opportunity to address some of these worries. Families have told us that:

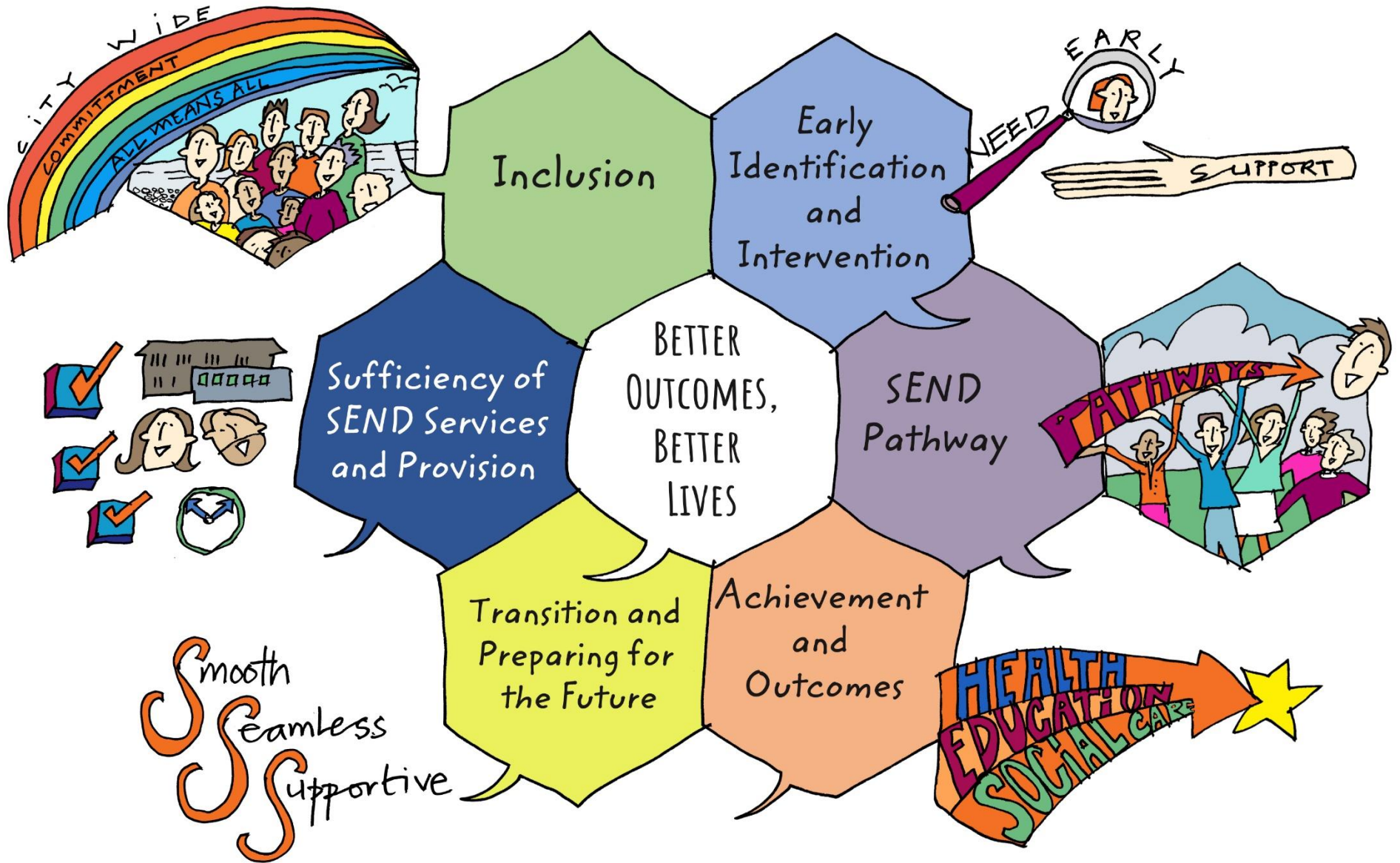
- They can feel lost and sometimes find it difficult to find out what is available for their child
- They can feel isolated and alone, stressed and exhausted
- They worry their child will struggle to ‘fit in’ or make friends
- There is too long a wait for some assessments and therapies
- Some feel that getting an EHC Plan is the only way of accessing the support their child needs
- Services are often not joined up, don’t always work together and families have to give the same information repeatedly, to different teams
- They worry the city hasn’t got the right range of educational provision to meet their child’s or young person’s needs
- They worry about how their children are supported in mainstream schools
- Their child with SEND, their siblings and themselves as parent carers, are facing increasing levels of anxiety and poor mental health
- Parent carers’ ability to maintain employment is affected and they are worried about not having enough money
- They are concerned about their child’s future, and the ‘cliff-edge’ of adult services

Our ambition is that all children and young people with SEND and their families are able to say

- We are listened to and respected
- Our needs are understood, acknowledged and provided for
- Our voice and views are at the heart of all decision making for our child
- We are involved in co-production of services and support at all levels of the system
- We have access to good quality and impartial information, advice and support
- We have regular communication that is tailored to specific needs
- Our needs are identified early
- The pathways to access help are transparent and equitable
- We have more help from a range of agencies for our children and young people on SEN Support
- We can access more support at home or locations of our choosing
- We can access a variety of short breaks and after school activities
- Professionals work in partnership with parents, are well trained and empathetic and work flexibly around us
- We are welcomed and included, and we are accessing (education, social and leisure) opportunities within our local community
- We are no longer excluded from schools
- We have earlier, person-centred and more aspirational/ambitious planning, for a good adult life and there is a smooth handover from children to adult services, where parent carers and children and young people know what to expect



Our priorities for the next 5 years



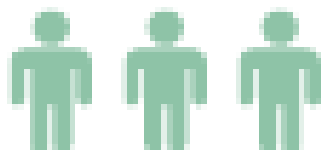
Profile of Need: Education

Overall rates of absence for Children and young people in Brighton and Hove with SEN are higher compared to compared to the England average.

In addition, overall rates of persistent absence for children and young people SEN are higher with an EHC Plan compared to compared to England average

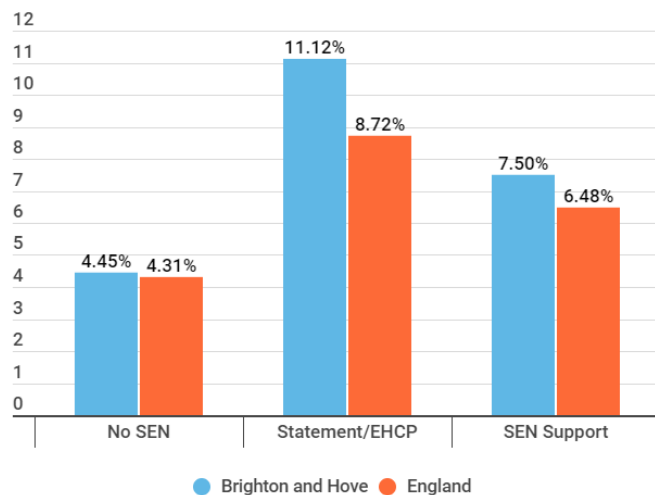
Rates of fixed term exclusions for children and young people with SEN are higher compared to England average.

Permanent exclusions are lower than the England average.

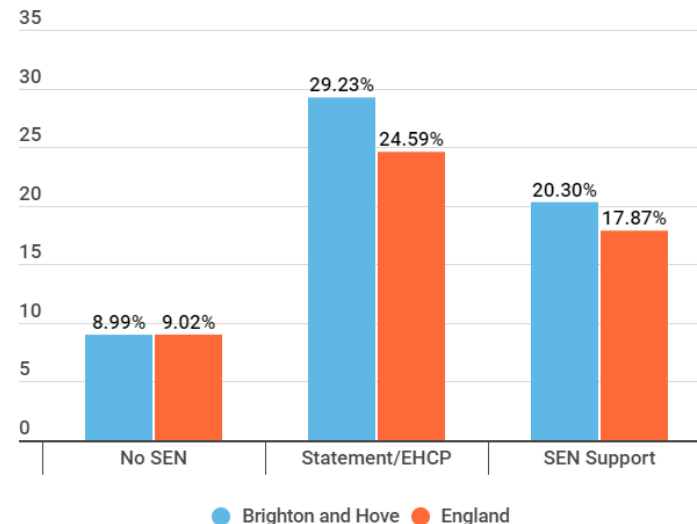


3 pupils were permanently excluded in 2019/20 and all were on SEN Support. 6 pupils were permanent excluded in in the Autumn and Spring Terms in the 18/19 Academic Year

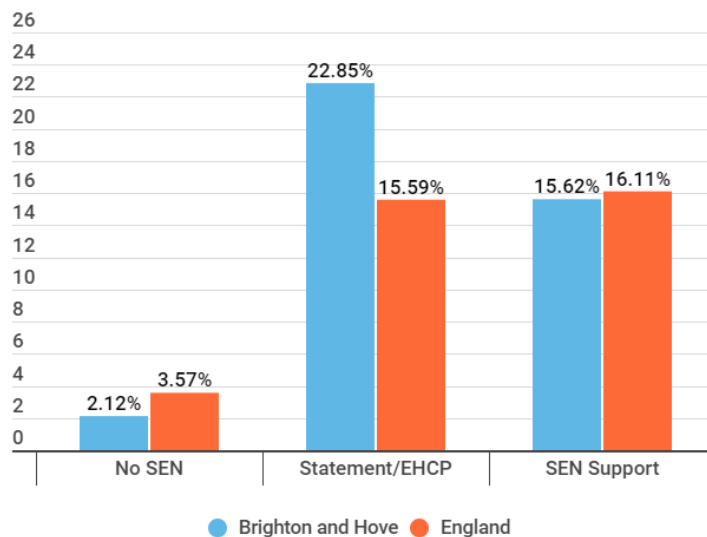
Overall Absence Pupils with Special Educational Needs 2018/19 Academic



Pupils with Special Educational Needs defined as persistent absentees 2018/19



Rate of Fixed Term Exclusions for Pupils with Special Educational Needs 2018/19 Academic



Profile of Need: Education

There are 4374 pupils in Brighton and Hove on SEN support which equates to 13.5% of the pupil population. This is higher than the national average of 12%, however the trend shows that the numbers have decreased year on year since 2015.

At 63% boys make up the majority of pupils on SEN support with 37% of girls.

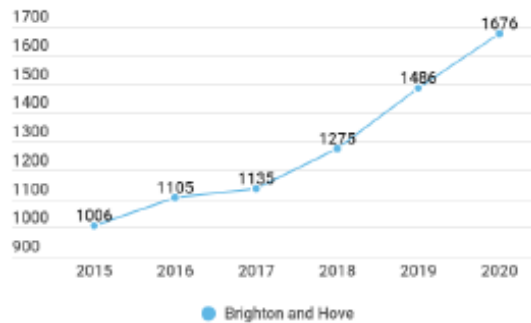
Pupils on SEN support receiving free school meals is slightly higher than national average.



1,676

Number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan aged 0-25

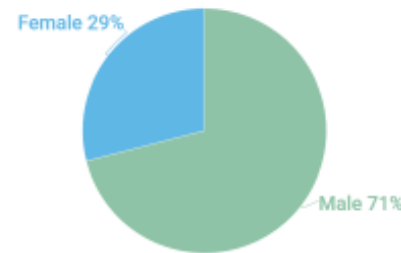
Children and Young People with an EHCP 2015 to 2020



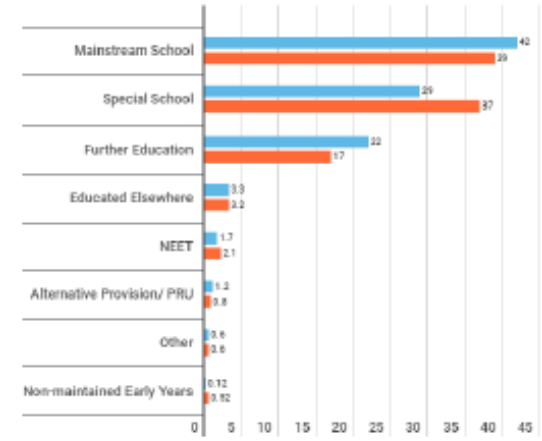
3.6%

Pupils in Brighton and Hove schools with an Education, Health and Care Plan (3.3% nationally)

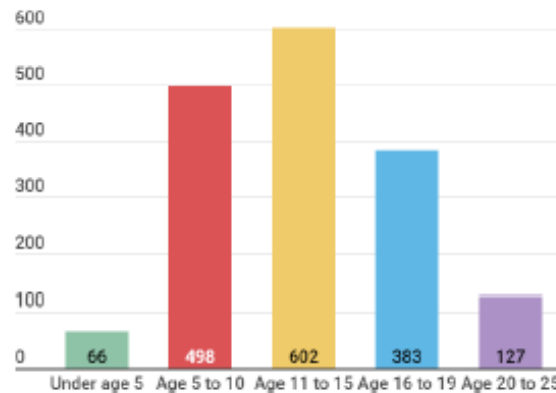
Children and Young People aged 0-25 with an EHCP by Gender



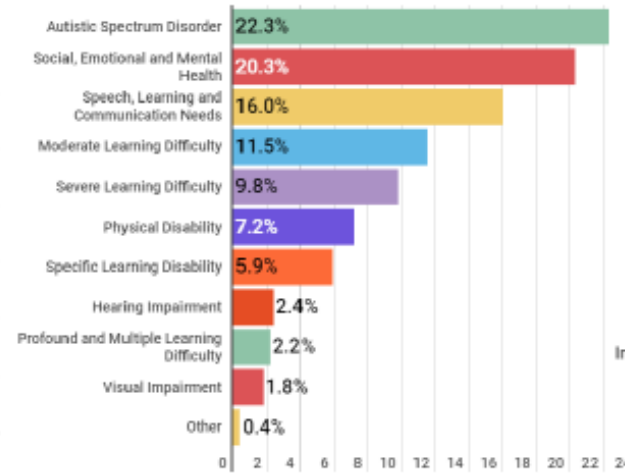
Children and Young People with an EHCP by Placement Type



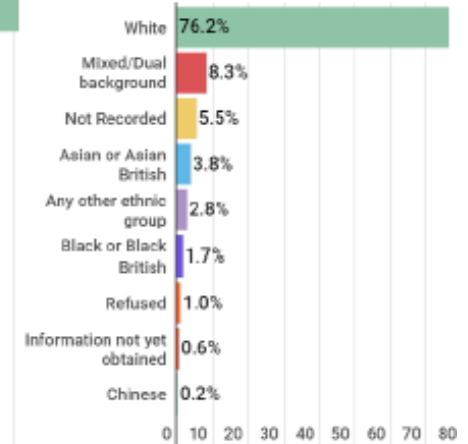
Children and Young People with an EHCP aged 0-25 by Age Band



Children and Young People aged 0-25 with an EHCP by Primary Need



0-25 with an EHCP by Ethnic Origin



The profile of need for this level of support differs from that of the children and young people with an EHC Plan. At 26.2%, Specific Learning Difficulties is the most prevalent primary need with Speech, Language and Communication Needs being the second most common additional need requiring support in mainstream schools.

In total 52.4% of those children and young people on SEN Support are below 10 years old, with many children converting to an EHC Plan upon transferring to secondary school.

Profile of Need: Education

At the time of publication, there are 1,676 children and young people aged 0-25 years with an Education and Health Care Plan in the city. This equates to 3.3% of the school population compared to 3.1% nationally. **The trend shows that EHC Plans have risen year on year.**

The significant majority of EHC plans are held by boys, with girls making up only 29% of the entire cohort. Most of the EHC Plans exist in the secondary phase.

There is a higher percentage of children and young people with EHC Plans in mainstream schools and Further Education colleges compared to the South East and national levels. The percentage of children and young people in non-maintained and independent schools is lower compared to the South East and national levels.

The majority of EHC Plans are young people aged 11 to 15 years and there is a higher number of EHC Plans in secondary compared to primary schools

The majority of children and young people with an EHC Plan are from a white background and mixed dual background. 14.6% of children and young people with an EHC Plan are from BAME backgrounds.



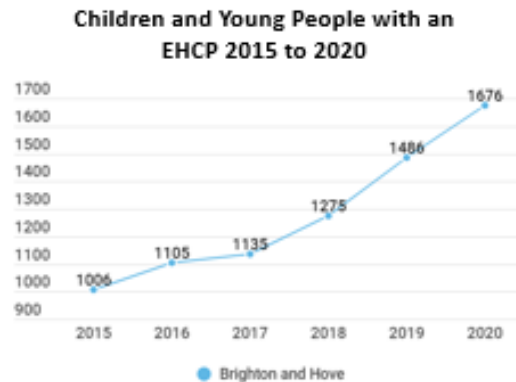
1,676

Number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan aged 0-25

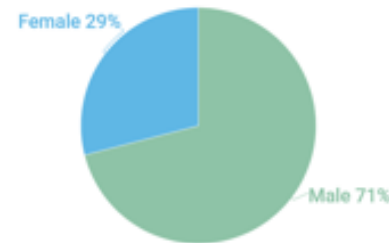


3.6%

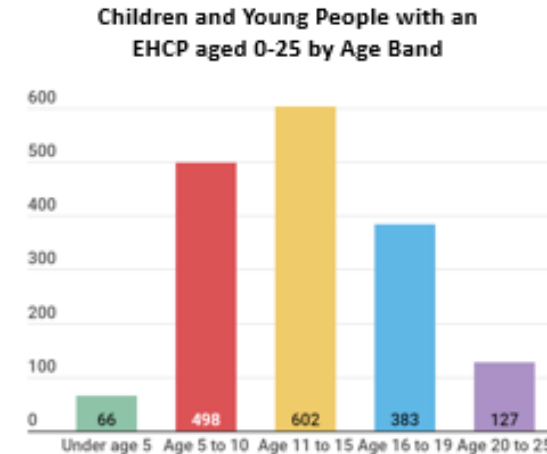
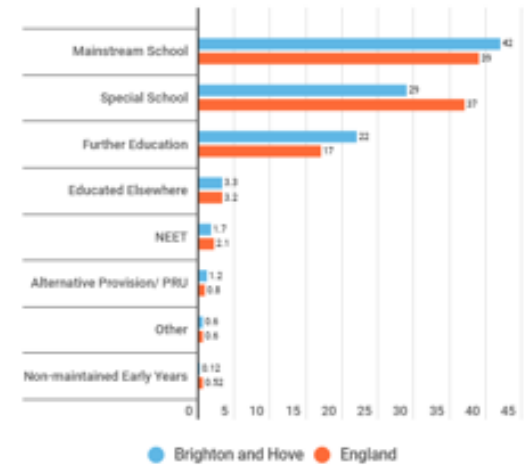
Pupils in Brighton and Hove schools with an Education, Health and Care Plan (3.3% nationally)



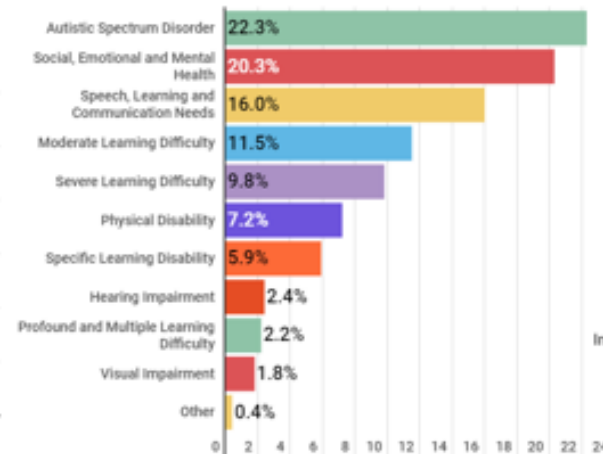
Children and Young People aged 0-25 with an EHCP by Gender



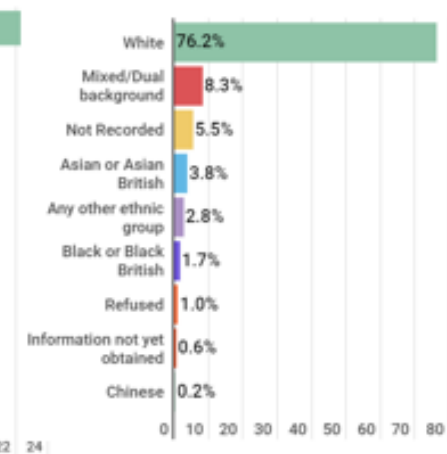
Children and Young People with an EHCP by Placement Type



Children and Young People aged 0-25 with an EHCP by Primary Need



0-25 with an EHCP by Ethnic Origin



Profile of Need: Health

Child Development Service

There is ongoing demand for all therapy services, which involves assessment and intervention, training workshops and parent support.

There continues to be a high level of demand for ASC assessment, which has meant that despite increasing capacity waiting times have increased. The CCG has identified funding to improve the services for children with Autism as part of a new Neurodevelopmental Pathway in Brighton and Hove. The service specification is currently being finalised for implementation in 2020.

Child Development Services are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and children and young people.

Children Referred for ASC Assessment



2018/19 - 328



2019/20 - 309

Number of children Assessed



2018/19 - 231



2019/20 - 265

Number of children receiving ASC diagnosis

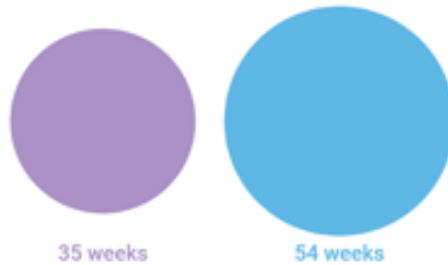


2018/19 - 167



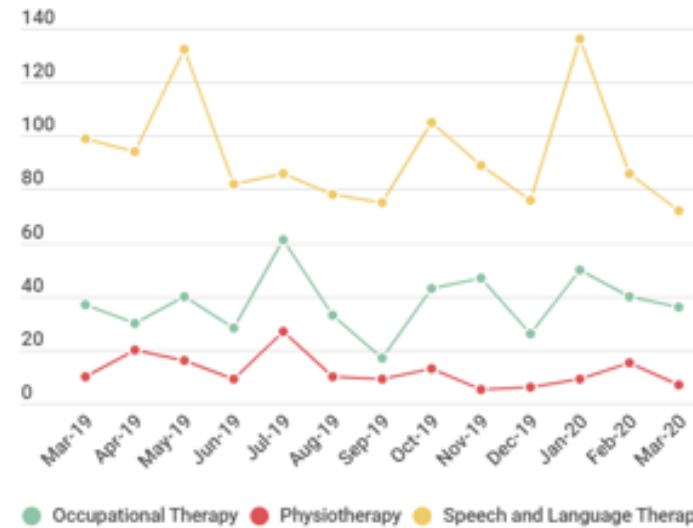
2019/20 - 183

ASC Waiting Times

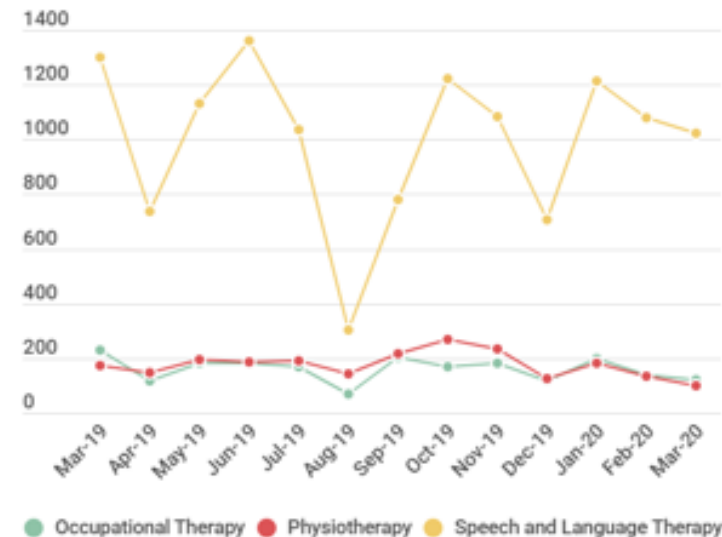


● March 2019 ● March 2020

Referrals for Physiotherapy Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy



Physiotherapy Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy Activity



Profile of Need: Health

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

The performance information is a snapshot of Brighton and Hove's current CAMHS service.

The Sussex CCGs have recently concluded a Sussex Wide Children's Review and they will be working together over the coming months to address the key findings of the review. The aim of the review was to ensure good services for children across Sussex and improved integrated pathways for our children and young people.



Profile of Need: Care

Brighton and Hove currently have **106** children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Early Help Service and **167** children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Services.

Brighton and Hove have 31% of children in care compared to 29% in England and 30.4% of children in need compared to 21% in England.

The majority of children known to Specialist Community Disabled Services are aged 0-12 years.

66% of children and young people are male and 34% female.

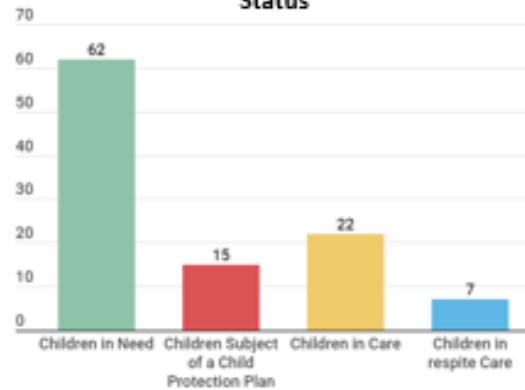
75.5% of children and young people supported by the Specialist Community Disability Service are from a white background, 11.3% are from a mixed/dual background and 13.2% are from BAME and other backgrounds.



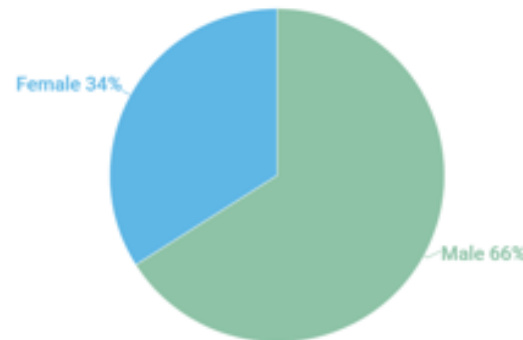
106

Children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Services

Children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Services by Social Care Status



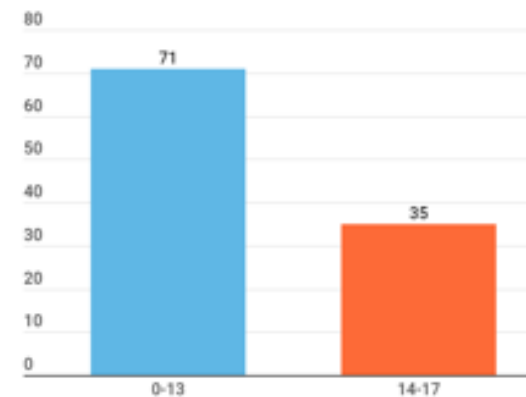
Children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Services by Gender



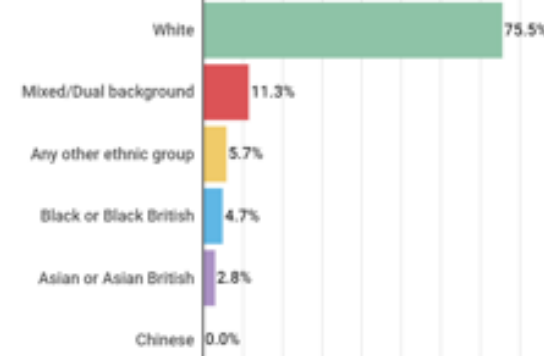
167

Children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Early Help Service

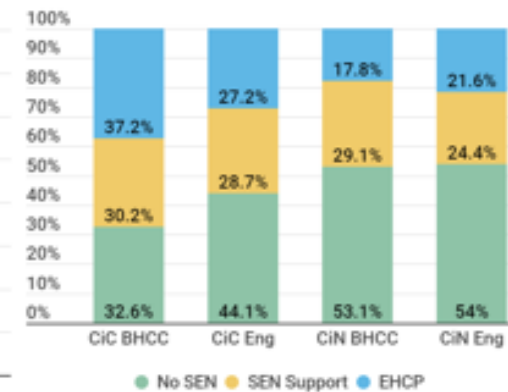
Children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Services by Age



Children and young people open to Specialist Community Disability Services by Ethnic Origin



Children in Need and Children in Care with Special Educational Needs



Independent and Non-Maintained Placements



73.2

FTE Spend in 2018/19

Profile of Need: Care

There are 708 adults with Learning Disability who received long-term support.



708

Working age (18-64) service users who received long-term support during the year with a primary support reason of learning disability support

The number of adults with learning disability in Brighton and Hove who are living on their own is 4% above national average.



81.4%

living on their own or with their family, above the national average of 77.4%

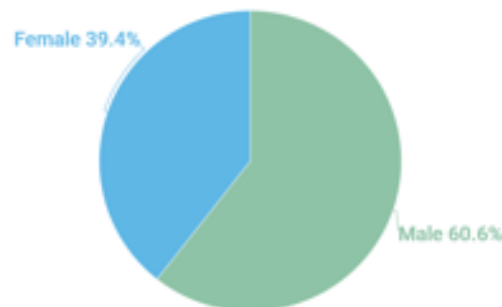
The number of adults with learning disability in paid employment is 2.9% above national average.



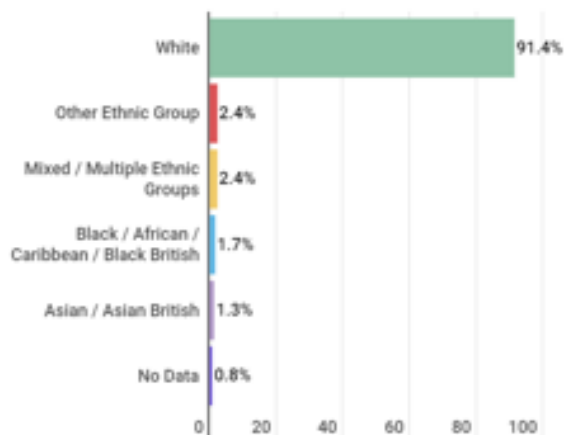
8.8%

In paid employment, above national average of 5.9%

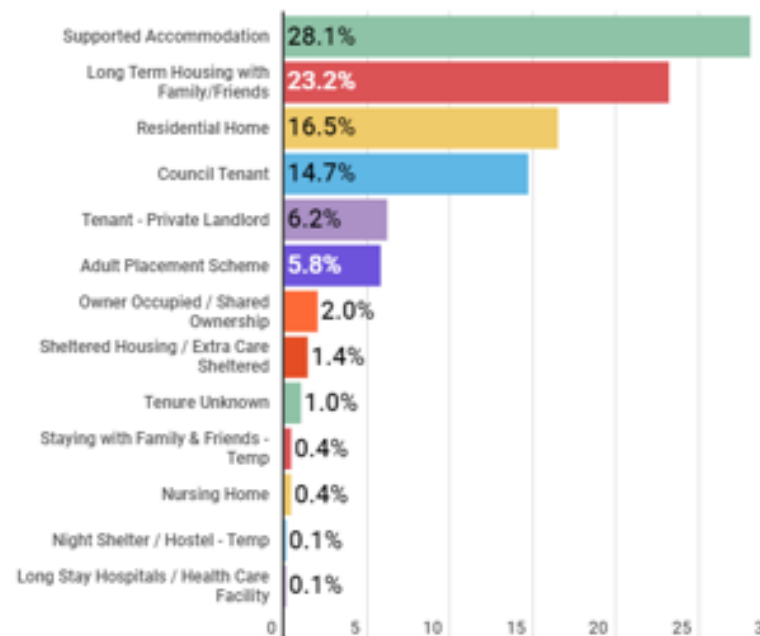
Adults with a learning disability by Gender



Adults with a learning disability by Ethnic Origin



Adults with a learning disability by accommodation status



49 60.6% are male and 39.4% are female.

91.4% of adults with learning disability are from a white background with 16.4% from other mixed multiple groups and BAME backgrounds.

28.1% of adults with learning disability live in supported accommodation and 23.2% live in long-term housing with family friends.

Priority 1: Inclusion

Vision: We will ensure there is a city-wide commitment to services and support that will be inclusive to children, young people and adults with Special Educational Needs and or Learning Disabilities.

What are the outcomes?

- There will be a commitment from all schools and early years settings to a city-wide charter for Inclusion
- Co-production will be central to the design and development of all services and provision
- Adults with Learning Disabilities will be able to access health services more easily and there will be a significant increase in the number of Learning Disability Annual Health checks being undertaken
- **The quality standard for inclusion must drive change**

50



Action Reference	Priority 1: Inclusion Strategic Actions Workstream 2
Inclusion 1	Co-produce a city-wide charter for inclusion. This will be supported by a communication campaign on Inclusion that focusses on engaging with harder to reach communities and promotes a shared ethos and commitment to disadvantaged learners, Black, Asian, and minority ethnic groups, those who identify as LGBTQ and those children, young people and adults with SEND.
Inclusion 2	Co-produce and promote, including with schools, a city-wide self-assessment tool for Inclusion to include best practice for children and young people with SEN and/or disabilities and across all categories of need.
Inclusion 3	Co-develop new services that intervene earlier to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs enabling inclusion and access to other services and opportunities.

Inclusion 4	Co-produce a multi-agency training package for Social Care staff on SEND and Inclusion and for SEND teams on Social Care , to enable better understanding and delivery of services to families across the system.
Inclusion 5	Enable a wider cohort of children and young people with SEN and/or Disabilities to access after school clubs, weekend and holiday schemes support to ensure equal access to many universal learning and leisure opportunities.
Inclusion 6	Deliver training on awareness of SEND, ethnicity and culture so that all staff across all settings can be supported to challenge cultural assumptions and improve their understanding of different cultures and backgrounds and how this may impact upon SEND needs. This will be co-produced with parent carers and accessible to diverse communities.
Inclusion 7	Co-produce the Hidden Children Missing Education action plan with parents/carers and other partners. The plan must have a focus on ensuring a full-time education and flexible location to meet the individual needs of children and young people.
Inclusion 8	Ensure that buildings that house services for children and young people are accessible for all types of SEN and Disability.
Inclusion 9	Develop a plan that focuses on providing support for young carers and siblings of those with Special Educational Needs.
Inclusion 10	Ensure that there is uptake of Learning Disability Annual Health checks for young people from age 14 years and adults with Learning Disabilities through the EHC Plan annual review process.
Inclusion 11	Develop further person-centred local medical/hospital passports considering the use of technology for children young people and adults with complex needs to ensure that their holistic needs are met during a hospital stay.
Inclusion 12	Promote on-line GP consultations in primary care as direct access online is more accessible for parents/ carers and adults with learning disabilities.
Inclusion 13	Parent/carers to be involved in co-producing training programmes on Inclusion with the LA and CCG
Inclusion 14	Develop specific support, activities, events and opportunities for BAME children and young people with SEND and their parent carers to come together, and for service providers to hear from and build relationships with these communities.

Inclusion 15	Key services, Children’s Committees and Boards to review their staff diversity profile and set targets to increase BAME % representation.
Inclusion 16	Develop an accessible and simple support system for parents of children and young people with SEND that has clear signposting.
Inclusion 17	Develop a scheme that shares good practice between schools through the primary and secondary SENCo networks.
Inclusion 18	Improved access to assistive technology to enhance the voice and lives of children and young people with SEND and increase their independence.
Inclusion 19	Develop training for school staff to create more child-led and relationship led support for children with SEND.
Inclusion 20	Raise the profile of SEND in the wider community by developing a SEND Communications Strategy with partners that uses a values-based approach to engage with providers and the community on the positive impact disabled people can make on the workforce and society.

Priority 2: Early identification and intervention

Vision: We will ensure that children’s needs are identified, assessed and supported both early in life and when issues arise.

What are the outcomes?

- There will be a reduction in the number of families reaching crisis point through timely Early Help intervention
- There will be an increased awareness of Early Help, intervention and inclusion across the city
- There will be a consistent offer of mental health and wellbeing services across Sussex

We will:

Action Reference	Priority 2: Early identification and intervention Strategic Actions Workstream 2
EIAI 1	Review the early help offer in the city to reduce health and social care inequalities and to improve support for children and families with SEN and or Disabilities with a focus on hidden families and harder to reach communities.
EIAI 2	Develop guidance for delayed entry to school applications and applications to place children out of year group that fully considers the longer-term implications for children with SEND.
EIAI 3	Co-design with families the development of peer support schemes in the city that builds on what already exists.
EIAI 4	Implement the recommendations of the Pan Sussex review of Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Services and prioritise those recommendations that our most pertinent to the SEND community.
EIAI 6	Build on our SEND Guide for Professionals that promotes the parent/ child and young person voice and develop a tool kit for early years settings and schools so that SENCO’s can identify and support additional needs at an earlier stage. To compliment this a SEND accessible guide for families will also be co-produced

	with our parent groups to enable better understanding of the tools used by schools to identify and support additional needs.
EIAI 7	Achieve an increased awareness in early years , education, health and care settings of inclusion issues and strategies/interventions in order to support vulnerable children and young people and adults with Learning Disabilities. This will be delivered through an enhanced inclusion training offer from Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS) and Specialist Community Disability Service (SCDS).
EIAI8	Work with the city's Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships (BAP) and other schools to ensure that children's Special Educational Needs and care status are fully considered in relation to school policies including behaviour and safeguarding.
EIAI9	Strategic leaders will ensure that the whole-family approach is communicated effectively and embedded across all levels of the partnership and delivery teams. Supporting the needs of siblings of disabled children and young carers will be a key strand of this work.
EIAI10	Strategic leaders will give greater attention to evidencing impact alongside maintaining a focus on positive outcomes for families. This will enable best use of existing resources with a view to developing the business case for investment in preventative services.
EIAI11	Implement personalised care and social prescribing for children and young people with complex health and Special Educational Needs.
EIAI12	Co-design with families the development of peer support schemes in the city that builds on what already exists and addresses the advocacy and support needs of all parent carers from diverse backgrounds
EIAI13	Monitor and publish the ethnicity breakdown of key services to increase transparency and assess whether BAME families' early help experiences are disproportionate to the wider SEND community
EIAI14	Schools to develop mentor systems to support BAME children and young people with SEND in developing effective individual plans around preparation for adulthood outcomes.
EIAI15	Develop training for schools, parents and health professionals about the different way neurodevelopmental conditions can present including cross gender can present, pre-diagnosis and associated strategies for support.
EIAI16	Ensure that early years providers and schools are equipped to identify and support children with high prevalence additional needs pre and post diagnosis through raising awareness, frequent and updated training and provision of appropriate teaching tools.

Priority 3: SEND Pathways

Vision: We will ensure that children, young people and adults with SEN and or disabilities and their families can access the right support from services easily and quickly.

What are the outcomes?

- Our pathways will be clear, accessible **and linked up across education, health and care for families**
- **A commitment to joint working and joint commissioning that recognises the value of working together to benefit the community and prevent children and young people falling through the gaps**
- There will be a reduction in the duplication of meetings and families will only need to tell their story once
- There will be a short-breaks/respite service for children and adults that meets the needs of families

We will:

Action Reference	Priority 3: SEND Pathways Strategic Actions Workstream 3
Pathways 1	Implement a communication strategy (which includes data sharing agreements) across services to ensure better lines of communication exist for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and their parents and carers.
Pathways 2	Improve the timeliness of in-school triage for children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties to ensure the right needs assessments are being identified and acted upon.
Pathways 3	Ensure that all meetings about the child/young person are brought together where possible to save families and professionals attending multiple meetings and repeating the same information.

Pathways 4	Review our SEND decision-making systems and ensure that processes are transparent for families.
Pathways 5	Transform the Neurodevelopmental Pathway to increase capacity for Autism and ADHD diagnosis across both health and mental health providers to ensure integrated pathways, approaches and packages of support for all Neurodevelopmental conditions. This will include the roll out of integrated clinics for complex and co-morbid cases.
Pathways 6	Co-design services considering a 'whole family' approach for all pathways pre and post diagnosis.
Pathways 7	Work with families and multi-agency professionals to ensure robust pathways for those children "missing education" who are not eligible for support because they are not on a school roll. This must include electively home educated children and young people and those who are in custody.
Pathways 8	Review our offer for, children in care, children in need and children and young people previously in care to ensure that their needs are identified early, and they receive appropriate support in schools and colleges.
Pathways 9	Ensure that Children in Care Reviews and Annual Reviews are bought together once a year.
Pathways 10	Review the short break and respite policy and commissioning strategy for children, young people and adults with LD. This aims to provide a range of opportunities through the extended day opportunities, and short breaks in their community, ensuring it reaches more families and eligibility is equitable.
Pathways 11	Ensure that EHC Plans better reflect the Health and Social Care needs of children and young people. For example short breaks provision will link to identified need and have clear outcomes.
Pathway 12	Ensure the Local Offer and information, advice and guidance through the SENDIAS Service is clear and accessible so that families in Brighton and Hove know what the Health SEND offer is and how to access it. Information should include clear threshold criteria for accessing specialist services and provision.
Pathway 13	Develop with partners a Quality Assurance Framework for Education, Health and Care Plans with a focus on improved outcomes for children and young people.
Pathway 14	Co-develop a special schools admissions protocol.
Pathway 15	Deliver the agreed recommendations with parents/carers for the Home to School transport service cited within the Independent Review Report.
Pathway 16	Parent/carers to be involved in co-producing training programmes on Inclusion with the LA and CCG.
Pathway 17	Health and Mental Health commissioners will review and co-develop, with families, the range of Child Development Centre Pathways, clarifying the offer and developing outcomes for ongoing monitoring.
Pathway 18	CCG will develop and implement an integrated commissioning model across Health and Social Care.
Pathway 19	Develop a more accessible and simpler support system for parents with clear signposting.
Pathway 20	Co-production with families at an individual level will be prioritised and monitored across pathways and services.

Priority 4: Achievement and Outcomes

Vision: We will ensure that all children, young people and adults with learning disabilities are able to achieve their full potential across Health, Education and Social Care.

What are the outcomes?

- Children and young people with Special, Educational Needs and/or Disabilities will have their achievements recognised and celebrated
- There will be a more flexible curriculum offer to provide more opportunities for success as recognised by Ofsted
- There will be a reduction in the attainment gap for children and young people at all key stages with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
- Adults with learning disabilities will engage in 'lifelong learning' pathways and increase their independence



Action Reference	Priority 4: Achievement and Outcomes Strategic Actions Workstream 4
AO1	Develop a city-wide approach to recognising and celebrating other outcome measures for young people with SEND and adults with LD. This needs to be embedded at an inter-agency/interservice level and done in partnership with the Local Authority, Voluntary Sector, children, young people and families.
AO2	Focus on aspirational and smart personalised outcomes across education, health and care in planning children, and young people's EHC Plans and Social Care plans.
AO3	Encourage education settings to implement alternative qualifications that champion Life Skills such as RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) – a five stage process to measure the progress and achievement of learners on non-accredited learning programmes.

AO4	Work with schools to review the curriculum offer in the city for those with Special Educational Needs. This should include consideration for expanding the city wide vocational and alternative qualifications offer in secondary schools and consideration of appointing vocational champions.
AO5	Develop a framework for wellbeing outcomes that makes explicit milestones for Mental, Physical, Social and Emotional Wellbeing.
AO6	Develop an aspirational outcomes framework for both EHC Plans and those children and young people on SEN Support.
AO7	Implement a co-produced attendance strategy for SEND learners to support increased attendance in school.
AO8	Continue to challenge and support schools to close the progress and attainment gap for 'disadvantaged' learners and those with SEND.
AO9	The CCG will review current service specifications for Autism, Neurodevelopmental pathways and therapies such as Occupational health, Physiotherapy, Audiology and Speech and Language services and engage with children, young people and parent/carers to ensure that meaningful outcomes are defined and agreed.
AO10	Reduce the number of children and young people with SEND and those with SEND from a BAME background being excluded from education settings through an enhanced training offer and the allocation of additional resources to the School Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships (BAP).
AO11	Raise the profile of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and the support it can provide to SEND EAL families. A varied number of therapeutic interventions / subjects should be offered to BAME Children and Young People with SEND.
AO12	Schools to develop mentor systems to support children with SEND from the BAME community in developing effective individual plans around preparation for adulthood outcomes.
AO13	Raise the profile of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and the range of interventions and support it can provide to SEND EAL families
AO14	More collaboration between mainstream and special schools to share assessment methodology and adapt it to mainstream settings for Children and Young People with SEND.

Priority 5: Transitions and preparing for the future

Vision: We will ensure that moves between services or changes in provision and support across all ages are smooth, seamless and supportive.

What are the outcomes?

- Transition for children going into reception and secondary schools will be well planned and supported
- A 14-25 co-produced pathway that includes Education and Care will be in place
- We will have increased employment and training opportunities for young people and adults with Special, Educational Needs and/or Disabilities



Action Reference	Transitions and preparing for the future Strategic Actions Workstream 5
TPF 1	Establish a multi-agency preparing-for-adulthood group which reports to the SEND Partnership Board to enable better transition into adult services and increase employment and training opportunities.
TPF2	Introduce person-centred planning reviews for young people in Year 9 to enable them to be more involved in all elements of their transition to adulthood.
TPF3	Develop and implement a co-produced 14-25 pathway for all young people with SEND to enable them to understand and navigate their next steps into adult life. This needs to include earlier consideration of post 16 options.
TPF 4	Develop city-wide training/practice-sharing activities focussed on Year 6 transition.
TPF 5	Implement a clear process for phase transfers (-1 to Reception, Year 6 to Year 7 and Year 11 to post-16) by working closely with families and statutory services such as School Admissions.

TPF 6	Increase the number of young people with SEND in employment through work experience, using the supported employment model alongside the development of supported internships and mentoring programmes with employers. Include a review of Information, Advice and Guidance available in the city for young people.
TPF 7	Review commissioning approaches within health and mental health services to ensure that children and young people up to the age of 25 experience a seamless service and age-appropriate care when transitioning from children’s services into adult services within community or acute hospital settings.
TPF 8	Develop and increase the opportunities for young people and adults with Learning Disabilities to enhance their life skills, interests and long-term outcomes particularly for those who have narrow interests and fewer life skills.
TPF9	Develop a range of tools for providers in the city to prepare our children for adulthood.
TPF 10	Provide training for foster carers and short breaks carers who can become shared lives carers. This will ensure consistency for young people with SEND who remain in family homes.
TPF 11	Expand the Move On project to enable more adults with learning disabilities to have greater levels of independent living.
TPF 12	Improve multi-agency working when planning the discharge of people with Learning Disabilities who are leaving their hospital placements.
TPF 13	Review the commissioning of services for young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 with SEND to ensure they experience seamless and age appropriate care. Young people will be included in commissioning decisions.
TPF 14	Develop an integrated, joined-up and multi-agency offer to support the transition of young people with SEND and complex health needs to adult services - even when there are no clearly identifiable adult services to meet their needs.
TPF 15	Commission services to ensure that providers of adult services actively contribute to the transitions care plan; this may include joint clinics held in a young person-friendly environment where a holistic approach can be readily adopted.
TPF16	Focus on developing children and young people’s independence, confidence and social skills so they can access education and their local community. Ensure an independent travel training programme is developed within the city.
TPF 17	Build on the ‘What’s out there’ days for young people with Disabilities.

TPF18	Develop pathways that ensure a wide range of opportunities for young people enhance their skills sets and increase their independence (i.e. the focus is less on training/education providers, and more on there being a different options for different Young people).
TPF19	Ensure robust packages of support for those children and young people with SEND in custody who are returning to school, employment or training and planning for any transition is undertaken with social care.
TPF20	Ensure the effective use of the Access to Work fund to help young people enter the workplace.
TPF21	Work with the community and voluntary sector to identify opportunities that will enhance the statutory offer for post 16 and 19 young people with SEND.
TPF22	Review and improve the post 16 and 19 education and training opportunities for SEND learners in the city through engaging with 6th form colleges, FE colleges, Voluntary Community Sector, training providers and universities.

Priority 6: Sufficiency of SEND Services and Provision

Vision: To ensure that the right provision is available at the right time for all children and young people with SEND which includes Early Years, Post-16, Post-10 and adults with a Learning Disability.

What are the outcomes?

- A commissioning strategy for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability and adults with Learning Disabilities will be in place
- We will have a clear evidence base that supports the allocation of funding to further develop our specialist provision and services
- We will have a clear and accessible Local Offer of support

62



We will:

Action Reference	Priority 6: Sufficiency of SEND Services and Provision Strategic Actions Workstream 6
SF1	Carry out a city-wide SEND sufficiency project to plan effectively how we will meet the prospective needs of our children and young people with SEND and adults with a Learning Disability. The purpose of this project will be to identify what provision and services we will require for children and young people from different backgrounds in terms of Education, Health and Social Care for a range of needs
SF2	Continue to harness the reach/knowledge/input from the wide range of (parent/carer/advocacy) community support groups across the city which add value to all statutory services.
SF3	Establish an LA commissioning and brokerage team to ensure a wide range of activities and provision are accessible for all children and young people with SEND. This will keep children and young people in their local community and use resources efficiently.

SF4	Continue to build on the Local Offer information detailing provision available for children and young people with SEND across Education, Health and Social Care.
SF5	Develop our SEMH offer to support children to stay in mainstream provision. We will engage specialist support to work at an earlier stage with children to stabilise placements and prevent exclusion.
SF6	Be responsive to the changing needs of our local population through engaging with families, using data and intelligence, using local data sources such as the Disability Register.
SF7	Review how SEND is funded across the system at a local level and explore alternative ways to manage the High Needs Block allowance for EHC Plans.
SF8	Carry out a skills audit to identify where we need to target support to improve staff recruitment and ensure retention in services that support SEND.
SF9	Review our offer for children and young people with Disabilities with a view to increasing the quality and capacity of Personal Assistants (PA) for young people in the city by developing a recruitment and retention strategy and providing an infrastructure that includes specialist training and a support network.
SF10	The CCG will improve their data systems to predict need and to plan effectively how we will meet the needs of children and young people.
SF11	Equality and diversity must be considered as part of SEND Sufficiency planning and the associated design and delivery of all services.
SF12	Develop a joint commissioning protocol that ensures Commissioning decisions on specialist placements will be made with all agencies supporting the child or adult with LD. These placements will only be made on the evidence that the child or adult's needs cannot be met locally.

Appendix 1: How we will make sure this is delivered.



We will deliver our strategy using a work-stream approach involving all key partners. Each work-stream will have named co-leads from Education, Social Care and Health and the Parent and Carer Council. The work-streams will meet bi-monthly and report directly to the SEND Partnership Board and the Adult Learning Disability Partnership Board on a bi-monthly basis.

Appendix 2: Links to other strategies

Brighton & Hove Council Corporate Plan 2020-2023

Adults Learning Disabilities Strategy

Hidden Children Strategy

Health and Adults Social Care Commissioning Strategy

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

NHS Long term plan

The Carers Strategy

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Appendix 3: SEND Partnership Board Members

Joint Chairs: Assistant Director Health, SEN & Disability, Commissioning Manager, Clinical Commissioning Group

Parent Carer Council

AMAZE Charity that gives information, advice and support to families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Brighton & Hove

Head of Service-Early Years Youth & Family Support

Head of Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Services

Head of Service 0-24 Specialist Community Disability Service

Head of Service 25+ and Specialist Clinical Services

Service Manager – Policy & Business Support

Head of SEN Statutory Service

Head of School Organisation

Designated Medical Officer

Executive Head, East Hub

Executive Head, West Hub

Executive Head, Central Hub

Headteacher, Secondary School

Headteacher, Primary School

SENCO, Secondary phase

SENCO, Primary Phase

Performance Manager, Performance and Safeguarding Service

Appendix 4: Adult Learning Disability Partnership Board Members

Head of Service 25+ and Specialist Clinical Services

Head of Service 0-24 Specialist Community Disability Service

Representative from Grace-Eyre

Representatives from Speak Out

Lead Councillor for Adult Social Care

Representative from Healthwatch

Deputy Chair of Parent and Carers' Council

Representatives from Amaze

Representative from the Carers Centre

Assistant Director for Health, SEN and Disability

Commissioning and Performance Manager

Learning Disability Health Facilitator

Representatives from Health & Adult Social Care:

Commissioning & Contracts Manager

Performance and Commissioning Manager (Engagement Lead)

Health Promotion Specialist

Representative from Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group:

Community Health Trainer, Healthy Lifestyles

Equalities Manager

Active for Life Sport & Physical Activity Worker

Employability Adviser, Employability Team

Representatives from Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Learning Disability Liaison Nurse Manager,

Appendix 5 – Funding and Risk Assessment

There are a number of actions identified within the SEND Strategy but much of the activity is focussed on better working between agencies; ensuring there is co-production with children, young people, adults with LD and their families when developing and designing services/provision; streamlining processes so they are more accessible to families and making systems more efficient so that children, young people and adults get the support they need when they need it. Training of the workforce by professionals and by families is also a key feature that threads through all priorities, although most of this can be delivered from within the current resources.

Much of this work will not require additional funding, only a different approach to the way we work together to achieve the objectives we have set ourselves. However, it is acknowledged nationally and locally that the public sector is under financial strain, a situation that has been further exacerbated by Covid19. Therefore, the local authority and partners will need to reflect upon how we use the current funding allocated to individual services and provision flexibly to respond to the different priorities identified by the community. Where there is an identified need for some additional funding a business case with supporting evidence will need to be submitted to the relevant organisation.

It is the outcome of Priority 6: SEND Sufficiency that will require detailed financial analysis alongside a complete review of the High Needs Block. Decisions will need to be taken collectively with stakeholders, including parents and carers, as to how the funding should be allocated in future, so that we can be assured the city has enough provision and services for children and young people with SEND and Adults with LD.

Risk assessment

Each priority will have an associated risk register. The register will identify the risks that may prevent the delivery of an objective and the impact on the community should it not be achieved. An officer from the relevant organisation will be responsible for managing the risk and a list of SMART actions to resolve/mitigate the risk will be monitored through the workstream leads and the SEND Partnership Board. The risk register will be presented alongside the progress report by the Priority Leads at each respective SEND Partnership Board

Appendix 6 - Covid19

The impact of coronavirus on children and young people with SEND and their families has been significant. The changes to children's daily routines, caused by the cessation of schooling and the reduced availability of therapeutic services, have caused many children with special educational needs and/or disability to struggle in adapting to new routines. This may have impacted negatively on their emotional and mental wellbeing and lead to increased anxiety, agitation and more challenging behaviours for some. Families have struggled as they have not been able to access their usual support networks and have often been confined to their homes, sometimes with little outdoor space.

We know that for some families, Covid19 has exacerbated challenges they were already facing and therefore it is critically important that we deliver this SEND Strategy. The public sector has learnt a great deal from the lockdown experience and specifically how to deliver services and support to families in different ways using a range of technology, social media and virtual platforms. We need to continue to listen to families about their experiences and ensure services are responding. Some of our systems and processes have become more efficient and multi-agency working has become increasingly expedient as we are increasingly able to meet virtually. The local authority and CCG have maintained a close working relationship with the city's SEND community and together we have managed to deliver a range of successful interventions that have supported families through this difficult time.

Many of the priorities in the strategy, such as:

- Reviewing of processes and policies
- Designing of pathways
- Delivery of training
- Effective communication between agencies and to the community
- Improving access to advice, guidance and support
- Data analysis to inform the commissioning of services and provision can be delivered creatively using a variety of virtual platforms, social media or by the application of PHE guidance in settings/venues to maintain social distancing.

All partners are determined that Covid19 will not delay progressing the work contained within the strategy and are committed to driving this forward by whatever means possible.

Glossary of terms

SEND	Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities
LA	Local Authority
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
PACC	Parent Carers' Council
SENDIASS	Special Educational Needs Information Advice and Guidance Service
SCFT	Sussex Community Foundation Trust
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
BHISS	Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service
BAME	Black Asian Minority Ethnic
EAL	English as an additional language
LD	Learning Disability
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition
GP	General Practitioner
EHC	Education, Health and Care
BAP	Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships
SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health
NHS	National Health Service

Accessible information

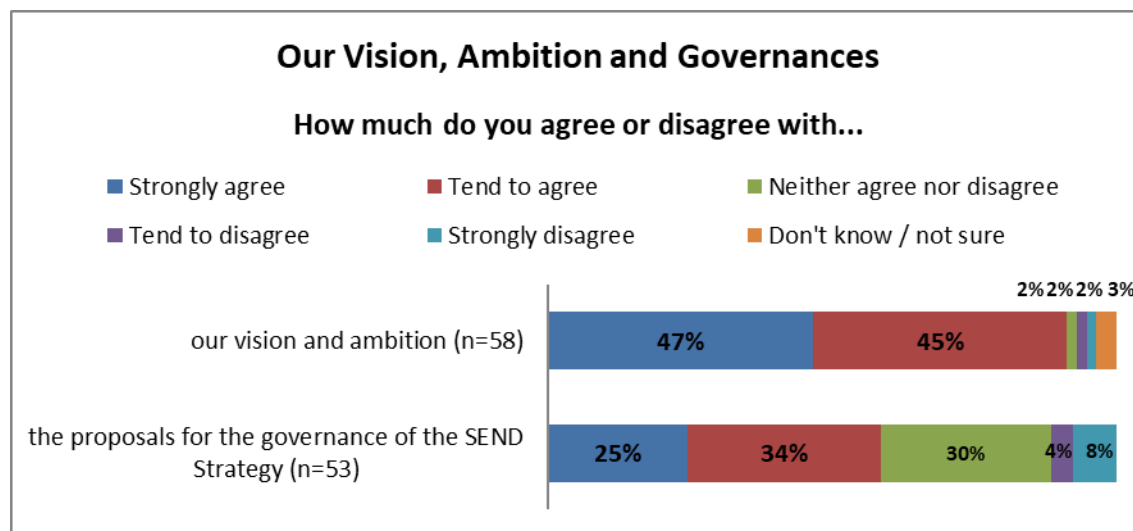
If you would like this letter or information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call us on 01273 293552 or email SEN.Team@brighton-hove.gov.uk



APPENDIX 2

SEND Strategy Survey Feedback

The bar charts below summarise the quantitative data collected through the online consultation and also several examples of comments from stakeholders within each of the sections.



Examples of qualitative feedback for Vision and Ambition (35 comments in total for this section):

“I have concerns about implementation and whether it will really happen but the aims are good.”

“I really like the focus on outcomes. Given that EHCPs run 0 -25 should there be specific reference to young adults (as well as Children and YP) 18+ who will be in our schools and colleges?”

“Our needs are understood, acknowledged and provided for is the key line for me. If that's done properly it covers all the other points in the vision.”

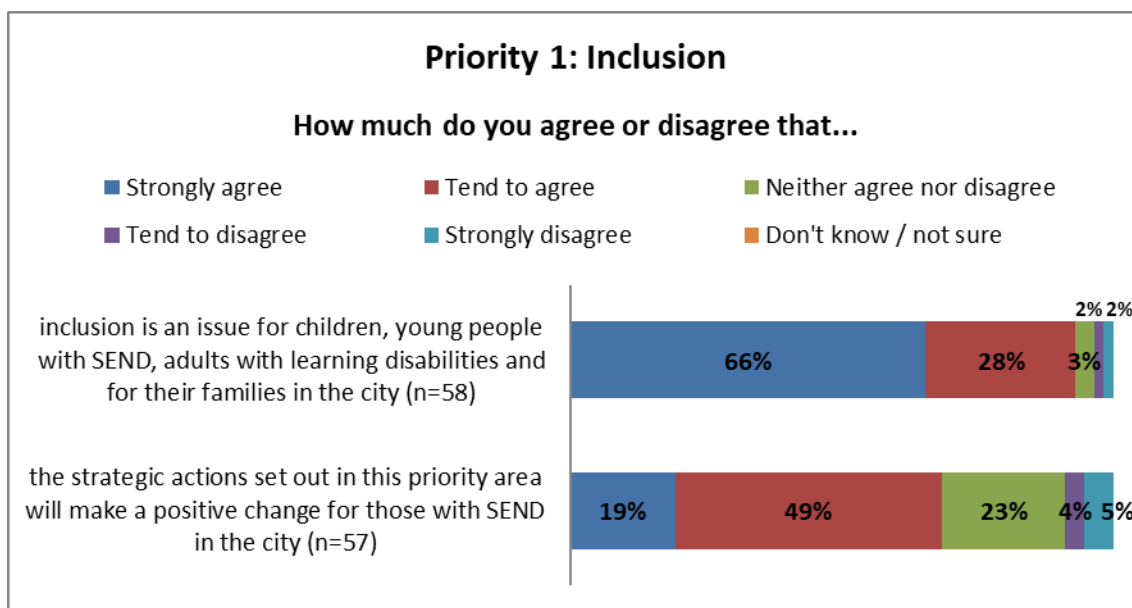
“That inclusivity is carried out by all schools in Brighton and Hove and this can be done by work collaboratively with parents and the LA to carry out the requirements for every child by making adjustments so that the child is not being asked to 'fit' the system rather the other way round.”

Examples of qualitative feedback for Governance (27 comments in total for this section):

“Why is it a linear path to the SEND board?”

“I cannot form a view here because it is unclear how representative the partnership boards will be and how impactful they will on the democratic process.”

“There does not appear to be a voice for the voluntary sector in the governance structure.”



Examples of qualitative feedback for Inclusion (85 comments in total for this section):

“Children and young people with SEND are too easily overlooked and their voices not heard, therefore inclusion is crucial to ensure they are able to access services and are listened to both as a group and as individuals.”

“Excellent range of actions. Support in schools and time for staff to be able to provide the support is essential.”

“I like the concept of the assessment tool. I hope this will reflect the idea of neurodiversity, which I feel should not just be used in an ASC context but across all needs. We need to move away from pursuit of (sometimes many) labels and towards more of an understanding of individual profiles that do not always need to be put into boxes or given official identifications, especially at a young age. Despite efforts at training, teachers and parents can still find this very challenging. Also, we need to move away from a medicalised model and the idea of something being 'wrong with' the individual - these mindsets still exist.”

“Inclusion is vital. It is important for SEND families to have equal opportunities and for this to be made available with the right support for them to access support to enable them to have the services they need and that are in their best interests.”

Priority 2: Early identification and intervention

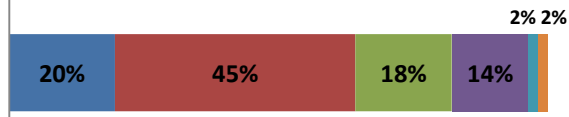
How much do you agree or disagree that...

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / not sure

early identification and intervention is an issue for children, young people with SEND, adults with learning disabilities and for their families (n=56)



the actions set out in this priority area will make a positive change for those with SEND in the city (n=56)



Examples of qualitative feedback for Early Identification and intervention (103 comments in total for this section):

“Building on good practice of early identification in EYs and SEND guide early identification throughout the age phases. Early identification that EYs have led on is good and exemplary practice in the city and a need to continue with this. Need to protect the areas that are working in this area.”

“There is a need to help continue to support schools with how to provide and support CYP with identified needs.”

“Early intervention is key to the prevention of difficulties and family crisis arising at a later stage.”

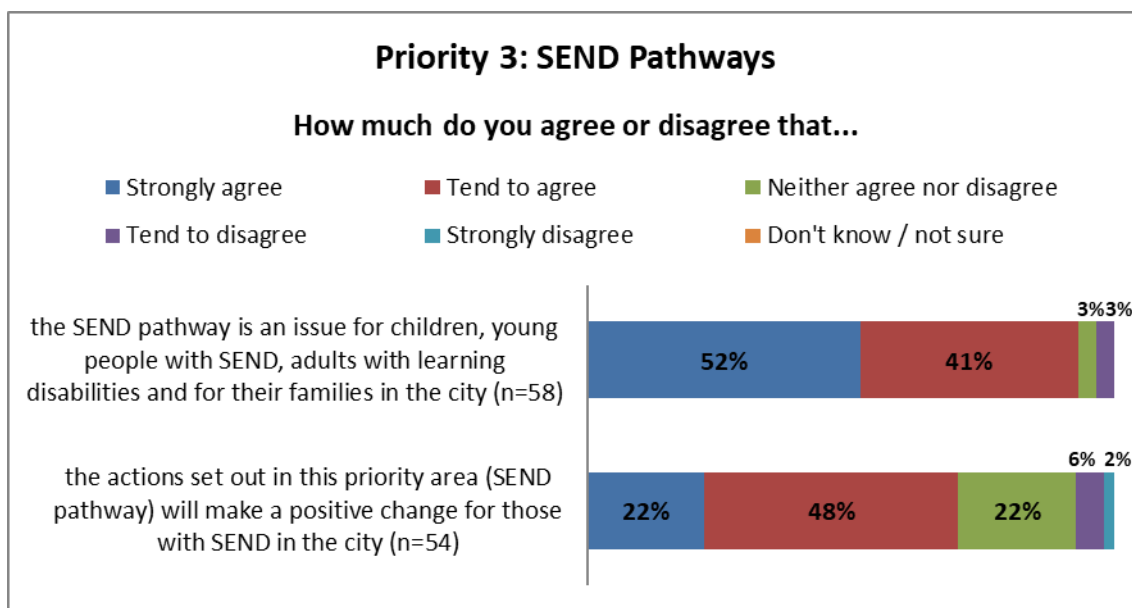
“Delay on identification compounds the difficulties individuals and families have later on.”

“Early identification is important and the training of professionals to spot when intervention is required should be prioritised.”

“More robust assessments over a period of time to identify SEND in early years is needed.”

“Too many children I have met have waited too long to get their needs met or have struggled at transitions times due to needs not being identified and provided for.”

“Research shows that early intervention leads to better outcomes. Families will feel better supported and crises/reactive practice will be reduced as a result.”



Examples of qualitative feedback for SEND Pathways (91 comments in total for this section):

“It is incredibly confusing to know what is available, where to go, when to access.”

“Lack of clarity and consistency across the city. Provision is still too varied and clearer thresholds are needed.”

“Not all families and young people will attend clinics, services need to be delivered in the community to be fully accessible to those that need them.”

“Many children fall through the gap especially in later years and then adulthood.”

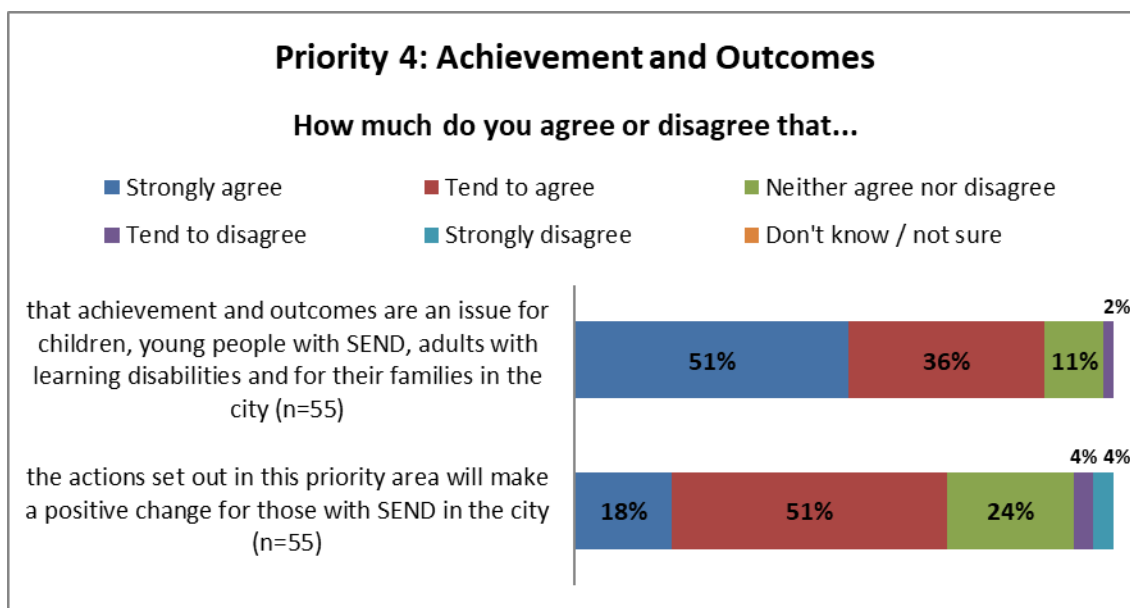
“Where can parents turn for help? The pathway should be clear and online for all to access.”

“Essential services and support are not signposted to families. I was surprised to read about services I hadn't heard about in the first two pages of your strategy”.

“Health education and social care not linked up for families.”

“There will be more joining up of services and communication to improve identification pathways. To improve services so that parents/carers do not have to keep telling their stories.”

“At the earliest possible stage there needs to be a clear way for all families to receive the full range of information about what help they could be eligible for (therapeutic / financial / social / emotional etc) and where that support can be found. Together with the support of someone to help guide them towards the most appropriate services rather than just leaving them with a pack of leaflets at a time when the amount of information may be difficult to digest if they are feeling overwhelmed with their circumstances. All families should be supported equally to access the help or support they might need.”



Examples of qualitative feedback for Achievement and Outcomes (78 comments in total for this section):

“Something really needs to be done this is well overdue. It's not fair at present when things become too much they lose out rather than receiving the necessary support.”

“Sometimes the curriculum is not differentiated enough for the individual or the environment at a particular setting may be wrong so there should be more awareness.”

“The statistics indicate there is an issue here locally.”

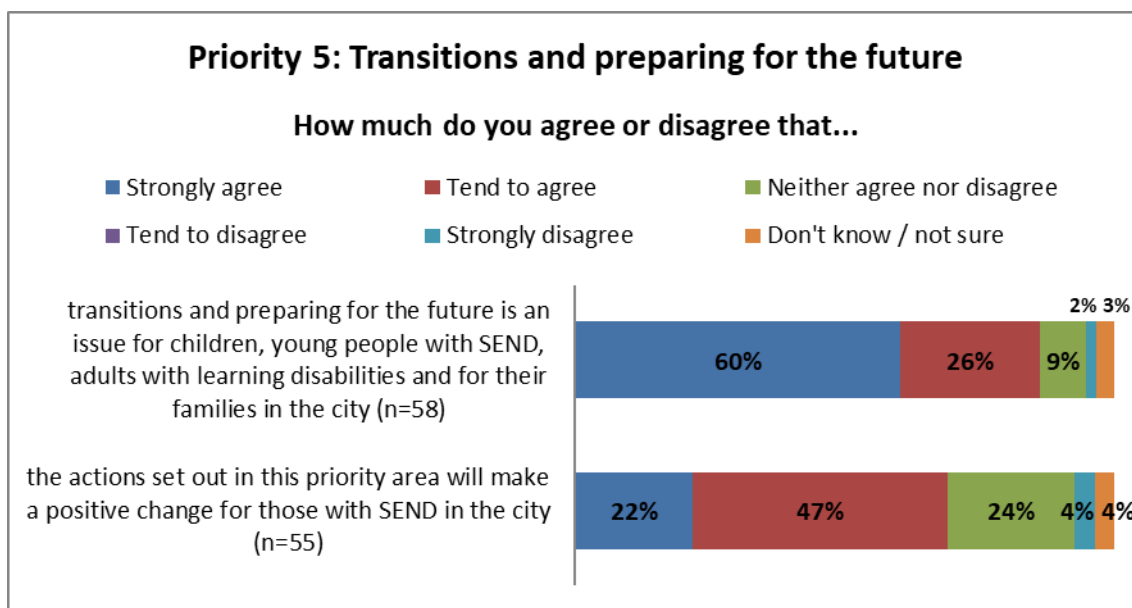
“Need consistent outcomes across all settings including short-breaks so all working to the same goals. Voice of the child, young person and adult with learning disability need to be consulted and involved in what outcomes they want to achieve.”

“I agree with developing an outcomes framework for both EHC plans and CYP on SEN Support - a template could be created which all schools use to monitor the provision and interventions a CYP is receiving as well as being used to keep track of their progress towards their outcomes”.

“Assistive Technology needs to be part of the strategic priorities as its role can be invaluable and make such a positive impact on people's lives and potential.”

“A more asset-based message would also be positive - the positive impact disabled people can make on the workforce and society - there's so much research to back this up.”

“It is essential that there is a focus on life skills and meaningful alternative qualifications to ensure the best adult life possible.”



Examples of qualitative feedback for Transitions and preparing for the future (74 comments in total for this section):

“I am very pleased to see the 14-25 work to provide a bridge from children's to adult services.”

“In my experience the transition from school to college is not well supported with little specialist support or access to information regarding options. A 14-25 team would be very beneficial in bridging these transitions.”

“Often transition planning is still left too late with not earlier enough planning to make it a smooth process for families especially for those children and young people with very complex needs. Often children services providers having to continue with placements post 18 years as adult services have not been successful securing ongoing correct provision which then blocks up placements for children and puts pressures of families waiting who are already reaching family relationship breakdown & exhaustion.”

“Transition support has improved hugely over the past ten years, but there is still scope for further improvement. Agree that transition to adulthood is a key area to support.”

“We all as a society need to do more to help CYPA get into employment/ part-time employment / supported employment / micro-enterprises etc.”

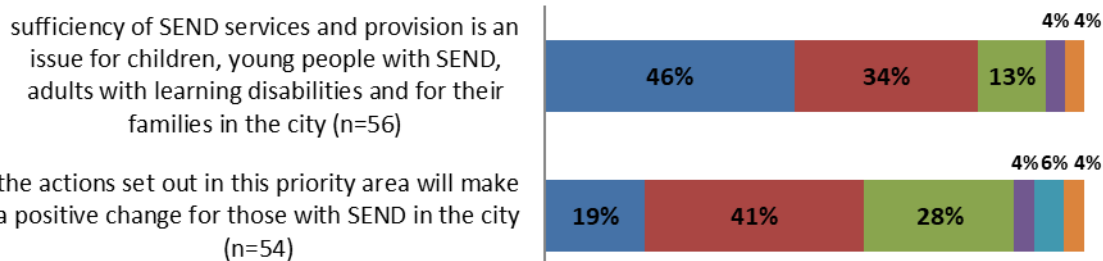
“Young people with SEND often fall between the cracks. High levels of anxiety about change.”

“Vocational training from earlier ages. Most transition preparation starts way too late for our vulnerable young people.”

Priority 6: Sufficiency of SEND Services and Provision

How much do you agree or disagree that...

■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / not sure



Examples of qualitative feedback for Sufficiency of SEND Services and provision (77 comments in total for this section):

“Importance of using data to inform practice, being critical of data and thinking does this reflect need in the city.”

“I believe we are very fortunate to have the range and quality of services that we do in B and H. However, time and resources can indeed be managed in a more effective and equitable way.”

“I would support a SEND sufficiency project being undertaken as on too many occasions there is delay on Post 18 transition planning and provision. This would reduce anxiety and stress levels for families and achieve better outcomes for young people, whilst also freeing up valuable resources for the 0-18 population.”

“It is so important that the right provision is available at the right time for all CYP with SEND. Also that every CYP has a suitable setting they can attend.”

“There will always be pressures on the High Needs budgets and we all need to work together across the city.”

“A great set of goals that recognised current weaknesses in the systemic failures of services for certain groups - let's hope these can be achieved.”

“I think services are key for supporting School Support CYP through effective training and monitoring in schools, as this can help free up more resources to be targeted for those with highest need.”

Subject:	Home to School Transport: Findings of the Members Policy Panel		
Date of Meeting:	9 November 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director of Families, Children and Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Jo Lyons	Tel: 01273 293514
	Email:	Jo.lyons@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 To share the findings and recommendations from the Member Policy Panel to this committee.
- 1.2 To provide the Committee an officer response to the Panel's recommendations

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- That the Committee notes and accepts the findings of the Member Policy Panel, given in appendix 1
- That the Committee notes the officer response, given in appendix 2
- That the findings and recommendations of the Members' Policy Panel are incorporated into the existing co-produced Home to School Transport (HTST) action plan
- That a further report comes to a meeting of the CYPS Committee in the Spring of 2021, which will include progress on the implementation of agreed recommendations from the November 2020 report of the HTST Member Policy Panel. Then further updates to come every six months until Spring 2022.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In 2018/19, responding to an escalating overspend in the HTST budget and perceived lack of effective competition in the sector, the council commissioned Edge Public Solutions to introduce a new Dynamic Purchasing and Procurement of Operators System for September 2020. Edge began working in April 2019 and challenges in capacity at every level of the system soon became apparent. It is acknowledged that the introduction of the new system was rushed, and serious problems resulted with the service from September 2019. Although most were resolved by November, there had been a very significant loss of trust and confidence from families and transport operators.
- 3.2 A notice of motion Notice of Motion at Full Council in October 2019 agreed to set up a Member Policy Panel to review the changes to the service. The appendices in the attached Member report provides the panel's terms of reference and a timeline of their work.

- 3.3 An independent barrister's review led by the LGA into the issues reported the following Spring, making a series of recommendations.
- 3.4 A second independent review has recently reported on the governance issues raised. This second review, and the council's response, is, at the time of writing, to be considered by the Audit and Standards Committee on 27 October 2020.
- 3.5 All the recommendations from the first independent review are being implemented as part of an HTST action plan to restore trust and confidence in the service.
- 3.6 The service works to a new co-production policy with the Parent Carer Council (PaCC) and approved by the HTST Governance Board. This ensures that all new policy and practice is co-produced in consultation with parent and carer representatives and that parents and carers are part of recruitment panels and key decision-making forums.
- 3.7 New governance arrangements were brought in to ensure all stakeholders were fully involved in the changes. Alongside the Member Policy Panel, a monthly HTST Governance Board was set up with all stakeholders represented. It is chaired by the Assistant Director. The Governance Board will continue to monitor progress with the service, alongside 6-monthly reviews by the CYPS Committee.
- 3.8 The Members Policy Panel has now concluded its own review, and the Panel's report is attached as appendix 1. Subject to approval by CYPS Committee, its recommendations will be consolidated into the existing action plan.

4. STATEMENT FROM THE MEMBER POLICY PANEL

"We regret the necessity to form as a panel, but welcomed the opportunity to look in detail at such an important area of the council's work and responsibility. We are pleased to have led a process that has been significant in putting children and their needs back into the heart of this service area. We are very thankful to the wide range of stakeholders who have engaged so positively and openly in this process. The commitment and energy from all parties to support us in both looking back and forward has been impressive. We are grateful for the input from the Parent Carer Council, the leaders at the city's special schools and to all of the contracted vehicle operators, for informing the panel's work. This has helped us have a full understanding and appreciation of the experience you have all been through and to truly recognise the impact the poor service delivery in September 2019 has had, especially to those families, children and young people directly affected.

We'd also like to thank and recognise the hard work of the front-line staff in the HTST service, who have worked diligently and with compassion throughout this time. We also value the considered and positive input from the interim head of Home to School Transport. Under their leadership, we have seen great improvement in both the operational service and the relationships of all involved.

At the start of our process we heard concerning testimony on the substantial negative impact on families of the service disruption from August 2019, which

lasted well into the autumn term that year. However, we are pleased to have heard many positive examples of how the service has improved since then.

We value having had the input from the LGA independent review report during our process. We see this as a critical turning point, in that it cemented some lessons learnt and helped the service fully develop its continuous service improvement plan, which is still being used now. We hope that plan will be further built on and that the relevant recommendations made here will factor in the service.

We have also heard about some examples of where the council have changed processes in light of the learning from this situation, for example a revised process around the use of urgency powers and a genuine embedded culture within the service around the value and necessity of coproduction. However, there are still some significant questions outstanding and this matter has been referred to Audit and Standard's committee for further investigation.

This report sets out some of our key findings, reflections and a set of recommendations. We are pleased to be presenting these to CYPS committee in November 2020 and have confidence that the committee and the service will accept the findings and continue to make service improvements accordingly. We also want to see our findings and learning points reflected in any future commissioning arrangements. We make a number of 'council wide' recommendations, especially around planning large change projects and recognising when members raise risks.

We want to conclude by further recognising and emphasising that the most important thing about delivering a HTST service is getting children to school safely and calmly so they are ready to learn. We also recognise that the journey to and from school forms a significant part of a child's day and therefore should aim to be an enjoyable experience. This is crucial and families were failed on this in the past.

We have been reminded throughout the work of our panel that the best way to design a service that will work for all, is to have coproduction at the heart of the approach.

Covid has provided the city and especially families, schools and operators with enormous challenges, stresses and worries and we have been pleased to hear throughout that the service has been stable and working well throughout that very worrying time.

As a panel, we wish to share the following principles which we believe current and future home to school transport services should be delivered under in the city:

- Children and young people must be at the heart of all considerations and the service should operate in a way that allows children to arrive at school stress free and ready to learn
- Timings of service decisions (e.g. who will be offered transport) need to allow for a fit-for-purpose service being ready by each September
- Appropriate safeguards to protect children must always be in place

- Smooth decision-making for families is essential, which should be helped by the agreed introduction of a parent representative on the decision-making transport panel
- The budget must be fit for purpose. The recently agreed uplift for the service from the Policy and Resources Committee only covers a shortfall; it doesn't provide additionality
- Supporting young people with independent travel training should be an essential consideration and resourced where appropriate
- Good communications with families is essential
- Simple and efficient systems are needed, co-produced to ensure they are family-friendly.
- Consistency and continuity of driver and Vehicle Passenger Assistants (VPA) should be ensured wherever possible”

5. STATEMENT FROM PARENT CARER'S COUNCIL (PACC)

“PaCC have been pleased to contribute to the work of the Member Policy Panel over the past several months. PaCC welcome the opportunity to work alongside officers to revise the Home to School Transport action plan following the publication of the Member Policy panel report.

The PaCC chair and Vice Chair have had brief early sight of the Member's final draft report and have provided the statement below, however we stress the importance of gaining the wider PaCC Steering Group feedback following a final published version of the report for the committee meeting.

PaCC outline here our broader comments on progress of the Home to School transport service, highlighting perceived risks (further detailed in the PaCC submission to the Member Policy panel 30.9.20) we ask officers and members to consider.

PaCC reiterate our thanks to Regan Delf and the HTST team for the ongoing focus on strong co-production and good communication with families. PaCC also thank Councillors for their ongoing scrutiny of the needed improvements to achieve progress towards a fit for purpose service, whereby CYP arrive at school/college in a non-stressed manner, ready to learn.

It will take time for PaCC and the broader community to forget the trauma and lost learning for many CYP when they returned to school and college in September 2019. Parent carers worried about their children's safety, the risks to employment and care for siblings.

The combined recommendations of the Independent Review alongside enhanced Councillor scrutiny held by members on the Home to School Transport scrutiny panel has led to the much needed focus on co-production of an action plan to create needed service improvements. PaCC welcome the uplift in funding to increase capacity within a previously insufficiently staffed HTST team. Strong leadership coupled with the understanding that families' needs must be placed at the core of all processes has led to necessary consultation with families, and vital learning for officers from the recent parent carer survey. PaCC are pleased to report that communications to the SEND community have improved. The

introduction of the essential training programme for vehicle crews will pave the way for the community to regain trust in Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC).

PaCC outline potential risks to the service going forward.

Funding- An uplift from Covid funding has enabled CYP to travel to school and college in less crowded vehicles. The principle of stress free travel, uncrowded travel must be maintained once this funding ends, and any changes to arrangements must be managed to avoid further disruption and anxiety for CYP and their families.

Additionally, PaCC note the references to progressing personal budgets and independent travel training made in the draft Members' recommendations. In light of these points, PaCC asks that Councillors recognise the need for appropriate budgets and we suggest that there is a reference to a commitment to protecting and or adjusting budgets in the Member's report.

An upward trend for parent carers to opt for Special School for their CYP.

Covid will continue to impact these figures, higher numbers of CYP are at risk of mainstream placements failing. Additionally, families being unable to visit schools when considering where their child should go to school/college are having to rely on virtual visits, this may see an increase in families opting for special school earlier; parent carers may make choices based on what is perceived as a safer option. To avoid this, and the associated increase in demand for HTST, BHCC and schools must uphold the principles of inclusion for CYP with SEND and good information for families will need to be enhanced. PaCC suggest the council continue to monitor numbers of CYP attending special and mainstream placements in this context.

Changes to the Home to School transport team

Lead members of the team are leaving. The new team must continue the legacy of good co-production with PaCC and maintain a firm hold on the core value that families are at the heart of the service.

PaCC thank members and officers for formally noting the positive contribution and impact that PaCC's work has for families in Brighton and Hove. PaCC welcome ongoing and future work with officers and Councillors to sustain the improvements seen recently in this statutory service."

6. OFFICER RESPONSE TO PANEL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The council accepts the findings of the Member Policy Panel and thanks them for their time and considered recommendations. An initial summary response is provided in appendix 2 and assuming they are accepted by CYPS committee they will be incorporated into the existing HTST service improvement action plan. Progress on that plan will be reported back to committee at agreed intervals.

7. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 The Member Policy Panel was mandated by Full Council, following the change of administration the Panel continued, although with a new Chair.

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Member Policy Panel actively sought and encouraged public submissions for each of their public meetings. Key stakeholders, including parent/carer representatives, operators and schools were invited to each public meeting and were actively encouraged to join the discussions, sharing their experiences and their views being sought about both lessons learnt and ideal future service design.
- 8.2 The Member Policy Panel and the service have both recognised and praised the value of coproduction on this matter.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Whilst entirely regrettable to have needed this process, great value has come from the Member Policy Panel's work, reflections and recommendations. This work will be a core part of the service improvement action plan going forward.

10. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 10.1 Of the reported overspend of £1.122m, it is currently estimated that £0.339m relates to additional costs as a result of COVID-19. The early indicative forecast overspend for 2020/21 (pre-Covid) was £1.200m. So, excluding Covid-19 related costs, the forecast overspend for 2020/21 has reduced significantly to £0.783m. This suggests that the careful route planning by the HTST team is having a positive impact on the cost of the service and is capable of producing improved value for money, at the same time as delivering what users regard as a good service.
- 10.2 The HTST budget for 2021/11 will increase by £1.000m as agreed by P&R Committee. It is anticipated that the additional funding, together with the improved route planning, should eliminate the overspend in 2021/22. However, forecasting spending for next year by extrapolating from this year is problematic, due to the service disruption and different financial arrangements that have had an impact on the budget as a result of the pandemic.

Finance Officer Consulted: Dave Ellis

Date: 23/10/2020

Legal Implications:

- 10.3 The context in which the Member Policy Panel was set up is provided in the body of the report. The report should be ready in conjunction with the LGA recommendations, which the panel endorses. The Panel makes a number of recommendations with a view to the council being able to offer an improved service and lawful decision making to meet statutory duties in relation to home to school transport services in the future.

Lawyer Consulted:

Natasha Watson

Date: 26/10/2020

Equalities Implications:

- 10.4 The impact of the poor service delivery in the Autumn of 2019 was most strongly felt by children and young people with special educational needs and their families. This was an unacceptable situation for which the council apologises and is committed to continuing to improve the service, using the lessons learnt from this and other reviews.
- 10.5 The statutory duty on the council to provide free Home to School Transport for children and young people with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is aimed at ensuring their access to schooling is assured, especially given mobility issues and the fact that the nearest suitable school may be further than for children without SEND. In arranging transport, the council must comply with the Equalities Act of 2010 which requires that children and young people with SEND are not treated 'less favourably' than their peers and that there is no indirect discrimination against their parents and carers by requiring of them more than would reasonably be required of other parents.
- 10.6 The coproduction agreement with PaCC and the detailed action plan demonstrate a commitment to improving the service experience for those with some of the greatest needs in the city.

Sustainability Implications:

- 10.7 The recommendations around procurement of future service arrangements are clear that sustainability matters must be fully explored and considered.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Report of the Home to School Transport Member Policy Panel November 2020
2. Officer response to the recommendations of the Panel

Report of the Home to School Transport Member Policy Panel

November 2020



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Contents:

Item	Page Number
Background and context	3
Reflections, findings and recommendations	
- Governance	7
- Stakeholder feedback	9
- Procurement	10
- Continuous service improvement	11
Conclusion	13
Appendices:	
1. Terms of reference for the MPP	14
2. Timeline of MPP meetings	16
3. Letter from Panel to parents and carers	17
4. LGA report	19

Background and Context

Background

In 2017, Home to School Transport (HTST) was identified as a service that needed review. This was for a variety of reasons, including an overspent budget and a reliance on a small number of providers. Work to change this began in 2018.

Members looked at this in June 2018, through the Procurement Advisory Board, and later at the Policy and Resources Committee in October 2018.

The change in contract created huge challenges for schools, operators and perhaps most importantly, children and families. The crisis hit in September, and the small HTST front-line staff did everything they could to address the consequences. The service was not placed on the council's strategic risk register until March 2020, by which time the first independent review had already reported on the circumstances that had led to failure. Its recommendations included significant learning points for the council as a whole on improving the practice and governance of change projects and programmes.

Local Government Association (LGA) independent review

Appendix 4 provides the full report produced by the LGA review team.

Members of the Children, Young People and Skills Committee (CYPS) were informed at their meeting on the 16th September 2019 that an independent review of the HTST service would take place. This was due to the significant concerns raised by members and stakeholders about the delivery of the council's HTST arrangements. The LGA was commissioned to undertake this piece of work and the Independent Review team arrived in Brighton and Hove on the 28th January 2020 for a three-day onsite visit.

The review focused on:

1. Procurement of consultants working on HTST service
2. The Dynamic Purchasing System and Procurement of Operators
3. Implementation of the new system
4. The council's response to the disrupted delivery of the HTST service
5. Concerns and complaints

During their visit the team spoke with 113 people directly, held more than 40 meetings, reviewed 33 survey response and read over 288 documents provided by the council and others – collectively spending more than 150 hours to determine their findings.

The review team presented their key findings and 10 recommendations to CYPS committee in March 2020 and this panel were pleased to hear that the council fully accepted all findings.

Establishment of the Member Policy Panel

A Conservative Notice of Motion was passed at Full Council in October 2019 and the council thus set up a Member Policy Panel to review the changes to the service. Appendix 1 provides the agreed terms of reference for the Member Policy Panel and Appendix 2 provides a summary timeline of the work of the panel.

- At the first meeting, Cllr Hannah Clare was appointed as the panel chair. It was agreed that:
- The scope of the panel would be to consider current issues and to examine the findings of the independent review
- Meetings would be held at least monthly and would be open to the public and press. In addition, an agreed list of key stakeholders (a Parent Carer's Council representative, special schools, parent/carers governors from the CYPS committee and contracted vehicle operators) would receive direct invites to attend

The panel agreed the ambition to report back to the June 2020 CYPS committee; this was later revised to November 2020.

The panel agreed to consider a comprehensive list of issues arising from the mistakes made in the HTST service. The list included:

- The impact on stakeholders
- How route allocations were determined
- Training as well as health and safety considerations on service delivery
- The impact on the year-end budget

There were two factors that lengthened the work of the panel: the desire to not clash timelines or duplicate the work of the LGA review and the impact of Covid in the city from February 2020.

Some changes to the Panel have been made since its establishment. Cllr Gary Wilkinson was unable to continue on the panel so was replaced with Cllr Amanda Grimshaw. In July 2020 Cllr John Allcock joined the panel, replacing Cllr Jackie O'Quinn, and was appointed as the panel chair.

Statement from the panel about the process and context of their work

"We regret the necessity to form as a panel, but welcomed the opportunity to look in detail at such an important area of the council's work and responsibility. We are pleased to have led a process that has been significant in putting children and their needs back into the heart of this service area. We are very thankful to the wide range of stakeholders who have engaged

so positively and openly in this process. The commitment and energy from all parties to support us in both looking back and forward has been impressive. We are grateful for the input from the Parent Carer's Council, the leaders at the city's special schools and to all of the contracted vehicle operators, for informing the panel's work. This has helped us have a full understanding and appreciation of the experience you have all been through and to truly recognise the impact the poor service delivery in September 2019 has had, especially to those families, children and young people directly affected.

We'd also like to thank and recognise the hard work of the front-line staff in the HTST service, who have worked diligently and with compassion throughout this time. We also value the considered and positive input from the interim head of Home to School Transport. Under their leadership, we have seen great improvement in both the operational service and the relationships of all involved.

At the start of our process we heard concerning testimony on the substantial negative impact on families of the service disruption from August 2019, which lasted well into the autumn term that year. However, we are pleased to have heard many positive examples of how the service has improved since then.

We value having had the input from the LGA independent review report during our process. We see this as a critical turning point, in that it cemented some lessons learnt and helped the service fully develop its continuous service improvement plan, which is still being used now. We hope that plan will be further built on and that the relevant recommendations made here will factor in the service .

We have also heard about some examples of where the council have changed processes in light of the learning from this situation, for example a revised process around the use of urgency powers and a genuine embedded culture within the service around the value and necessity of coproduction. However, there are still some significant questions outstanding and this matter has been referred to Audit and Standard's committee for further investigation.

This report sets out some of our key findings, reflections and a set of recommendations. We are pleased to be presenting these to CYPS committee in November 2020 and have confidence that the committee and the service will accept the findings and continue to make service improvements accordingly. We also want to see our findings and learning points reflected in any future commissioning arrangements. We make a number of 'council wide' recommendations, especially around planning large change projects and recognising when members raise risks.

We want to conclude by further recognising and emphasising that the most important thing about delivering a HTST service is getting children to school safely and calmly so they are ready to learn. We also recognise that the journey to and from school forms a significant part

of a child's day and therefore should aim to be an enjoyable experience. This is crucial and families were failed on this in the past.

We have been reminded throughout the work of our panel that the best way to design a service that will work for all, is to have coproduction at the heart of the approach.

Covid has provided the city and especially families, schools and operators with enormous challenges, stresses and worries and we have been pleased to hear throughout that the service has been stable and working well throughout that very worrying time.

As a panel, we wish to share the following principles which we believe current and future home to school transport services should be delivered under in the city:

- Children and young people must be at the heart of all considerations and the service should operate in a way that allows children to arrive at school stress free and ready to learn
- Timings of service decisions (eg who will be offered transport) need to allow for a fit-for-purpose service being ready by each September
- Appropriate safeguards to protect children must always be in place
- Smooth decision-making for families is essential, which should be helped by the agreed introduction of a parent representative on the decision-making transport panel
- The budget must be fit for purpose. The recently agreed uplift for the service from the Policy and Resources Committee only covers a shortfall; it doesn't provide additionality
- Supporting young people with independent travel training should be an essential consideration and resourced where appropriate
- Good communications with families is essential
- Simple and efficient systems are needed, co-produced to ensure they are family-friendly.
- Consistency and continuity of driver and Vehicle Passenger Assistants (VPA) should be ensured wherever possible"

Reflections, Findings and recommendations

Theme 1: Governance and oversight

The panel endorse the findings of the LGA report.

The LGA independent review had been agreed and was being progressed, so in order to avoid duplicating that work much of the early focus of the panel's work was hearing from stakeholders about remaining and current concerns. This was achieved through invited submissions ahead of the meetings but also by inviting key stakeholders to speak at the public meetings. Below is a summary of the points that were raised and some of our reflections for this theme.

Panel findings and reflections:

- Concerns were raised early in the panel's work on the effectiveness, efficiency and accuracy of the current pupil information sheet process. This meant that operators did not always have the detailed knowledge about individual children that they needed. It was acknowledged by all parties that this process needed improvement.
- The panel concurred with earlier calls by Councillors that HTST should be added to the corporate risk register. This only occurred when the LGA included it in their Review recommendations in March 2020. The panel feel that Councillors' advice on this was ignored and not progressed swiftly enough.
- Questions were raised by the panel about whether the council took appropriate responsibility regarding the events that led to service deficits in September 2019. The panel recognised the very real impact on and efforts of the front-line staff who responded to the service difficulties. The panel also noted the LGA's findings that "Although senior leaders gave public apologies for the stress and disruption that had been caused at the time of the crisis, many parents felt strongly that senior leaders had not apologised in a meaningful way to affected families and without this they felt that it was difficult to move on."
- Questions were raised throughout the process about the HTST budget and sought to understand why the overspends in 2019-2020 and then 2020-2021 came about. The panel was concerned that it was difficult to obtain detail on some of these questions.
- The panel recognised that during the course of the academic year, a number of recordkeeping matters greatly improved from a sub-standard position, providing assurance over suitability of drivers and VPAs and their training and decision making around route allocations.
- Concerns were raised about the decision to allow a small number of VPAs to commence work with a waiver whilst their full DBS checks came back.
- Discussions took place on the tension between operators needing enough contractual commitment to make appropriate investments in the right specialist vehicles and

-
- equipment, alongside the council's need to retain a strong grip on contract management, including the ability to sanction or cease contracts where necessary.
- The panel agreed strongly with the LGAs finding that the process had been rushed without adequate consideration or consultation with key stakeholders.
 - The panel recognise that a significant amount of information that provided evidence for the panel, the LGA and the information being presented to A&S Committee was obtained by Councillors using Freedom of Information (Fol) requests. The panel recognises that in some instances using Fol is appropriate when information might be subject to confidentiality clauses and conditions and in this case enabled some further information to be placed within the public domain. However, the panel does feel it is inappropriate for Councillors to feel they have resort to these measures and was concerned about the amount of time it can take for officers to response to some requests.

The panel identified a number of potential concerns regarding the authority to introduce a dynamic purchasing system and the related procurement process. The panel decided that the issues could be separated from the "service delivery" issues of HTST. Consequently, the panel felt it appropriate for the issues to be subject to further urgent investigation by the Audit and Standards Committee.

Panel recommendations :

Council wide:

- **Systems change** - The panel were concerned with all the evidence that this was not a well-managed systems change project. The council are recommended (perhaps via a recommendation to Audit and Standards Committee) to consider how the learning from this is captured and incorporated into corporate processes as a matter of urgency, to include the need for sufficient lead in time for any future significant service change.
- **Risk register** - Council officers need to ensure robust change management by adding significant projects to the relevant risk registers and to take swifter action in future when requests are made for additions to risk registers by councillors
- **Co-production** - The panel have seen, through the service improvements over the span of their meetings, that meaningful coproduction on key services such as this is essential. The panel recommends that all projects of this scale and significance in future have a well-resourced commitment to coproduction with stakeholders both throughout the planning and implementation and also through being part of the governance of overseeing future governance of the area of work.
- **Financial modelling** - Future change programmes need a more robust financial modelling approach in future. Some work was done on high-level comparator budgets but there was little drilling down into the detail to understand the validity and relevance of the high-level comparisons.
- **Access to information** - The council should review processes for Councillors to obtain information when legitimate reasons are provided.
- **Procurement review** - In March this year, significant concerns were raised with the Council's Chief Executive regarding the consultancy contract to advise and support the Council on the HTST procurement process. In June the Chief Executive was asked to obtain an independent review of the HTST procurement process to ensure transparency and accountability. Subsequently the matter was referred to an external

Barrister for review and advice and Counsel has provided his preliminary draft advice. Given that these are matters of governance, rather than service, and given their vital importance, the Panel has determined that they would be better dealt with by the Audit & Standards Committee which met on 27 October to consider the recommendation of this Panel that a cross party panel with an Independent Person, is set up as a matter of urgency.

Service specific

- **Committee Oversight** - In 6 months time, a brief progress update paper on the service should be provided to the CYPS Committee, with a full progress update being provided on an annual basis thereafter. This fuller update should include: an update on the service improvement action plan, parent/carer feedback on the service, procurement plans and the budget position.

Theme 2: Stakeholder feedback

The panel were aided greatly in their work by the generous and open contributions from stakeholders, including the Parent Carer's Council and school leaders, as well as from operators. Their contributions enabled the panel to gain a greater understanding of the real lived experiences of service-users and providers at the current time. The panel were pleased to hear how both the relationships and co-production of and around the service improved greatly during this time, between the council, parents/carers and the operators.

Panel findings and reflections:

- PaCC raised consistently throughout the process that it was essential that children are able to arrive at school ready to learn, and not distressed or agitated from their journey into school. The panel heard that issues with the service were still occurring in January 2020. By March 2020, PaCC, schools and operators fed back that improvements were occurring at pace.
- PaCC and panel members agreed that it was essential that direct feedback from parent/carers, children and young people should continue to be collated, analysed and fed into service improvement plans.
- Suggestions were made around needing an improved customer focus for the service, including a clearer complaints procedure.
- The panel were concerned to learn that some parents and carers did not feel comfortable in raising complaints with the council for fear that complaining might lead to them being disadvantaged with the services they might be entitled to or were receiving.
- The panel highlighted the importance of arrangements being in place well in advance for academic year 2020-2012, and the need for the Transport Governance Board to oversee the services' improvement action plan. PaCC as a standing member of this board, would provide support and challenge around the improvement progress.
- During the time the panel meetings were being held, the council agreed to increase the funding to PaCC to allow them to further engage in and support this work.
- The panel heard from operators about the experiences and difficulties they faced following the procurement process in spring/summer, 2019. It was helpful to hear about their experiences of the systems and process, as well as reports on these

issues from officers, to enable them to get a complete view of what had not worked in that process.

Panel recommendations:

Council-wide:

- **Key performance indicators (KPIs)** - The introduction of KPIs on service-user satisfaction and as providers of the service, the council remains ambitious about its targets.
- **Complaints processes** - The council must ensure that complaints processes and procedures for parents and carers allow and encourage open and frank feedback, emphasising that feedback can be made without prejudice to services entitled to, received or being offered.
- **Member panels** - Future Member panels of this type should learn from the strong stakeholder voice model used here. Constitutional Working Group should consider how further guidance can be drafted as to assist future member panels.

Service specific:

- **Service feedback** - Feedback from schools and operators should be regularly sought and acted upon – in a transparent way

Theme 3: Procurement

Much of the panel's discussions have highlighted the need to ensure that the service is procured well in future. Leading on from the comments in the LGA review, the panel felt this topic had to be explored further.

Panel findings and reflections:

- All stakeholders had an opportunity throughout the panel's work to provide feedback on the procurement process that took place for the new service arrangements in September 2019. Feedback to the panel reflected the findings of the LGA report.
- Due to the Covid pandemic, requests were made throughout the panel's meeting for the council to work creatively and in a supportive way with operators to enable them to maintain their service delivery where possible. The panel was pleased to hear about the financial support offered along with access to PPE. In June 2020, the panel heard that the operator contracts had been rolled over to provide greater consistency to providers and service users. However, robust contract performance management will continue to be undertaken to ensure compliance and value for money.
- The panel heard feedback from operators and others on how the service might be contracted differently, e.g. whether the DPS provided good value for money or whether routes might be better offered out in lots rather than individually. Operators were able to give clear feedback and submissions on elements that they did not find valuable or useful about the current process, often providing comparison with how systems had worked previously. The panel were unconvinced that the procurement model for HTST put in place for September 2019 was suitable for the service being offered or reflected the needs of the city. The panel offered caution in adopting a procurement model that focused on e-auctions designed in such a way as to either

give routes to the lowest bidder, or accept unnecessarily high service costs on routes receiving only one bid.

Panel recommendations:

Council-wide:

- **Exploring options** - The council can and should be encouraged to meet its statutory obligations in different ways, for example, by paying parents (based on mileage or by giving each a personal budget) or by exploring delegating some budgets to schools. However, it is the panel's view that in order for operators to invest in delivering a high quality service they need assurance that the contracts will run (subject to good contract management) for the duration of their term.
- **System change** - There is a point of learning for the whole council around whether there is enough lead-in time to properly plan for and achieve major systems change, including time for relevant committees to be consulted. For HTST this should include the annual procurement of each route, contracts being issued and the start of the autumn term.

Service specific:

- **Future contractual changes** – the CYPS committee will receive a future detailed report on possible new contractual arrangements for this service, which are fully co-produced with key stakeholders and that clearly seek the views and input of current providers. This model must include full considerations around sustainability and environmental impacts on the city. Any future contractual changes need to be considered with sufficient lead in time to be capable of delivery at the start a new academic year avoiding an over reliance on preparations over the summer holiday period.

Theme 4: Continuous service improvement and improving outcomes

During the course of the Member Policy Panel, significant improvements were made both to the operational side of the service and also to the ongoing continuous improvement action plan. Through submissions and contributions from stakeholders throughout, the panel were able to hear directly of improvements and better relationships. This was further evidenced by a smooth start of the 20/21 academic year, despite managing Covid impacts at the same time.

Panel findings and reflections:

- Early submissions from PaCC and schools highlighted the need for clarity on the complaints procedures; communications strategy with families; assurances in respect of service operator training and up-to-date Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS) certificates.
- The panel recognised that the poor service at the start of the autumn term in 2019 was further exacerbated by delays in building works at both the Downs View and Hill Park school sites.
- The panel noted that there was inconsistency in approach to ensuring vehicles complied with the contract requirements, particularly those of the council's Blue Book, such as on-board CCTV and vehicle age.

- Reports were made throughout the panel's process of excellent individuals and teams working with children, young people and their families despite the unacceptable position the service was in during August/September 2019.
- Stakeholders brought up lessons to be learnt in order to secure improvements for September 2020. These included allocating routes much earlier where possible, better communications with families about their child's journeys and asking operators to introduce themselves to families over the summer.
- The panel supported the arrangement that means families no longer need to reapply for transport annually, and the development of social stories to help children understand why their service may look a bit different during Covid-19. The panel did, however, record concerns about possible service disruption and sought assurance from officers. These concerns centred around whether routes would be allocated in a timely way, whether vehicles could be purchased in time and whether necessary staff recruitment would be in place before September 2020.
- The panel were concerned that reasons for routes being returned to the council were not readily available and significantly, that emphasis on the failure of the service in September 2019 was largely attributed to operators returning routes. The panel learnt that there were several factors resulting in returned routes, notably misunderstandings regarding operators being able to sub-contract, and delays by the council in providing information to operators in respect to the needs and circumstances of children being transported.
- In the final panel meeting in September 2020, stakeholders, including PaCC and operators, reported the positive situation at the start of term and that there was confidence that things would continue to improve now.
- The panel has considered the service action plan in their meetings. The panel consider that whereas operators are required to ensure drivers and operators are suitably trained for the children in their care, the council were previously lacking in having good records. A subject that was repeated several times was a deficiency in suitable training for epilepsy and how to manage incidents, especially in vehicles carrying many children. It was recognised that some areas of work are still in development, such as a better system for pupil information sheets and moving the operator training package online.
- The panel noted that service delivery was impacting the education time pupils were receiving. This was primarily as a result of a lack of clarity, planning and insurance when pupils were moved between vehicles and the school premises. The panel was concerned that pupils were therefore being educationally disadvantaged. The panel does note that in respect to managing Covid, the service, schools and operators are seeking to limit the impact on pupil education time.
- The panel was informed that a consequence of the problems in transferring pupils between vehicles and the school premises, the schools were incurring additional costs to try and overcome the shortcomings of the process.
- The panel heard of instances where the reporting of incidents regarding safeguarding or health and welfare concerns were not always acted upon in a timely fashion. The panel was of the opinion that any incidents being reported should be robustly recorded with actions noted and dealt with as a priority.

Panel recommendations :

Council-wide:

- **Contract management** - Robust contract management arrangements to be in place to ensure compliance with key standards (For HTST this means training, DBS and full compliance with the council's Blue Book etc). The panel welcomes the idea of a contract management board being established to manage contracts.

Service specific:

- **Governance board** - Transport Governance Board to continue and to oversee the HTST Improvement Action Plan and ensure continuous service improvement.
- **Wider SEND planning** - Process review of how transport needs are woven into Education, Health and Care plans and the work of SEND (given HTST sits outside the SEND team). The panel would like to see greater collaboration between these two areas with agreed roles and responsibilities.
- **Route allocation review** – Implementing an expanded value for money tool which embeds quality considerations alongside financial information when considering bids or making route allocations.
- **Alternative arrangements** - Alternative HTST arrangements are to be explored such as personal budgets; Independent Travel Training; mileage allowances.
- **Home to School Transport policy** - Reviewing and co-production of the Home to School Transport Policy, which was last agreed by members in 2015. Timing – to be in place before the formal re-procurement of the service begins. New Government Guidance is expected – consultation closed in October 2019. This will cover how to review the council's local policy. Separate post-16 guidance is also expected.
- **Route returns** - Route returns and other significant issues with operators must be recorded in a robust manner to allow scrutiny, analysis and improved service delivery.
- **Future liaison** - HTST should ensure close liaison between the service, schools and operators to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged by reduced education time.
- HTST should ensure close liaison between the service, schools and operators to ensure that decisions by HTST do not create budget pressures on the schools.
- **Incident reporting** - HTST should create a robust procedure for incident reporting and a summary of incidences (complying with GDPR legislation) should be included with the reports to CYPS Committee recommended elsewhere in this report.
- **Vehicle checks** – HTST to ensure that appropriate vehicle checks are regularly and routinely carried out.

Conclusion

The Member Policy Panel commends these recommendations to the CYPS and A&S committees and look forward to seeing the amended HTST action plan in time. The recommendations that refer to wider matters, sitting alongside and also outside of HTST / Families, Children and Learning matters will be referred on to the relevant areas in the council but an update on them will feature in the six month report back to CYPS committee.

Appendix 1: terms of reference of the panel

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY PANEL

1. Name

1.1 The panel shall be called the Home to School Transport Policy Panel (“the Panel”).)

2. Purpose and remit

2.1 The Panel shall:

- Review the current issues and challenges around the home to school transport service and oversee any results of the Independent External Review;
- Provide advice and make recommendations to the Children, Young People and Skills Committee as well as to the Acting Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning, as necessary.

3. Status

3.1 The Panel have the status of a task and finish policy panel. It will be an advisory body and will not have subcommittee status. The political balance rules in section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 will not apply.

4. Reporting

4.1 The Panel will report to the Children, Young People and Skills Committee with recommendations, but may also provide advice to the Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning as necessary.

5. Membership

5.1 Membership of the Panel shall consist of 6 elected Members, 2 each from the three political groups on the Council nominated by their Groups.

5.2 The appointments may be made, in accordance the wishes of the political Groups, at the meeting of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee when the terms of reference are agreed or notified to Executive Director by the relevant Group following the meeting.

5.3 Nominees will normally be selected from the membership of the relevant parent committee(s).

35

6. Chairing of meetings of the Panel

6.1 The Chair of the Panel shall be appointed by the Children, Young People and Skills Committee from members of the Panel who are members of the opposition.

6.2 If the Committee does not appoint the Chair, the Panel itself will appoint the Chair at its first meeting. An Officer authorised by the Executive Director will preside over the appointments process.

7. Meetings and ways of working

7.1 The Panel will agree ways of working appropriate to its role and remit at the scoping meeting (the meeting to discuss how the work will be organised, who to invite, and timescales.)

7.2 In line with normal practice, it is expected that the Panel will have 3 or 4 meetings, but this is without prejudice to the ability to have additional meetings if the Panel consider it necessary.

7.3 The Panel will decide whether some or all of its meetings are open to the public having regard to the nature of the issues to be discussed, the wishes of witnesses and any legal or commercial sensitivities.

8. Duration

8.1 As an ad-hoc panel, the Panel will come to an end when it concludes its deliberations and submits its report, if any, to the Parent Committee. This is **expected to be early in the new year.**

Appendix 2: Timeline of the work of the panel

24 October 2019 Full Council endorsed notice of motion to establish Member Policy Panel and referred to CYPS committee

11th November 2019 [CYPS accepted recommendation](#) from P&R committee and MPP was established

18th December 2019

Panel meet for first time in a private session and agree schedule of issues

Member Policy Panel Public Meetings

- 23rd January 2020
- 3rd March 2020
- 20th March 2020
- 3rd June 2020
- 2nd July 2020
- 21st July 2020
- 30th September 2020

At the Children's Young People and Skills Committee on 15th June 2020 it was agreed that the work of the Member Policy Panel could be extended by a period of up to 6 months to complete its work.

The panel then met privately on 7th and 27th October to write this report.

Following the meeting on the 7th October a decision was made to refer elements of the Panel's considerations (and procurement process) to Audit and Standards Committee.

7th November 2020 - Present final report to CYPS committee

Appendix 3: Letter from the Panel to parents/carers whose children are in receipt of HTST – sent 2nd November 2020

Dear parents /carers

We are a panel of six councillors who have been looking at your service and have made some recommendations back to the city's children, young people and skills committee.

We had 7 public meetings, where we heard evidence on what had happened last September and how things were now. We invited the Parent Carer Council, the transport companies, the special schools and the council's service to come to those meetings.

We heard more about the upsetting impact the poor service last year had on your families and we wanted to ensure that those mistakes didn't happen again. We are sorry that this happened to you. It was unacceptable and we have been clear that your children are amongst our most vulnerable young people in the city. They deserve a high-quality transport service that makes the start and end of their school day safe and stress free.

Some of the things we have recommended back to the council's children's committee includes:

- Making sure that you are asked regularly whether you feel you are getting a good service and embrace criticism and complaints to enable swift resolution to concerns and problems raised.
- When thinking about any future changes to the service your views are asked for and listened to before changes are made
- That the council consistently checks to make sure that all journeys are safe and are of a high fit for purpose quality
- If you have concerns we will make it easier for you to share them with us.

By our last meeting this September we heard about positive improvements with the service. We are asking children's committee to keep asking for updates on how the service is working to ensure this continues.

We want to say a big thank you to you and your children for your cooperation with the reviews that have taken place. Hearing your views and learning how this hurt you has helped in making sure the service is now improving and mistakes will not happen again.

If you want to read our full report or watch the recording of the committee meeting you can see these here : <https://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>

With many thanks,

Members of the Panel – Councillors John Allcock (Panel Chair), Hannah Clare, Amanda Grimshaw, Elaine Hills, Mary Mears, Lee Wares

If you have any questions about your child's transport arrangements please contact the team here hometoschooltransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk or by calling 01273 293501.

Appendix 4: LGA report

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/independent-review-home-school-transport>

1. Executive summary

The Local Government Association was commissioned by Brighton & Hove Council to provide an independent review of the Home to School Transport Service (HTST). This review was prompted by the significant problems that occurred when the new system was implemented in September 2019. The review focuses on the decisions leading up to the changes, the implementation of the new system and the council's response to the disruption and distress caused by the changes.

This independent review was asked to consider the procurement of the consultants working on the Home to School Transport Service (Edge Public Solutions). Edge Public Solutions began working on the service in April 2019. The independent review team found that many interviewees had concerns about the process of the procurement of the consultants. In the view of the independent review team the process was rushed and not well executed, with advice from both the council's procurement and legal teams not taken on board. The team also found that member oversight of the decision appears to have been very limited.

The Dynamic Purchasing System and Procurement of Operators was also a source of concern for the independent review team. The new purchasing system and procurement of operators was done at great speed between April and June. Edge Public Solutions repeatedly highlighted a number of risks that flowed from such a tight timetable; however, they also stated they were confident of delivering and the decision was taken to proceed. The independent review team are of the view that moving to a very different system, so quickly was not advisable and noted that many interviewees said they had raised concerns that moving to the new system with so little lead in time was likely to cause significant problems. One interviewee summed this up saying: "The crisis was predicted and predictable."

The implementation of the new system was done very quickly due to the tight timescales with Edge Public Solutions commencing work in April 2019 and the system due to be in place for September 2019. This meant there were limited opportunities to engage with parents, carers and schools before the new system was implemented. The concerns raised by parents, schools and operators were disregarded and key information about the changes were not

effectively communicated to all stakeholders. Systems of communication between the council and key stakeholders needs to be improved going forward. Once the new service started there were clearly very significant problems from the outset with some children not receiving a service at all, transport arriving late, others experiencing frequent change of operator, some being mixed inappropriately with other children and young people or experiencing very long journeys. The independent review team were also very concerned that there were a number of safeguarding incidents. The service has improved in the months that followed but it is vital the council ensures that adequate safeguards continue to be in place and that children and young people receive a safe service suitable to their needs.

The council's response to the disrupted delivery of the Home to School Transport Service showed a willingness from many different officers and departments to come together to improve the service. Some officers clearly went above and beyond their usual duties in order to rectify the problems. However, some children experienced problems with the Home To School Transport Service for several months; the majority of these problems were resolved by the end of November. The impact of this on children and young people, and their families/carers should not be underestimated - it was significant. Members of PaCC, the local parent and carers' council, reported that the pressures in responding to parents' concerns had brought the organisation to near crisis point. The parents and carers the independent review team spoke to were clearly frustrated and distressed by the situation and parents reported that they had lost all confidence in the local authority.

The independent review team took part in a number of parent/carers focus groups. There was clearly frustration with the way that parents' concerns and complaints had been handled. The overstretched Home to School Transport Service team were dealing with a very high volume of calls and emails, approximately 200 a day at the peak of the crisis. Senior managers did provide some additional support but did not seem to recognise that the team needed even more support. While schools, parents and carers acknowledged that the team tried to fix the issues, some experienced weeks, and in some cases three months of disruption.

The independent review team also found that further shared understanding and clarity is needed regarding the definitions and boundaries of informing, consulting and co-production. In order to rebuild trust and to ensure genuine co production of solutions with parents/carers, schools and voluntary sector, greater understanding and more time is needed to work with stakeholders collaboratively. The council is fortunate to have a vibrant and expert PaCC (Parents Carer’s Council) which is committed to meaningful co-production and to restoring relationships and trust between the council and parents, carers and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) providers across the city.

The council needs to put children and young people back at the centre of the Home to School Transport Service making them the focus, their voice and needs should be more prominent. Parents wanted the council to fully appreciate that “transport is of huge importance to their family lives”. Some parents stated that they considered the council did not value the provision of home to school transport. They considered that the need to re-apply each year, the application form and the attitude of some council staff were intended to dissuade them from seeking transport support for their child.

2. Key recommendations

There are a range of suggestions and observations within the main section of the report that will inform some ‘quick wins’ and practical actions. The following are the independent review team’s key recommendations to the council:

- Clear, consistent and urgent communication to all stakeholders (carers, schools and settings etc.) about stability in the Home to School Transport (HTST) arrangements from this point onwards. **September 2020 must not be a repeat of 2019. The council should also acknowledge the pressure on the base budget and that significant savings are unrealistic in the near future**
- Rebuild trust with schools and settings parents/carers, VCS, members and officers from other departments. **The council should consider having a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) charter and agreed Co-production policy which includes the Home to School Transport Service between parents/carers and the council setting out clear roles, responsibilities and expectations**

-
- The HTST policy (2015) needs to be updated with an emphasis on planning and training for independent travel, including an associated budget and sustainable strategy. It should also include a personal travel budget policy developed with parents/carers. **This should include a consistent independent travel training offer across the local authority. The team found there were some examples of good practice in children’s social care. The updated policy needs to integrate with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities strategy and should be used to re-engage and seek best practice**
 - Review the HTST processes and streamline them. **After initial agreement that travel arrangements are required, the council should remove the requirement for parents to complete a transport request form each year and consider introducing a system as part of the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) annual review to discuss and review travel. The annual review paperwork should be revised to ensure there is clear discussion about travel requirements, supporting the planning and training needed for independence and preparation for adulthood. The pupil information sheets, risk information, annual review and eligibility documents could be combined into a single travel plan to save duplication and aid clarity**
 - The Special Educational Needs (SEND) team and HTST team must work together more and share more information reducing the burden on parents to repeatedly provide the same information. **Operational managers across departments need to work collaboratively to strengthen relationships between HTST and SEND. The newly strengthened Directorate Team need to work together more closely, to facilitate and encourage this**
 - The council should ensure there is standardised and consistent training and performance expectation of drivers and Vehicle Passenger Assistants (VPAs) with monitoring. **Drivers and VPAs should complete comprehensive training to ensure that they meet the needs of each child or young person for whom they are responsible. Training should include at least basic first aid and disability awareness. In addition, identification badges and high visibility jackets need to be worn consistently by drivers and vehicle passenger assistants**
 - Review governance arrangements for projects and programmes so that all significant change projects go to the Modernisation Board. **The**

review should include simplifying governance arrangements, ensuring clear lines of accountability and decision making, with a clear audit trail

- Programme management needs to be strengthened to ensure that any significant changes to council services are based on a full business case, that there are realistic timelines and clear lines of accountability. **The council needs to allow adequate time to undertake transformational change in a service. Business cases should be used for significant changes and savings, as well as spending proposals**
- More support and oversight are needed from senior managers when significant changes are being made to council services. **Senior managers should also place more value on the professional advice of specialists within the council such as procurement, legal, communications and health and safety**
- The council should consider strengthening contract management going forward and ensure all contracts with suppliers of HTST are signed and returned before a service starts. **The council cannot continue to rely on implied terms and conditions for the remaining contractors who have not signed contracts**

3. Summary of the independent review approach

The independent review team

The make-up of the independent review team reflected the requirements and the focus of the independent review. The independent review team were selected on the basis of their relevant experience and expertise.

The team who delivered the independent review at Brighton and Hove were:

- Kevin Hall - **an experienced Director of Children's Services (retired from East Riding of Yorkshire Council in August 2019)**
- George Gilmore - **Headteacher of 3 special schools over 23 years, a local authority officer, and most recently an Ofsted Inspector**
- Dr Jackie Lown - **Head of Specialist Services (East Riding 2009 to 2019) and member of Ofsted inspection teams for Special Education Needs (SEND) inspections**

-
- **Janine Walker - Special Educational Needs/Disabilities professional, currently Head of SEND and Vulnerable Pupils, Nottingham City Council**
 - **Angela Kawa - Programme Manager for London and the South East at the Local Government Association, and Independent Review Manager**

Scope and focus

The Local Government Association was commissioned by Brighton & Hove City Council, to conduct an independent review of the Home to School Transport Service and the recent changes made to it. In particular, the council requirements asked the team to focus on the following:

- **Procurement of consultants working on Home to School Transport Service**
- **The Dynamic Purchasing System and Procurement of Operators**
- **Implementation of the new system**
- **The council's response to the disrupted delivery of the Home to School Transport Service**
- **Concerns and complaints**

The independent review process

It is important to stress that this was not an inspection. The independent review team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The independent review team prepared for the review by considering a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing before arriving onsite. The team then spent 3 days onsite at Brighton & Hove, during which they:

- **spoke to 113 people including a range of council staff together with councillors, stakeholders, parents and providers**
- **gathered information and views from more than 40 meetings, 33 survey responses, visits to schools and additional research and reading over 288 documents provided by the council and other parties**

-
- **collectively spent more than 150 hours to determine their findings the equivalent of one person spending more than four weeks in Brighton & Hove**

This report provides a summary of the independent review team's findings. By its nature, the independent review is a snapshot in time. We appreciate that some of the feedback may be about matters the council are already addressing and progressing.

4. Main findings

4.1. Procurement of consultants working on Home to School Transport Service

Many interviewees expressed concerns about the procurement of the consultants working on the HTST service. These concerns primarily focused on the speed of the procurement, lack of political oversight, and the fact that Edge Public Solutions were the only bidder. The independent team understand from interviews with officers that the then Lead Member had oversight of the decision. The independent review team also understand that the Lead Members and Council Leader were briefed about the decision, but the team have not seen any formal minutes of the relevant meeting.

Members also expressed concerns to the independent review team that the value of the contract was only just below the level at which it would need to be taken to committee. The very tight timescale imposed by the council meant that the involvement of members in the decision making, whilst technically within the legal procurement requirements, was very limited. Given the sensitivity of the decisions being made more consideration should have been given to briefing and involving members Member scrutiny should be welcomed, and in this case may well have raised relevant concerns about changing the procurement system with such little lead in time.

The independent review team were concerned that an evaluation report of the tender submitted by Edge Public Solutions was not completed. The team has seen written evidence that confirms this and confirms that concerns about the procurement process were raised repeatedly, and the risks highlighted internally. One email states that: 'Edge began providing

consultancy services on 1st April 2019, despite the fact their proposal was incomplete and as you know the contract is still not signed, a risk that xx xxxx and I have highlighted on a number of occasions.'

The independent review team note that the decision to change the procurement method and engage Edge Public Solutions to do this, was undertaken during purdah (pre-election period) using urgency powers. We also noted that an internal audit report (dated 2 September 2019) states:

“The Director of FCL was advised that this was as a technical change to the procurement process rather than a change to the decision to tender the contracts. In addition, it was highlighted that if an additional PRG Committee were held, this would have coincided with local and European elections and the purdah period. Ultimately these considerations concluded with a Senior Lawyer advising the Executive Director of FCL that it would be appropriate to use urgency powers to make sure that the decision to change the procurement route was properly documented and authorised. We are therefore satisfied that this decision process was in accordance with existing council procedures and delegations.”

The internal audit report also states that no business case was presented as to why the council should move to a Dynamic Purchasing System. Instead “a briefing report for Members and a presentation prepared for the Executive Leadership Team in March 2019 contains the key elements of a business case.”

The report also notes that “council arrangements only require a formal business case if additional funding is required or the plans have financial implications for other directorates, in which case these are presented to the Modernisation Board. In this case, no additional funds are being requested as all set up costs are covered within the existing budget. As a consequence, a formal business case was not required.” The independent review team do not believe this is best practice.

The independent review team recommend that in future any significant changes to council services should have a formal business case, which is presented to senior managers and lead members. Decisions made on modernisations and significant changes must be thoroughly documented to ensure there is a clear audit trail and clear lines of accountability. The

professional advice of the procurement and legal teams should be given far greater consideration going forward. There should be a review of the modernisation board, its effectiveness and what matters go to it for consideration.

The independent review team were concerned that the decision to proceed with the Dynamic Purchasing System was made in the spring of 2019, leaving the council and Edge Public Solutions only a few months to implement a new system, with new suppliers and new routes, in time for the new school year in September.

In our view, more consideration should have been given to extending the previous framework or issuing new contracts within the existing framework period, to give the council more time to properly consider the changes to the system. This would also have allowed more time to engage with key stakeholders such as parents, carers, and schools.

4.2. The Dynamic Purchasing System and Procurement of Operators

The timeframe to deliver the new dynamic purchasing system and to procure new operators was extremely tight. Edge Public Solutions repeatedly highlighted many challenges and potential risks to the council in their presentations: timetable to re-tender extremely tight, supplier stronghold, limited resources in the council's Home to School Transport team.

There was an overly ambitious timetable for implementation of the procurement system. The independent team judged that the programme timings were far too tight and that having so many key milestones just before the summer school holidays was inadvisable.

There was not sufficient time to deliver the significant changes being proposed without there being an impact on the service. The significant risks and challenges which had been identified do not appear to have been actively managed by the council.

The independent review team have seen clear evidence that concerns were raised about the procurement on the Dynamic Purchasing System being done too quickly.

There were also concerns raised about the suitability of the e-auction system, with one interviewee stating: "We would use e-auction for stationery, but these are people not pens." Health and safety considerations previously

highlighted in 2018, do not appear to have been fully considered during the procurement process.

Many providers also expressed dissatisfaction with the new system with many reporting difficulty using the system, there being little time ahead of the auction process to familiarise themselves with the system and there being insufficient information to accurately judge if they could provide the right vehicle for the routes. Providers also reported that the system allowed overbidding for routes indeed some providers reported that they were encouraged to overbid. As a result, a number of providers underestimated their success and won contracts that they subsequently were unable to deliver. In addition, providers reported conflicting advice from the council and Edge Public Solutions regarding whether routes could be sub-contracted.

4.3. Implementation of the new system

The implementation of the new system was very rushed. As a consequence, there was very little time to properly engage with parents/carers, children and young people and schools about the changes. This led to problems such as parents not having information in advance about new drivers and routes, schools not clearly understanding that it was their responsibility to escort children from transport into the classroom and drivers not understanding children's requirements.

The independent review team has had conflicting reports on the number of children who were adversely affected by the implementation of the changes with the first member briefing referring to 30 children. What is clear is the impact, with one parent saying: "I really think that if I hadn't have already given up work, the lack of transport at the beginning of term would have tipped me over the edge." Some children and young people were left without transport at all, late arrival of transport, experienced very long journeys or were mixed with other children in large vehicles when this was not appropriate.

As a result of some drivers and VPAs not being informed about children's special educational needs, some children were not adequately or safely supervised in vehicles once they arrived at school. Parents reported that on occasions drivers and VPAs called to collect a child from home not knowing the name of the child.

Half of parents/carers who were surveyed by PaCC said they did not feel confident that their child was safe. There were a small number of potentially serious safeguarding incidents during the implementation of the new system:

- **one incident involved a driver advising a Headteacher that he had a "lost" child who had left the vehicle and was subsequently found by school staff**
- **one parent commented that she received a phone call late one night to say that there would be no taxi for her son the following morning, as the usual driver had been found to have insufficient insurance cover**
- **one parent said her son, in a wheelchair, was positioned in a multi-person vehicle, within striking distance of another child who lashed out at him (they were separated in school for this reason)**
- **one parent reported that they received a call from their child's school to say the child had been picked up, but no-one knew by whom and it took the Home To School Transport Service over an hour to find out where he was**

In addition, it was reported that a number of VPAs commenced contracts without DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and at the time of the review the team were informed that "almost all VPAs DBS checks had now been collated". Several parents mentioned the worry of putting their children into taxis when they had never met the driver/VPA before. A number of interviewees also raised concerns regarding licensing of contractors.

The independent review team found that pupil information sheets were either not received by providers, arrived far too late or did not provide sufficient information for providers and drivers. When questioned by parents as to why they did not have pupil information sheets, drivers and escorts stated that data protection regulations (GDPR) meant that they were not allowed to see this information. As stated in the recommendations the council should consider streamlining their processes to ensure this information is updated as part of the regular annual review.

Many parents/carers expressed concern about the directive given to them that they should not have any direct contact with drivers/VPAs, but that all communication should be made via the HTST team. They saw this as

inefficient and cumbersome; parents/carers overwhelmingly expressed a view that this should be remedied.

A number of providers decided not to take up routes, in some cases providers reported this was because the information on the children's needs had arrived and they found they did not have the right sort of vehicle for a particular wheelchair, in other cases the providers had over bid and could not deliver all of the routes. They also reported problems with the routing saying some of them were impractical. Given the tight timeframes, this had an impact on the service and caused a number of problems.

A further complication concerned the building works underway on each of the special school sites during the summer term delays in the programme were not anticipated and the ongoing building works and site restrictions created additional logistical challenges for transport providers and school staff at the start of term.

The independent review also found that as a result of Home to School Transport having been managed on behalf of the council by a local provider over many years, there was a loss of school transport expertise within the Council. As a consequence, the data held by the council regarding children's needs, routes and compatibility on shared transport was limited, incomplete and at times inaccurate.

The combination of all of these issues has meant that Brighton & Hove is still using a large number of individual taxis, as this was necessary in the aftermath of the implementation problems in order to ensure that children could get to school. This has meant that instead of achieving a reduced overspend on the Home to School Transport there has been an even greater overspend than had been projected if the council had kept the previous system. Indeed, the latest actual forecast budget position has identified an overspend this year of £0.967m (as of February 2020, figure provided post review based on the assumption of a one year extension to the previous contract). Therefore, the position has worsened by £0.393m for this financial year.

Many parents and children had their routines disturbed experienced disruption to their work and schooling, and were distressed by the problems 57% of parents who responded to the PaCC survey said they were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the service a

third of parents /carers were satisfied or very satisfied with the new service. However, in general the implementation of the new service caused a host of problems to some families who are already facing challenges and need support.

4.4. The council's response to the disrupted delivery of the Home to School Transport Service

The independent review team found that there was not a clear picture of the impact of the changes to the service and therefore there was a delay in contacting affected groups. Once the scale of the problem became clear, frontline staff, in the words of one interviewee “went above and beyond” to try and resolve the problems. However, it still took many weeks and in some cases months before children and young people who had been adversely affected by the implementation received suitable home to school transport. The significant impact on families and staff was underestimated.

There were a number of safeguarding issues as a result of the implementation of the new service. The council has now ensured that all the necessary checks have been undertaken but there was a point when the council could not confirm this was the case.

The council's communications team did not appear to have been given the correct information when they initially responded to member enquiries and produced member briefings therefore figures in the early member briefings were incorrect, this led to some break down in trust. The council's communications team were not forewarned of the scale of the change in advance and therefore were caught unawares when it became clear that the implementation of the new service had not gone well. Once they realised the scale of the problem, they acted quickly to provide information and support to members dealing with media enquiries.

The council needs to develop a systematic response to crisis management and service continuity. There needs to be more consideration given to the impact of resources on other affected services. For example, communications, procurement, health and safety and legal. In the independent review team's judgement, the council had limited capacity to resource an internal crisis and manage its aftermath. Some interviewees also

reported that the corporate team were slow to understand the scale of the risks posed by the crisis.

The independent review team have serious concerns that the focus on improving Home To School Transport will lose momentum without robust programme management support and a better understanding of risk. In our judgement the level of corporate risk was not understood during this crisis.

4.5. Concerns and complaints

At one stage of the crisis the council was receiving approximately 200 emails and phone calls regarding home to school transport per day. There was clearly a significant impact on families and children, some coped well with the changes whilst others were very distressed. These were responded to, but the service was overwhelmed by the volume of enquires and complaints. Going forward, it is important that the council promotes high quality customer service contact with parents and other stakeholders.

Parents and carers rightly want clarity on the transport arrangements for September 2020. The independent review team found that parents did not know what the arrangements will be in September as a result, parents were anxious about whether routes will be re-tendered and changed. The council urgently needs to communicate clearly their future plans for the Home To School Transport Service.

The comment of one parent was typical of many "hopefully lessons have been learned and we won't have a repeat of this fiasco again next September...parents are going to struggle to trust the system again for some time." Although senior leaders gave public apologies for the stress and disruption that had been caused at the time of the crisis many parents felt strongly that senior leaders had not apologised in a meaningful way to affected families and without this they felt that it was difficult to move on.

Parent/carers anxieties about future travel arrangements appear to have become such a strong focus that other priorities around SEND have not progressed, for example SEND policy. Clear information and reassurance about travel arrangements for parents/carers is required, in order to engage them in meaningful co production about wider SEND issues, of which travel is one element.

Members are also clearly concerned about the new system, the procurement and implementation. More than one member referred to it as “a botched process”. In our interviews some members expressed their frustration that they could not get accurate information from the council and that many parents and carers had contacted them in distress during the midst of the crisis. The member briefings were welcomed but undermined by the inaccurate information provided. This seems to have been a result of a lack of data being in one place that was easily accessible. We are aware the council has a new IT system for Home to School Transport, the council must ensure that information it stores is correct and easily accessible to the appropriate staff.

Some opposition members also expressed concerns that they had resorted to using Freedom of Information requests to get information from the council, as information had not been forthcoming via the usual routes such as emailing officers for information. It should also be noted that the internal audit report referenced above was compiled following a concern raised by backbench councillors.

The council has produced a detailed lessons learnt report (January 2020). The independent review team considers that while the analysis is helpful, and the 11 proposed actions are to be welcomed, the report does not fully recognise the extent of the internal systems failure. The mitigating factors described in the report were largely within the control of the council and should have been foreseen.

The independent review team also understand that a Council committee is due to consider the changes to the service and examine what went wrong and what changes need to be made.

5. Next steps

The independent review team appreciate that senior officers and political leaders will want to reflect on the findings within this report in order to determine how the council wishes to take things forward.

The independent review team have identified a number of key recommendations, some of which the council may already have in hand. We recommend that the council’s response to these recommendations includes

the prompt development of an action plan which is sent to stakeholders and published on the council's website.

The Local Government Associations' Principal Adviser for your region Mona Sehgal and Children's Improvement Adviser Alison Michalska will be in contact to assist Brighton & Hove City Council going forward.

Their contact details are: mona.sehgal@local.gov.uk or tel. 07795 291006 and alisonmichalska@icloud.com or tel. 07920 727626.

Contact details for this report

18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

www.local.gov.uk

Telephone 020 7664 3000

Email info@local.gov.uk

Chief Executive: Mark Lloyd

Local Government Association company number 11177145

Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government
company number 03675577

Appendix 2

OFFICER RESPONSE TO THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEMBERS' POLICY PANEL

1. This report presents an initial response to the recommendations in the report of the Members' Policy Panel.
2. Officers will respond in more detail to the findings and recommendations of the Members' Policy Panel once these have been considered in full.
3. The full response to the recommendations will be captured in an up-dated and extended action plan, which will be overseen by the Home to School Transport (HTST) Governance Board and will be presented with a progress report as part of the next HTST report to Children, Young People and Skills Committee in the Spring of 2020.
4. The extended action plan will be co-produced with the Parent Carers' Council (PaCC) and signed off by the Governance Board by the end of the Autumn term 2020.
5. Officers accept the findings and recommendations of the Members' Policy Panel and wish to thank Members for their work in providing support and challenge to the developing service over this critical time.
6. Our thanks also are extended to the Parent Carers' Council (PaCC) representatives, transport providers and Headteacher who gave freely of their time to feedback on experiences in the summer and autumn of 2019 and who all made valued suggestions for improvement.
7. Officers particularly appreciate the challenge and support from PaCC, who have worked intensively with the service on improvements as part of co-production arrangements over the past several months.
8. The council very much regrets the disruption, distress, loss of schooling and upset caused to families and other stakeholders over the autumn term of 2019 in particular, apologises unreservedly again to families, schools and transport providers, and is determined that lessons are learned such that these failings will not occur again.
9. The service is pleased to be able to report on substantial progress over the past several months in improving the service and to evidence this with a very positive response to a recent survey of parents/ carers on arrangements for transport in September 2020.
10. An update on all aspects of service, plus priorities for further improvement, is included in this report.

11. Meantime, a summary headline response to the four themes in the findings of the Members' Policy Panel is detailed below.

1 Theme 1: Governance and Oversight

Panel recommendations:

Council wide:

- *Systems change - The panel were concerned with all the evidence that this was not a well-managed systems change project. The council are recommended (perhaps via a recommendation to Audit and Standards Committee) to consider how the learning from this is captured and incorporated into corporate processes as a matter of urgency, to include the need for sufficient lead in time for any future significant service change.*
- *Risk register - Council officers need to ensure robust change management by adding significant projects to the relevant risk registers and to take swifter action in future when requests are made for additions to risk registers by councillors*
- *Co-production - The panel have seen, through the service improvements over the span of their meetings, that meaningful coproduction on key services such as this is essential. The panel recommends that all projects of this scale and significance in future have a well-resourced commitment to coproduction with stakeholders both throughout the planning and implementation and also through being part of the governance of overseeing future governance of the area of work.*
- *Financial modelling - Future change programmes need a more robust financial modelling approach in future. Some work was done on high-level comparator budgets but there was little drilling down into the detail to understand the validity and relevance of the high-level comparisons.*
- *Access to information - The council should review processes for councillors to obtain information when legitimate reasons are provided.*
- *Procurement review - In March this year, significant concerns were raised with the Council's Chief Executive regarding the consultancy contract to advise and support the Council on the HTST procurement process. In June the Chief Executive was asked to obtain an independent review of the HtST procurement process to ensure transparency and accountability. Subsequently the matter was referred to an external Barrister for review and advice and Counsel has provided his preliminary draft advice. Given that these are matters of governance, rather than service, and given their vital importance, the Panel has determined that they would be better dealt with by the Audit & Standards Committee which met on 27 October to consider the recommendation of this Panel that a cross party panel with an Independent Person, is set up as a matter of urgency.*

Service specific

- *Committee Oversight - In 6 months' time, a brief progress update paper on the service should be provided to the CYPS Committee, with a full progress update being provided on an annual basis thereafter. This fuller update should include: an update on the service improvement action plan, parent/carers feedback on the service, procurement plans and the budget position.*

Officer response on Governance recommendations:

- 1.1 The council accepts the findings of the Members' Policy Panel in this area and is committed to learn lessons from past failings in respect of the service.
- 1.2 It is accepted that a lack of proper oversight, plus inadequacies in project planning and the construction of a business plan, were significant factors in the issues that arose in the summer/ autumn of 2019.
- 1.3 Now there is a monthly HTST Governance Group with representation from the Parent Carers' Council (PaCC) and schools to oversee the work of the service.
- 1.4 Any future changes to the service will be proposed and implemented within a strong governance structure, with full community consultation and co-production, and on the basis of a robust project and business management structure and realistic time scales for full consultation and implementation.
- 1.5 The service's co-production agreement with PaCC will ensure families are fully involved in all future planning and recommendations.
- 1.6 Any significant proposed changes and related financial matters will be subject to the approval of the Families, Children and Learning Modernisation Board.
- 1.7 Currently the service remains on the corporate risk register, and risks, plus mitigating actions, are subject to regular review.
- 1.8 An update report will be presented to CYPS Committee in six months-time on progress made with the Members' Policy Panel recommendations.

2 Theme 2: Stakeholder Feedback

Panel recommendations:

Council-wide:

- *Key performance indicators (KPIs) - The introduction of KPIs on service-user satisfaction and as providers of the service, the council remains ambitious about its targets.*
- *Complaints processes - The council must ensure that complaints processes and procedures for parents and carers allow and encourage open and frank feedback, emphasising that feedback can be made without prejudice to services entitled to, received or being offered.*
- *Member panels - Future Member panels of this type should learn from the strong stakeholder voice model used here. Constitutional Working Group should consider how further guidance can be drafted as to assist future member panels.*

Service specific:

- *Service feedback - Feedback from schools and operators should be regularly sought and acted upon – in a transparent way*

Officer response on Stakeholder recommendations

- 2.1 Officers accept the Panel's findings in this area and accept that changes to procurement processes in the summer and autumn of 2019 did not meet expected standards in terms of proper consultation, particularly with respect to children, young people and families.
- 2.2 The current service is committed to full consultation and partnership working with all stakeholders and has worked hard to regain the trust and confidence of families, transport providers and schools.
- 2.3 The HTST transport service has conducted surveys of school satisfaction with the service (July 2020) and parent/ carer satisfaction with September arrangements (September 2020).
- 2.4 Both surveys indicated very high levels of satisfaction from those responding (schools 100%, parents and carers 91%) with corresponding very low levels of concern. These, alongside comments by parents, carers, children and young people are detailed in the service update below.
- 2.5 However, the service is aware that a minority of potential respondents only have completed survey responses and a plan is needed with PaCC to reach a wider group of parents and carers.
- 2.6 The service needs to develop an integrated and regular schedule for obtaining feedback from all stakeholders, giving a 360-degree perspective, and for acting on concerns or suggestions for improvement. This will be a key part of the role of the Quality, Compliance and Contract Manager post once recruited.
- 2.7 A commitment has been given that stakeholder feedback will be obtained regularly in an open and transparent way.

3 Theme 3: Procurement

Panel recommendations:

Council-wide:

- *Exploring options - The council can and should be encouraged to meet its statutory obligations in different ways, for example, by paying parents (based on mileage or by giving each a personal budget) or by exploring delegating some budgets to schools. However, it is the panel's view that in order for operators to invest in delivering a high-quality service they need assurance that the contracts will run (subject to good contract management) for the duration of their term.*
- *System change - There is a point of learning for the whole council around whether there is enough lead-in time to properly plan for and achieve major systems change, including time for relevant committees to be consulted. For HTST this should include the annual procurement of each route, contracts being issued and the start of the autumn term.*

Service specific:

- *Future contractual changes – the CYPS committee will receive a future detailed report on possible new contractual arrangements for this service, which are fully co-produced with key stakeholders and that clearly seek the views and input of current providers. This model must include full considerations around sustainability and environmental impacts on the city. Any future contractual changes need to be considered with sufficient lead in time to be capable of delivery at the start a new academic year avoiding an over reliance on preparations over the summer holiday period.*

Officer response on Procurement recommendations:

- 3.1 Officers accept the findings of the Members' Policy Panel with respect to considering future procurement and related arrangements for securing HTST services.
- 3.2 The current four-year framework contract with transport providers has just under three years left to run.
- 3.3 Subject to agreement at CYPS Committee, a review of procurement arrangements will be organised.
- 3.4 If at the end of this review, changes of significance are proposed, these will be formulated within a sound governance and project management structure, in full consultation with stakeholders and with realistic lead-in times for any changes to be made.
- 3.5 The view of the service is that the amended way the procurement and tendering system is working now is at least satisfactory and providing much improved value for money, even within the context of extra vehicles for social distancing.
- 3.6 The council has heard the concerns of transport providers, who feel the current framework contract does not give them to the security they need to invest in new vehicles.
- 3.7 The council very much wishes providers to invest in the size and type of vehicles needed and to consider environmental impacts in doing so.
- 3.8 The service accepts that new ways of working should be explored. The service already offers mileage payments to many parents and personal budgets to a small number but agrees these options could be extended further.
- 3.9 The service is committed to the introduction of independent travel training, providing that a budget can be secured for this initiative.

3.10 A full report on suggested future methods of procuring Home to School Transport Services will be taken to a future meeting of the CYPS Committee.

4 Theme 4: Continuous Improvement and Improving Outcomes

Panel recommendations:

Council-wide:

- *Contract management - Robust contract management arrangements to be in place to ensure compliance with key standards (For HTST this means training, DBS and full compliance with the council's Blue Book etc). The panel welcomes the idea of a contract management board being established to manage contracts.*

Service specific:

- *Governance board - Transport Governance Board to continue and to oversee the HTST Improvement Action Plan and ensure continuous service improvement.*
- *Wider SEND planning - Process review of how transport needs are woven into Education, Health and Care plans and the work of SEND (given HTST sits outside the SEND team). The panel would like to see greater collaboration between these two areas with agreed roles and responsibilities.*
- *Route allocation review – Implementing an expanded value for money tool which embeds quality considerations alongside financial information when considering bids or making route allocations.*
- *Alternative arrangements - Alternative HTST arrangements are to be explored such as personal budgets; Independent Travel Training; mileage allowances.*
- *Home to School Transport policy - Reviewing and co-production of the Home to School Transport Policy, which was last agreed by members in 2015. Timing – to be in place before the formal re-procurement of the service begins. [New Government Guidance](#) is expected – consultation closed in October 2019. This will cover how to review the council's local policy. Separate post-16 guidance is also expected.*
- *Route returns - Route returns and other significant issues with operators must be recorded in a robust manner to allow scrutiny, analysis and improved service delivery.*
- *Future liaison - HTST should ensure close liaison between the service, schools and operators to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged by reduced education time.*
- *HTST should ensure close liaison between the service, schools and operators to ensure that decisions by HTST do not create budget pressures on the schools.*
- *Incident reporting - HTST should create a robust procedure for incident reporting and a summary of incidences (complying with GDPR legislation) should be included with the reports to CYPS Committee recommended elsewhere in this report.*
- *Vehicle checks – HTST to ensure that appropriate vehicle checks are regularly and routinely carried out.*

Officer response to Service Improvement recommendations:

- 4.1 Officers accept the Panel's findings in respect of continuous improvement and improving outcomes.
- 4.2 Systems in use by the service up to and including 2019 have been reviewed and those causing concern have been changed or updated in consultation with PaCC, with new systems introduced.
- 4.3 Further details of changes to systems are including in the report to this committee on the progress of the HTST service.
- 4.4 A comprehensive new online training programme has been developed and a system for ensuring compliance with training requirements has been developed also.
- 4.5 Termly contract management meetings are held with contractors against the Key Performance Indicators in the contract.
- 4.6 Links between the HTST and SEND teams have been strengthened with termly meetings between senior officers in both. A senior member of the SEND team joins the Transport Panel also, where decisions are made on transport eligibility.
- 4.7 The Transport Panel now also includes a worker from Amaze representing parent/ carers.
- 4.8 The service is currently recruiting to the post of HTST SEND Officer. The appointee will be responsible for liaison between the teams, with families, providers, schools and medical services to ensure all SEND needs are correctly identified and met, that risks are identified and mitigated and that the transport workforce has all been properly trained for the role.
- 4.9 The policies for HTST, including post 16 transport, are scheduled to be reviewed on a co-produced model with PaCC once new government guidance is finalised and published.
- 4.10 The service is also developing a Value for Money Tool, which will provide expected bands within which we expect providers to bid. This would support a focus on quality as well as price, by identifying bids that are exceptionally low or high and providing evidence for further inquiry. The service is also in contact with the relevant department of the Government, which is undertaking similar work at national level in this area.
- 4.11 The service works in partnership with the Council's Vehicle Licensing Team to carry out spot checks at school sites. The HTST team check for compliance with the HTST standards such as transport staff identification badges, high visibility jackets and knowledge of children being transported, while the Licensing Team

carry out vehicle inspection checks as this is part of their role in monitoring standards in the taxi and private hire trade.

5. Summary and Next Steps

- 5.1 Officers will reflect in detail on the recommendations of the Members' Policy Panel in consultation with PaCC and other stakeholders and will incorporate these into the existing service action plan.
- 5.2 The action plan will be monitored by the HTST Governance Board as part of monthly meetings.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the extended action plan with an evaluation of progress against targets will be presented to the CYPs Committee in six months i.e. April 2020.

Subject:	Progress Report on the Home to School Transport Service		
Date of Meeting:	9 November 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director of Families, Children and Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Jo Lyons	Tel: 01273 293514
	Email:	Jo.lyons@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 To provide the panel with an update and progress report on the Home to School Transport (HTST) service

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes this report on the Home to School Transport Service;
- 2.2 That a further report comes to a meeting of the CYPS Committee in the Spring of 2021, which will include progress on the implementation of agreed recommendations from the November 2020 report of the HTST Members' Policy Panel.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In 2018/19, responding to an escalating overspend in the HTST budget and perceived lack of effective competition in the sector, the council commissioned Edge Public Solutions to introduce a new Dynamic Purchasing and Procurement of Operators System for September 2020. Edge began working in April 2019 and challenges in capacity at every level of the system soon became apparent. It is acknowledged that the introduction of the new system was rushed, and serious problems resulted with the service from September 2019. Although most were resolved by November, there had been a very significant loss of trust and confidence from families and transport operators.
- 3.2 An independent investigation into the issues reported the following March 2020, making a series of recommendations.
- 3.3 All the recommendations from the first independent review are being implemented as part of an action plan to restore trust and confidence in the service.
- 3.4 The service has an agreed co-production policy with PaCC, approved by the HTST Governance Board and included with background reports to this report.

This ensures that all new policy and practice is co-produced in consultation with parent and carer representatives and that parents and carers are part of recruitment panels and key decision-making forums.

- 3.5 New governance arrangements were brought in to ensure all stakeholders were fully involved in the changes. Alongside the Members Policy Panel, a monthly HTST Governance Board was set up with all stakeholders represented. It is chaired by the Assistant Director. The Governance Board will continue to monitor progress with the service, alongside 6-monthly reviews by the CYPS Committee.
- 3.6 The Members Policy Panel has now concluded its review and produced its report. Subject to approval by CYPS Committee, its recommendations will be consolidated into the existing action plan.

4. Planning of Transport Arrangements for September 2020

- 4.1 Notwithstanding the complexities arising from the pandemic, arrangements for transport for this autumn term went very well overall, as evidenced by feedback from all stakeholders.
- 4.2 By the beginning of the autumn term 2020, the service had successfully completed a range of tasks:
- secured new systems to ensure arrangements for September 2020 that ensured no repetition of the inadequate services in September 2019;
 - responded to the COVID 19 pandemic and the significant difficulties raised for safe transport of highly vulnerable children, in terms of social distancing, cleaning vehicles to prevent contamination and PPE for transport staff;
 - helped to ensure the sustainability of transport firms and staff over the school closure period by negotiating supplier relief on an 'open-book' basis with all transport providers;
 - introduced more robust contract management and compliance monitoring to ensure best value and improved budgetary control.
- 4.3 All routes for September were planned to allow social distancing and in line with government guidance.
- 4.4 Our transport providers have been flexible and supportive over a period of much change and uncertainty, working in partnership with the service to ensure that arrangements are the best they can be over the pandemic period and in relation to the return to school. This has included supporting the service with the planning of additional vehicles to support social distancing and also accommodating staggered starts and part-time timetables that some schools introduced this term.
- 4.5 Planning took place in good time, with transport providers being informed about their routes before the end of July and asked to inform families and introduce any new staff teams prior to the 16 August.
- 4.6 In the majority of cases, firms met the deadline of 16 August, but a number had to be chased up beyond this date. In some cases, we have been informed of genuine difficulties making contact with parents and carers at this time of year, and we do not feel this system has worked as well as it should and needs further

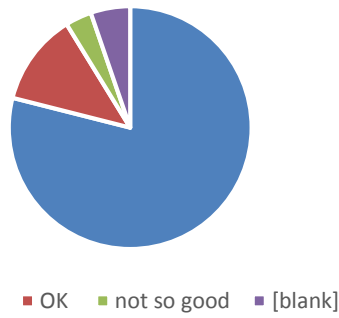
improvement. We have been discussing with a PaCC representative how to make changes to ensure greater compliance with deadlines in the future and will continue to explore options with operators.

- 4.7 The Parent and Carers' Council, often under extreme pressures themselves as parents and carers over the period of school closures, has provided highly valued challenge and support in relation to autumn arrangements and very helpful input into planning and communications.

5. **Survey of Parents and Carers in September 2020**

- 5.1 The service had worked closely with PaCC and with operators to plan for the start of the new school year.
- 5.2 Social distancing meant new vehicles and VPA's had to be added to routes, and there were also changes to school timetables to be accommodated.
- 5.3 To find out how successful plans had been, it was agreed that the service would undertake a quick snapshot survey of satisfaction with autumn term arrangements and this was constructed with the help of PaCC.
- 5.4 A simple survey was sent out by email to 411 parents and carers on 17 September to make replying as easy as possible with three potential scores; good/ OK/ not so good.
- 5.5 Parents and carers were asked to comment on what was going well and what could be improved.
- 5.6 They were also invited to elicit a comment on the service from their child or young person.
- 5.7 Parents were also asked to tick a box if they would like follow-up from their comments and just one parent did so.
- 5.8 Fifty-seven responses were received.
- 5.9 91% of respondents rated the service as at least satisfactory (OK).
- 5.10 Of these, 79% rated the service as at least 'good'.
- 5.11 Two respondents (4%) rated the service as below satisfactory and 3 did not give a score.

HTST user survey 17 September 2020



5.12 Very many positive comments by parents and carers were received with appreciation expressed for individual transport staff and sometimes to members of the HTST service. For example (names removed):

- *My son's driver is fantastic. He knows my son and understands him. He always has classical music playing when my son is picked up, because he knows it comforts, calms and soothes him....*
- *All interactions I have had over the holidays have been positive and beneficial. I've spoken with his driver at the school gate and as always, he was very accommodating for my child's needs and as always a pleasure to deal with.*
- *Drivers have been on time, friendly and helpful. And my son likes them and the chaperones.*
- *Our driver has been lovely and real gem and very reliable and punctual*
- *Very pleased we have the same driver and chaperone as last year. I think this really allowed my child to settle back more quickly.....*
- *Excellent Same great driver as last year which was a big relief. Kind and professional VPA.*
- *Warm and welcoming service. Communication all been great .*
- *The taxi driver is really friendly and my daughter enjoys getting in the taxi.*
- *Everything. The communication from yourself was great. (HTST transport officer) was really helpful. The taxi driver called in advance to introduce himself and my son has had no issues and is happy to go.*

5.13 Parents and carers particularly appreciate the relationships with transport staff, consistency of drivers and VPAs, good timekeeping and good communication.

5.14 Parents also provided some positive comments from children and young people stressing again the importance of good relationships, such as:

Phil is brilliant. I feel good when I'm in his taxi.

I like going on the bus with Nigel and Pat

5.15 Comments about areas for improvement were few in number (3) but related to poor communication and time-keeping, and in one instance to a change of staff team:

- *Communication from the taxi firm. Also, we were supposed to have some contact from the driver before we started, and it came down to the last minute. There was a lot of chasing.*
- *The measures put in place to ensure children were sufficiently prepared, etc. did not take place. Our experiences were very similar to last year. We knew it would be [operator] but no named driver*
- *I'm confused as to why the driver and escort were changed in the first place (when) we were finally provided with a taxi driver and escort who were able to manage both my child and the other child in his taxi without any problems.*

5.16 One person suggested that parents be given access to a vehicle tracker used by some transport firms so they could plan around arrival times. Schools may also like this tool, and this could be a helpful development for all.

5.17 Where parents and carers requested a follow-up, this has happened, and the situation has been resolved to their satisfaction.

5.18 A more thorough survey of users, schools and operators/staff will be organised with PaCC later in the school year. For children, we can perhaps explore opportunities to make it part of a school activity.

6. COVID-19 Guidance for Parents and Operators

6.1 Following government guidance issued on 11 August 2020, new advice was issued to operators on 18 August covered the prevention of transmission and the response to symptoms. This is included with background documents to this report.

6.2 We have also required our operators to send us their risk assessments before the start of term.

6.3 We issued advice to parents and carers on 20 August along with a 'Social Story' to help some children and young people prepare for the changed arrangements for September. This is included with background documents to this report.

6.4 All our communications with parents and carers have been discussed and approved by PaCC.

- 6.5 Social distancing on HTST was not considered mandatory by the government, but their guidance advised councils to implement it if possible and the Brighton and Hove Service has done this.
- 6.6 Social distancing (with a spare seat between each passenger or limits to numbers on vehicles) has necessitated the commissioning of more vehicles and crews, and while we have managed to secure sufficient capacity, resources have been stretched with additional vehicles commissioned and providers have had to recruit extra staff.

7. Vehicle Passenger Assistants

- 7.1 This workforce is often difficult to recruit and retain because of limited hours needed, split shifts and time of day when transport required. A high percentage of VPAs (and drivers on HTST) are an older workforce and their safety is a priority, alongside that of children and young people.
- 7.2 Acknowledging recruitment and retention difficulties, our supplier relief over the period of school closures has paid VPAs at 100% of their expected pay.
- 7.3 To avoid shortages, the HTST service over the summer recruited a small 'bank' of VPAs who can cover for any gaps caused by sickness or any issues that might arise with time taken for acquiring enhanced DBS for new VPAs. These are now all deployed and consideration is being given to further recruitment.

8. Monitoring

- 8.1 The service checks with providers ensured that no staff member began their work in September without an enhanced DBS. No 'waivers' were necessary and are not part of service policy going forward.
- 8.2 Following issues last year, where parents and carers reported feeling burdened by requests for new Pupil Information Sheets annually, this year parents and carers have only been asked to update the existing sheets if there have new information to provide about children's needs.
- 8.3 All operators have been told that they will only get an updated Pupil Information Sheet if the parents or carers have provided updated information. Where routes have changed, transport operators have been provided with Pupil Information Sheets for children and young people new to their service.
- 8.4 A new online application form and pupil information sheet combined has been co-produced with a PaCC representative and will be online this term.
- 8.5 The Home to School Transport Service has conducted risk assessments on all children using our transport and is in the process of undertaking a further risk assessment on all vehicles.
- 8.6 The service is monitoring compliance with COVID-19 safety standards by:
- requiring an updated risk assessment from each firm;

- staff being required to complete the training modules sent out to them by the beginning of term;
- team presence at key school sites in the first week of term to monitor traffic flow;
- spot checks on COVID preventative and cleaning regime compliance at key school sites from the beginning of the autumn term.

8.7 Capacity issues in the HTST team have prevented spot checks starting as soon as we would like, but they will resume shortly.

9. Recruitment

9.1 In May of 2020, the Policy and Resources Committee of the Council agreed an uplift to the budget for the HTST from April 2021 to bring this more in line with the average for our statistical neighbours.

9.2 Part of this funding was allocated to an increase of staffing for the under-resourced HTST service.

9.3 Low capacity in the team at peak times, was referenced in the report from the Independent Review Team, published in March 2020.

9.4 Since then, despite the addition of some temporary staff, the service has continued to struggle with low capacity, especially over the summer holidays this year.

9.5 Complexities in the recruitment process have meant a protracted period without new staff being in post but progress is being made.

9.6 A permanent Team Manager has been appointed to start at the end of October 2020 and a new administrative assistant is recently in post. The service is very grateful for the work of the interim team manager, who was seconded from another part of the council and is returning to his substantive position, after leading the service well through a challenging period.

9.7 Candidates for the HTST SEND Officer post have been short-listed and recruitment will take place in the next few weeks.

9.8 The aim is to complete recruitment and induction of the new team before the end of January 2021, including induction into co-production arrangements with PaCC and Amaze.

10. Training

10.1 Prior to the Spring of 2020, Brighton and Hove had no training offer for transport staff.

10.2 Elements of training were contractually required but the service did not have a robust means of monitoring compliance with training or assessing the quality and suitability of training accessed independently by firms.

- 10.3 The service considers high quality training to be essential for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people on HTST and is mindful that parents and carers are of the same view.
- 10.4 Addressing this issue has therefore been a key priority for the service over the past several months and has taken up much available capacity and resource.
- 10.5 A comprehensive online training programme, consisting of 9 modules has been developed using expertise as appropriate from services across the council, medical services, schools, transport staff and from parents and carers.
- 10.6 This will be supplemented by a series of webinars and post-pandemic, a programme of face-to-face training.
- 10.7 The online modules allow the service to set a uniform standard for training. The Learning Gateway enables the service to monitor that transport staff have undertaken modules and that they have passed the tests embedded in each module.
- 10.8 Dedicated support from the Learning and Development Team has enabled the service to put these modules onto the Learning Gateway and ensure all transport providers have access to this.
- 10.9 We issued our firms the first two training modules for all staff to be completed by the beginning of term. They are:
- 'Introduction to HTST'
 - 'Safeguarding on HTST'
- 10.10 These were not accessible to all on the Learning Gateway by the summer holiday period so were issued as PDFs by email. All operators have assured us that these have been undertaken by all staff.
- 10.11 All modules are now on the Learning Gateway or in the planning cycle to be online by January 20201.
- 10.12 Initial feedback from firms on the content is very positive despite some teething problems with the Learning Gateway.
- 10.13 We are then requiring all staff to have completed a further three modules by this half term and a further four by the end of the autumn term, covering. These are:
- Equalities
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
 - Exploitation
 - Autistic Spectrum Condition
 - Managing Behaviour
 - Epilepsy
 - Language and Communication

- 10.14 We have also accelerated training on epilepsy for staff transporting children with epilepsy plans. Epilepsy plans are also now being written by the specialist nurses at Seaside View with a dedicated section providing advice specifically for transport staff, and with parents' and carers' consent, each updated plan is being forwarded to our operators.
- 10.15 While enormous progress has been made, this training programme has been brought in very fast to fill a significant gap in service and systems still need to embed. All staff completing training modules are asked to fill in a brief evaluation sheet and their responses will be used for further improvement.

11. Summary and Priorities for further Improvement

- 11.1 The service has worked hard over the past many months to improve the service on offer and overcome the challenges of the autumn of 2010
- 11.2 Many new systems have been co-produced and brought in quickly to ensure rapid improvement and that children and young people were once more at the heart and centre of the service on offer.
- 11.3 Those new systems need to embed and consolidate, with further improvements as needed consequent on stakeholder feedback.
- 11.4 In addition, the service has expanded with permanent posts replacing temporary posts and new staff arriving in post. Some new posts still need to be recruited and the new team needs to be fully inducted.
- 11.5 In the above context and despite considerable progress, the service has much work left to do and top priorities include:
- Finalising recruitment and induction of new staff;
 - Ensuring all COVID-related advice and guidance is up-to-date and implemented for the safety and wellbeing of children and staff;
 - Reviewing the current system of procurement and considering any changes to be made;
 - Consulting on an updated HTST and post-16 transport policy;
 - Providing a quality independent travel training option is available to all families for whom independent travel is an option, subject to a budget being secured for this;
 - Extending and improving further links with the SEND team and making sure that HTST processes integrate with the Education, Health and Care plan cycle
 - Reviewing and improving all new systems in the service and making sure they are effectively implemented, recorded and managed;
 - Establishing a regular integrated survey of key stakeholders to provide a 360-degree perspective on the work of the service;
 - Establishing a regular integrated survey of key stakeholders to provide a 360-degree perspective on the work of the service;
 - Improving further systems for financial forecasting and ensuring a balanced budget for 21/22.

12. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 12.1 The service now works with an agreed co-production policy with the Parent and Carers' Council (PacC) and is committed to on-going co-production of all communications, new policies and service developments with parents and carers.

13 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 13.1 Of the reported overspend of £1.122m, it is currently estimated that £0.339m relates to additional costs as a result of COVID-19. The early indicative forecast over spend for 2020/21 (pre-Covid) was £1.200m. Excluding Covid-19 related costs, the forecast over spend for 2020/21 has reduced significantly to £0.783m. This suggests that the careful route planning by the HTST team is having a positive impact on the cost of the service and is capable of producing improved value for money, at the same time as delivering what users regard as a good service.
- 13.2 The HTST budget for 2021/22 will increase by £1.000m as agreed by P&R Committee. It is anticipated that the additional funding, together with the improved route planning, should eliminate the overspend in 2021/22. However, forecasting spending for next year by extrapolating from this year is problematic, due to the service disruption and different financial arrangements that have had an impact on the budget as a result of the pandemic.

Finance Officer Consulted: Louise Hoten / Dave Ellis Date: 19/10/20

Legal Implications:

- 13.3 The context in which the MPP was set up is provided in the body of the report. The report should be read in conjunction with the LGA recommendations, which the panel endorses. The Panel makes a number of recommendations with a view to the council being able to offer an improved service and lawful decision making to meet statutory duties in relation to home to school transport services in the future.

Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson Date: dd/mm/yy

Equalities Implications:

- 13.4 The statutory duty on the council to provide free Home to School Transport for children and young people with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is aimed at ensuring their access to schooling is assured, especially given mobility issues and the fact that the nearest suitable school may be further than for children without SEND. In arranging transport, the council must comply with the Equalities Act of 2010 which requires that children and young people with SEND are not treated 'less favourably' than their peers and that there is no indirect discrimination against their parents and carers by requiring of them more than would reasonably be required of other parents.

Sustainability Implications:

- 13.5 The addition of up to 200 vehicles travelling twice a day at peak times across the City adds to pollution and in that context, it is important that transport providers invest in newer more environmentally sustainable vehicles.
- 13.6 It is also important that the best and most efficient route planning minimises the numbers of vehicles needed by using the most suitable vehicles for each shared journey.
- 13.7 While the need to socially distance on transport has necessarily increased the number of vehicles on the road this year, the underlying number of vehicles for when routes return to normal has reduced this year.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 13.8 None

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 13.9 None

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 13.10 The HTST remains on the corporate risk register. Major improvements have been evidenced above and the level of risk has significantly reduced over the course of 2020.
- 13.11 There are continued risks related to the pandemic, with significant additional safety measures needed on transport. These are mitigated through risk assessments, careful guidance to our transport operators and parents, close consultation with Public Health, and appropriate measures to ensure compliance with national and local advice.
- 13.12 The service is expanding with a number of new posts and also permanent appointments replacing temporary ones. While this will substantially increase capacity to make and sustain improvements, there is a risk in the transition, which will be mitigated through thorough induction processes.

Public Health Implications:

- 13.13 Transporting children with SEND in the enclosed space of vehicles brings inevitable risk for children and staff, but the service has worked with transport providers to mitigate that risk as far as possible.
- 13.14 Guidance to operators has been written in consultation with Public Health and advice sought from Public Health as needed.
- 13.15 Public Health have agreed to transport staff being treated as key workers in terms of accessing COVID testing.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 13.16 The issues that arose with the service in the summer and autumn of 2019 led to a loss of confidence in this area of the council's service amongst parents and carers of children with SEND, with schools and with transport providers.
- 13.17 Issues with the process of consultation and co-production with key stakeholders were highlighted and have been addressed for the future.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Background Documents

- Co-production agreement with PaCC
- Guidance to Transport Operators on Response to the Pandemic
- Guidance to Parents on September Arrangements and Social Story
- Introductory Training Module for Transport Staff

Home to School Transport Service (HTST) and Parent and Carers Council (PACC) Co-production: Working Agreement

Introduction

The Home to School Transport (HTST) Service is committed to working in co-producing all new policy and practice with PACC and Amaze.

The Home to School Transport Service is committed to ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of all we do and is the top priority in improving and developing the service.

HTST and PACC acknowledge the finding of the Independent LGA review report, published in March 2020, which says the service must:

Rebuild trust with schools and settings, parents/carers, VCS, members and officers from other departments. The council should consider having a SEND charter and agreed co-production policy (which includes HTST), between parents/ carers and the Council, setting out clear roles, responsibilities and expectations.

The new SEND Strategy sets out plans to develop a SEND charter which will cover a wider co-production policy.

As this will take some time, this working agreement covers co-production arrangements between HTST and PACC.

Agreement and Arrangements

1. BHCC is required to produce policies that are in accordance with the Government's HTST guidelines, read in conjunction with the Education Act.
2. PaCC representatives will represent B&H parent carers in shaping HTST policy and practice. Reps will feedback to the PaCC Steering Group and seek the views of the PaCC membership as required. This includes sharing information and updates on service developments. This agreement adopts a principle of transparency and openness in sharing of information.
3. All policies and developments relating to HTST will be co-produced with PACC and written in parent carer accessible language.
4. All communications of significance with parents and carers will be ~~discussed and~~ co-produced with PaCC
5. Where there are consultations on new policy or practice with parents and carers, there will a pre-consultation discussion with PaCC to co-produce content, wording, analysis and use of feedback to inform developments. Sufficient time must be agreed for PaCC to comment
6. PaCC and families using transport will be fully consulted on any changes to the service and their feedback will be given full consideration and used to formulate policy and practice. Consultations should not take place during school holiday periods. PaCC will also expect that schools and colleges are similarly consulted.
7. The action plan responding to the recommendations in the Independent Review will be co-produced with PaCC and there will be joint monitoring and evaluation of progress.
8. PaCC representatives will sit on the HTST Governance Board.

9. An Amaze worker, who is also a parent/ carer, will be invited to all Transport Panels to provide a parental perspective in relation to decisions about eligibility for transport. PaCC/Amaze Reps and the LA Panel members must have training in HTST & Education Act Law
10. New systems in relation to the transfer of pupil information will be fully co-produced with PACC representatives.
11. There will be regular communications with families about arrangements for their children and young people, which are produced in consultation with PACC.
12. A PACC representative will be invited to join all interviews for new HTST posts and PACC will be invited to contribute to new job descriptions for posts in the service.
13. Co-production meetings will be held fortnightly between the HTST and PACC for the foreseeable future.
14. PACC will work in partnership with the HTST to produce an annual survey of parent/ carer satisfaction with the service and will use the results to make further improvements.
15. Where there is disagreement between PaCC and the LA about any matters relating to home to school transport, this will be made clear in associated papers and communications.

While co-production work is funded by BHCC, PaCC capacity is finite and parent carers working hours need to fit around caring responsibilities. This means that the expectations and timeline for PaCC input to the co-production of HTST should be discussed and agreed at each stage, to keep the work manageable and adequately resourced.

This agreement will be reviewed after 12 months and updated as necessary, in agreement with all parties.

Date: 16.8.20
Phone: 0786 7545450
Email: regan.delf@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Dear Transport Operators

Special Arrangements over the COVID-19 Crisis Period: Updated HTST Working Guidance

Our thanks again for the dedication and flexibility you and your staff continue to show over the pandemic period towards the transport of our children and families. We appreciate the responsiveness and consideration you have shown over these uncertain times.

Drawing upon the latest DfE guidance issued on 11.8.20, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>), this letter sets out updated working guidance for September 2020 onwards, including:

- risk assessments over the pandemic period
- suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases on transport
- use of PPE and face coverings
- social distancing
- cleaning of vehicles

This letter does not attempt to replicate or include all that is contained within Government and Public Health guidance and directives, which should be read separately and followed. Please do also read the latest guidance in the link above and use this to update your own risk assessments.

The safety and wellbeing of your staff and our children and young people is very important to us.

This is an anxious time, so operators and staff will need to maintain strong empathic relationships with children and young people using HTST and their families, and to be sensitive to the safety and emotional wellbeing of children and young people at a difficult time. Please bring any problems or issues to the attention of the Home to School Transport Service. We are here to help.

Regular parallel communications are being sent to our parents and carers, which we will ensure operators receive.

Risk Assessments

Government guidance requires operators to have conducted a risk assessment for dedicated their school transport services. This will determine the most appropriate safety measures to put in place such as for social distancing and face coverings. The [guidance for operators](#) provides further advice for staff. You may also find the following link useful:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/vehicles>

In conducting your risk assessment, you need to be mindful of:

- *risks to workers, passengers, customers and the public, along with the control measures required*
- *the impact of control measures and whether they result in additional, different risks or non-compliance with other requirements (for example health and safety or equalities legislation)*
- *applying the hierarchy of controls set out in the [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)*
- *consultation with workers, or bodies representing workers, and the public*
- *the visibility of the results of any risk assessment*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators#risk-assessment>

The HTST service requires a copy of your updated risk assessment to be sent to Hometoschooltransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk by the 31.8.20.

Suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

Transport staff who develop symptoms that might indicate COVID-19 should to home and get a test.

Anyone with symptoms must follow [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

Government guidance on staff who come into contact with a passenger showing coronavirus symptoms is that they do **not** have to go home and self-isolate unless:

- they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test)
- the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive and they were in contact within 48 hours of them first displaying symptoms
- if they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>

Staff must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser if they have been in contact with someone with symptoms.

If a child has symptoms of COVID-19 while on board a vehicle, transport staff should take them home. **Do not take the child to school.** Clean the vehicle thoroughly before the next journey. If there are no family members at home or if there are any complications with this advice, call the HTST team.

If a child develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the school **should not ask you to take the child home.** The parents or carers should be asked to take the child home. Please call the HTST team if you are unsure what to do or if parents/ carers are unable to collect.

The council prohibits the transport of passengers with confirmed COVID-19 on vehicles used for HTST under any circumstances.

For more information where children have particularly complex needs, follow the links below:

- [How should I care for children who regularly spit or require physical contact?](#)
- [Guidance on the specific steps that should be taken to care for children with complex medical needs, such as tracheostomies](#)

Response to any infection

Operators along with the Local Authority must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to [contact their local Public Health England health protection team](#). Operators must require drivers and passenger assistants to [book a test](#) if they display [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#).

If you are unsure what to do in relation to any of the above, call the HTST team for advice.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Face Coverings on Journeys

Government guidance states that the routine use of PPE by transport staff is unnecessary.

Drivers and passenger assistants will not normally require PPE on home to school transport, even if they are not able to maintain a distance from the children and young people on the transport. This is because....children and young people with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) must not board home to school transport.

If the care a child or young person usually receives on home to school transport requires the use of PPE, that should continue.

However, guidance also says that:

Face coverings offer some benefits in work situations where [social distancing](#) is difficult to manage. For example, when working in passenger facing roles including when providing assistance to disabled passengers.

Public health advice is that staff wear a face covering when they are unable to maintain social distancing in passenger facing roles, recognising that there will be exceptional circumstances when a staff member cannot wear a face covering, or when their task makes it sensible (based on a risk assessment) for them not to wear a face covering.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators>,

The council acknowledges that social distancing is often not possible on HTST. We require our **transport providers to have made their own risk assessment in relation to COVID-19**, based on the particular routes covered and the needs of the children on those routes, and to take action accordingly. This will determine the most appropriate safety measures to put in place such as for social distancing and face coverings. The [guidance for operators](#) provides further advice for staff. The council is supportive of the outcomes of individual providers' risk assessments in relation to PPE, providing they are carried out to a suitably high standard.

We are aware that our providers are using PPE, particularly masks and gloves, and are supportive of the rationale and reasons for this, proving such equipment is used and disposed of properly (please see attached guidance on the donning and doffing of PPE).

Please note also face masks must:

- cover both nose and mouth
- not be allowed to dangle around the neck
- not be touched once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal
- be changed when they become moist or damaged
- be worn once and then discarded - hands must be cleaned after disposal

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

The advice from the council for HTST is as follows:

- Where social distancing on HTST is not routinely possible, we are supportive of transport providers who are using, or wish to use masks or other face coverings as a precautionary measure and where risk assessment deems necessary, plastic gloves and aprons. This is subject to PPE being of the **required standard and the operator providing staff with guidance and training on the effective use of and disposal of PPE**. Please see the attached guidance from Public Health in this respect.
- Where social distancing is reasonably achievable on HTST and where no physical contact need normally be made with children and young people by drivers and VPAs, the routine use of PPE may not be considered necessary. However, we understand that local providers may wish to use PPE on the basis of their own risk assessment in specific circumstances.

The acquisition of appropriate PPE is the responsibility of transport providers and not of the council. Suppliers can access PPE of a verified standard via the government website <https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/covid-19/covid-19-buyer-information/safer-working-supplies/>

Providers who have exhausted all avenues for acquiring PPE can apply to the council for support on the form attached, which should be returned to hometoschooltransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk. The council will support suppliers as far as possible, but only if supplies cannot be accessed elsewhere, and subject to prioritisation and available stocks. There is no guarantee that the council can provide PPE, and this should not be a routine demand when other avenues for accessing supplies are available.

PPE is only one effective measure within a package of administrative, environmental and management controls. This includes maintaining social distancing where practicable, monitoring staff and clients for coronavirus symptoms, and applying correct waste management and cleaning regimes. Where PPE is used, it is important to apply internationally recognised principles i.e. all PPE that is provided to help manage Coronavirus hazards should be:

- Provided and worn only in relation to an associated task risk assessment;
- Compliant with the relevant BS/EN standards (European technical standards as adopted in the UK) and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions;
- Used after relevant staff training and fit testing where relevant (see resources below);
- Located close to the point of use;
- Stored to prevent contamination in a clean/dry area until required for use (expiry dates must be adhered to);
- Changed immediately following completion of a procedure, task, shift or session (as directed by the risk assessment); and
- Disposed of after use by double bagging waste in domestic waste bags and disposing after 72hrs into the appropriate waste stream.

Transport services will still need to follow the general Coronavirus avoidance guidance, even when using PPE. As such, staff will need to:

- Avoid close contact with others where possible
- Resist the urge to touch their face/mouth/nose/eyes

- Report any COVID-19 symptoms early, a new continuous cough or a fever, however, mild
- Cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue
- Regularly wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Where facilities are not available, hand-wipes may be used.
- Only use sanitiser/hand gels when hands are visibly clean.
- Avoid touching surfaces that may have been contaminated by others and clean such areas with an approved disinfectant frequently.

Please see attached Public Health guidance on donning and doffing PPE.

You are aware that the special needs and disabilities of our children and young people mean that many find change very difficult to cope with, so where there are changes you are making on safety grounds, the council asks operators to ensure families are aware and can work with you to prepare children and young people appropriately. We will work in partnership with you and our families over this.

Face Coverings for Children and Young People

With regard to face covering for children and young people, current guidance on mandatory use of face coverings does not apply to dedicated home to school transport nor are children and young people with disabilities of any age required to wear face coverings on transport.

Latest guidance says:

*It is now the law that children and young people aged 11 and over must wear a face covering on public transport. **This law does not apply to dedicated school transport. However,** we recommend that local authorities advise people aged 11 and over to wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated school transport to secondary school or college from the start of the autumn term. This does not apply to [those who are exempt from wearing a face covering on public transport.](#)*

We believe this is an appropriate balance, because:

- *the overall risk to children and young people of serious illness as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low*
- *they do not mix with the general public on those journeys*
- *home to school transport often carries the same group of children and young people on a regular basis, and they may also be together in school or college*
- *the predictability of home to school transport will allow for planning so that protective measures can be put in place*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>

However, children over 11 years on transport do not need to wear a face covering if they have a legitimate reason not to. This includes:

- if they have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means they cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering
 - if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause them severe distress
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#exemptions-face-coverings>

Transport operators and their staff must not require children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to wear face coverings for the reasons above. **Please do not ask parents/ carers or young people to provide or wear face coverings.** If there are any issues with this, please contact the HTST team.

Older and/ or more able young people over 11 years of age may wish to wear a face covering. This should be at the parent or carers' discretion and should be safe. We do not want transport staff to fix face coverings in place for children and young people and parents/ carers should not ask you to do this, as this could result in greater risk. Young people must be capable of using a face covering correctly as failure to do so could increase the chances of virus transmission. If any problems arise in this respect, please contact the HTST team.

Social Distancing

For the autumn term 2020, the HTST service has continued to arranged transport with reduced numbers on vehicles to allow for greater social distancing. This is in line with the most recent DfE guidance, published on 11.8.20, which states:

As set out in the [guidance for full opening for schools](#), for [special schools](#), and for [places of further education](#), from the autumn term local authorities will not be required to uniformly apply the social distancing guidelines for public transport on dedicated school or college transport. However, the full opening for schools guidance also sets out that distancing should still be put in place within vehicles wherever possible.

It is of vital importance to work through the steps set out in this guidance. In particular:

- *social distancing should be maximised within vehicles wherever it is possible, between individuals or 'bubbles'*
- *it is very important to maximise the ventilation of fresh air (from outside the vehicle) on dedicated school and college transport, particularly through opening windows and ceiling vents*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>

In order to preserve social distancing to the maximum degree possible while national policy is in force, the HTST service is limiting the numbers of children and staff on vehicles, leaving a spare seat between every child wherever practical and possible.

We are aware that with some very large vehicles and some seating alignments, it may be possible to accommodate another child safely on some routes and that there may be good practical reasons for this over the pandemic period, **but this must be agreed with the HTST team in advance**. Partnership with parents and carers is also crucial as they must be in agreement with any variance to standard arrangements.

The council requests that operators:

- allocate specific seats to children
- avoid the use of 'face to face' seating wherever possible
- ensure good ventilation through open windows wherever practical
- make careful arrangements for boarding and disembarking from vehicles to preserve social distancing where possible.
- Consider 'first in last out' policy with those children getting on first seated at the rear of the vehicle and the vehicle filling forward.

Screens

The council is supportive of operators who are installing, or investigating the installation of, screens between the front and back of vehicles or between the driver and front passenger seats with certain provisos. This potentially provides a protective barrier and could enable more passengers to be carried safely but such installation needs to be subject to professional and safe installation and maintenance, appropriate risk assessments in relation to passengers carried, and any considerations in relation to licensing and insurance cover.

Cleaning of vehicles

The council requires all transport operators and staff to follow national guidance, as previously circulated, on the cleaning of vehicles between passengers and to be meticulous about frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces using the appropriate cleaning products. Please see guidance below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings> updated 15.7.20. It states:

All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with should be cleaned and disinfected, including all potentially contaminated and frequently touched areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab rails in corridors and stairwells

Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings – think one site, one wipe, in one direction.

Use one of the options below:

- *a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine (ppm av.cl.)*

or

- *a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants*

or

- *if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses*

If a passenger either on a school run or via another route has suspected COVID-19 symptoms, operators must follow national guidelines to carry out a very thorough cleaning of the vehicle concerned, using apron, mask and gloves. If a child is diagnosed with COVID-19, the vehicle must be cleaned as above and left for at least a 72 hour interval before next usage.

Where cleaning products and equipment cannot be accessed elsewhere, providers may be able to access supplies from the council via the attached form, although this is not guaranteed.

Please remember to call the HTST team for any issues where there are concerns or you are unsure what to do on 01273 292501.

With best wishes

Regan

Regan Delf
Interim Lead Home to School Transport
Children, Families and Learning (Education and Skills)
Brighton and Hove City Council
First Floor, Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 3BQ
Regan.delf@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Mobile: 0786 7545450

Date: 20.8.20

Email: regan.delf@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Dear Parents and Carers,

Home to School Transport – special arrangements for September 2020

With the beginning of the autumn term approaching, I am writing to update you on the special arrangements we've put in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children and young people on Home to School Transport (HTST).

We realise this continues to be an anxious time for families.

However, we want to assure you that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people on transport is extremely important to us and we have taken care with special arrangements for the autumn term.

Please bring any problems or issues to the attention of the Home to School Transport Service.

Also, please get in touch if you would like help with this letter and we will go through what it says with you on the phone.

You can ring us on 01273 293501 or email at Hometoschooltransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk

September Arrangements

The latest guidance covering Home to School Transport was issued by the government on 11 August. Here is a link to it:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>

We have considered all national guidance carefully in constructing the following advice to you about arrangements for the autumn term.

If your child or someone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If your child or young person, or a member of your household has these symptoms, **you must not send your child on Home to School Transport or to school.**

Our transport staff must not be asked to take your child or young person if they have symptoms. This is because it risks spreading the virus to other children and staff. In these circumstances, your child or young person must stay at home and be tested. Please follow the guidance in the link below:

[Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection.](#)

If your child or young person develops COVID-19 symptoms while at school, **we cannot allow the transport team to take them home.** To avoid potential transmission of the virus, we will ask you to collect your child and take him or her home. If that causes difficulties for you, you can ring us to discuss – but we have to protect the safety of all children and our transport staff.

Social Distancing on Transport

The government has said that the rules for public transport on social distancing do not apply to ‘dedicated’ or Home to School Transport.

The risk is deemed to be lower on Home to School Transport, as pupils do not mix with the general public on those journeys and the same groups travel together every day.

However, the government encourages arrangements that leave more space between passengers wherever possible.

Brighton & Hove is reducing the numbers of children and young people on vehicles this autumn term to allow for greater distance between them.

This has meant we have had to commission more vehicles and staff crews than we would normally over the pandemic period. This means there is less spare capacity in the city in the event of staff illness or absence.

However, the council has recruited a small team of Vehicle Passenger Assistants (VPAs), to provide extra cover if needed.

The principles we've used are:

- Distancing within vehicles where possible / reduced numbers on vehicles
- Maintaining consistency for children and young people / familiar firms / crews
- Ensuring everyone gets safely to school in an efficient and timely manner

In most cases, there will be a spare seat between each child or young person. Where this has been difficult to achieve, we have added one extra child in to enable everyone to get to school in a timely and efficient manner.

We are asking firms not to seat children opposite each other if at all possible.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed with families, the HTST team and the transport provider, we are not permitting children to sit in the front of vehicles.

We are also asking our firms to make sure vehicles are well-ventilated, with open windows where possible, and that surfaces are cleaned thoroughly between passengers.

Transport staff will not be permitted to enter your homes. Please make sure you bring your child to and from the transport vehicle. School staff will meet transport staff at the school entrance.

All routes for September have been planned and all new transport teams should have introduced themselves to you and your child by now. Please let us know if this has not happened and we will chase this up.

Face coverings

The government are recommending that children and young people over 11 years old wear face coverings on Home to School Transport, as on public transport.

However, our children and young people on HTST are excluded from this recommendation under the following circumstances:

- if they have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means they cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering;
- if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause them severe distress.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#exemptions-face-coverings>

If your child or young person cannot manage to fix and remove the face covering or mask safely on their own, it is not safe for them to wear them.

If your child or young person is over 11 years old and can manage to fix and remove a face covering safely and independently, we would recommend that they do wear one. However, this is at your discretion.

Other safety measures

Please make sure your child or young person has washed their hands thoroughly before joining transport in the morning.

Please make sure you take your child to the vehicle in the mornings and collect from the vehicle in the afternoon.

It can help if your child travels with tissues.

If you would prefer to transport your child yourself over the continuing pandemic period, please contact us in relation to a mileage allowance or personal travel budget.

We are keen to support parents and carers who are able to do this. This does not in any way affect your entitlement to free transport and you can end any such arrangement at any time.

PPE for Transport Staff

Government guidance does not require staff on Home to School Transport to wear PPE or face coverings.

However, it is recognised that masks or face coverings and sometimes other forms of PPE may be a sensible precaution where social distancing is not possible. This will depend on the risk assessments carried out by our transport providers of their own situations.

Your child or young person should be prepared for staff wearing PPE when they return to school. I have re-attached a 'social story' we put together that may be a help to you in preparing your child for what to expect in September.

Emotional and Behavioural Needs

We understand that many of our children and young people are highly anxious, and that the pandemic can make this worse.

We know that anxiety and distress can lead to challenging behaviours for some young people. Our VPAs, if there is one on the route, will help them and reassure them to the best of their ability.

Our new training programme will support transport staff in meeting children's needs.

However, drivers must be allowed to pay full attention to the road and cannot be expected to manage children and young people's behaviour.

For the safety of all children and young people and transport staff, we may have to make special arrangements if staff are struggling with unsafe behaviours over the pandemic period.

In these circumstances we may ask you to travel with your child, although you do not have to do so.

Cleaning of vehicles

We have set out expectations for all transport providers about thorough cleaning of vehicle surfaces between journeys.

We will be carrying out spot checks at school sites to check that cleaning and safety precautions are being complied with.

Training for Transport Staff

Please be assured that all staff on transport have the required DBS checks.

Our transport providers have been given all the information in this letter.

We are also introducing online training for all staff and require all transport staff to have completed introductory and safeguarding modules before the start of term.

Over the course of the autumn term, all staff will have to complete online modules on Equalities and a broad range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Our training has been produced by specialist staff at the council with input from transport operators and PaCC representatives.

Traffic

We are aware that with planned roadworks and other changes to the traffic systems across the city, there could be some temporary hold-ups. We are hoping that journeys won't be adversely affected, and we will monitor the situation in the autumn and check on arrival times at school or college.

And finally...

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or queries about the above or any other aspect of your child or young person's transport:

- phone 01273 293501
- or email hometoschooltransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

We are here to help if we can and you will receive a warm welcome from us.

Your child or young person's safety and wellbeing is very important to us and we want to be sure you are comfortable and confident in the arrangements made for the autumn term.

The pandemic is a challenge for all of us and we cannot guarantee that everything will be perfect straight away as we all come to terms with the 'new normal'.

I hope you can bear with us if there are any unforeseen challenges. However, we have planned to the best of our ability and – working together with PaCC and our families in partnership – we will do our very best to ensure a smooth transition back to school for everyone.

Best wishes,

Regan

Regan Delf
Interim Lead Home to School Transport
Children, Families and Learning (Education and Skills)
Brighton and Hove City Council
First Floor, Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 4AH
Regan.delf@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Introduction to your role as a HTST Driver or VPA

“Happy, safe, and well supported on their journeys ...”



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of home to school transport for children and young people with special needs, their parents, and the schools they attend.
- List the benefits you get in the role of driver or vehicle passenger assistant.
- Describe the Home-to-School Transport team and their relationship to transport providers and their values.
- Explain and understand how to react in an emergency.
- Explain and understand the procedure for reporting concerns.
- Recognize the importance of confidentiality and GDPR requirements.
- List Brighton and Hove training requirements for drivers or vehicle passenger assistants.
- Use the Learning Gateway.



“Not just another job”

- Home to School Transport (HTST) is not just another job.
- Our children and young people have significant and complex special educational needs and disabilities.
- The journey to school and back is a very important part of their lives but they may not find it easy to communicate their wishes and needs to you.
- This means you will need to use special skills of thoughtfulness, kindness, sensitivity and understanding to make sure that they are **happy, safe and well on their journeys.**

“Not just another job”



- This training is very important as it will help you to develop these skills and understand the role more fully.
- Let’s hear now why the role is so important to children, young people and their families

Why is the role of driver or VPA so important ... the parents view

My name is Jane and I live in Brighton and Hove. I have a son called Tom and he attends a special school in the City.



Tom has autism with global developmental delay.

- He is a happy, placid little boy and he loves going to school more than anything. He is non-verbal and relies on us for 24-hour care.
- He has no awareness of danger and very limited understanding of language.
- He runs off, so he needs a hand held at all times.

Jane's "golden rules" to remember when transporting children like Tom are:

- It takes a huge amount of trust to let Tom or any child with special needs out into the world with strangers, especially if they are very young and can't yet communicate like my son.
- Please take time to get to know Tom or any child and their family and take seriously any concerns that they may have. Tom will run into traffic and I need to know that his taxi driver and VPA wouldn't let go of his hand **at any point**. Once I was sure of this this, I could relax.
- Your role is so important and makes a huge difference to a family who otherwise couldn't work or take their other children to school. It takes so much stress off families so always remember how important and appreciated turning up every day to do this job is!
- If you are kind, caring, patient, positive, and want to play a huge role in helping the most vulnerable children in the city to have the education they deserve (and help their families with work and respite in the process) then that's all you need!

Jane and her son Tom

- Tom goes to school by taxi with a fantastic driver and VPA.
- They are so kind to Tom and to us and they are such an important part of his care.
- We trust them completely with Tom, and this is a huge help to us.



What do you like about coming to school in the taxi?

I can talk to my
friends

The same taxi picks me up
from my mums and

Dads house.

What do you want your driver and escort to be like?
How can they help you?

I would like them
to be very kind
and helpful.

They can talk to
me and help me
out of the taxi.

The child's view ...

- What do you like about coming to school in the taxi?

I can talk to my friends. The same taxi picks me up from my mum and dad's house.

- What do you want your driver and escort to be like? How can they help you?

I would like them to be very kind and helpful. They can talk to me and help me out of the taxi.





The School View – Rachel, Executive Headteacher from Hill Park School

- We see HTST as an important part of the child's day and our day. You are part of our school community and part of the jigsaw of people that makes a wonderful day at school happen!
- Bringing our pupils to school is not just getting them from A to B. Having our pupils arriving at school calm, happy and safe makes a huge difference to their day (and ours). The children's ability to learn, manage their emotions and behaviour all starts with the journey to school.
- We care about you and want to support you to bring our pupils to school safely and enjoyably. We want to support you with advice and resources (like social stories or timetable boards) to help you support the pupils.
- We want you to enjoy the best relationships possible with our pupils, so we are really pleased you are engaging in training to support your role.
- Our pupils feel really safe when they have familiar drivers and VPAs who care for them.
- Parents tell us how excited their children are when they see the taxi or bus arrive. We see their faces light up at the end of the day when we open the school doors and you arrive!
- People are the most precious resource in any school. We want you to know how important and valued you are - as part of the team that supports our pupils.



And the driver / VPA's view ...

- My name is Amira. I have been working as a VPA for three years. I help to take special needs children to and from school in the Brighton and Hove Area.
- I really enjoy this role because I like working with children and helping people. I started this job because my children are grown-up and I wanted to give something back to the community.
- Sometimes this job can be unpredictable, and this is what I particularly enjoy. No two days are the same, and I enjoy the experience of facing different challenges every day.
- Facing these challenges gives me immense satisfaction, as I am intrinsic to the well-being of these vulnerable children.
- I believe that providing high quality Home to School Transport is important because it gives all children equal opportunities to engage with education.
- Training helps me to do my job better. I have undertaken training in Disability Awareness, Epilepsy awareness, Safeguarding, and Emergency First Aid.



The HTST (Home to School Transport) Team

- You work for what we call a “Transport Provider” such as a taxi company.
- Your first point of contact will normally be with your employer, the “Transport Operator”.
- The Home to School Transport Team is part of the local council – they work with Children and Young People (CYP), their Parents and Carers, and schools to assess transport needs and establish contracts for taking CYP to and from home and school.
- If you have an urgent query, or one that your Transport Operator cannot answer – contact the HTST Team:

hometoschooltransport@brighton-hove.sch.uk

01273 293501 or 01273 295196

HTST and Transport Providers – Our Shared Values

The HTST Team and transport providers share the same values:

- We aim to treat each other, CYP, their parents and carers as well as school staff as **we would wish to be treated**
- We work and treat each other with **fairness** and **respect**.
- We recognise the need to maintain **appropriate boundaries** with CYP, their parents and carers as well as school staff
- We use **appropriate language** with each other and with CYP, their parents and carers as well as school staff
- We strive to provide **warmth** and **professionalism** at all times



Medical Emergencies

We aim not to have medical emergencies on HTST journeys **BUT** ... if one happens this is what we expect you to do ...

- *If a child or young person you are transporting is known to have epilepsy you will have been provided with their Epilepsy Care Plan. This plan contains a section called “Transport statement for children with epilepsy”. If the child or young person has a seizure whilst you are travelling with them you should follow the instructions written in this section of the plan.*



Medical Emergencies

- *For all other medical emergencies, including a child or young person with no epilepsy care plan who appears to be having a seizure, the driver should stop the vehicle in a safe location, call an ambulance dialling 999 and await their arrival. This should be done without delay. It is very important that a note is made of the time the incident started. After calling the ambulance, the parents/carers, the HTST Team office and your “Transport Provider” office should be informed of the situation and kept updated. If the incident occurs on the route to school, they should also be notified.*
- *The only exceptions to this guidance will be where the vehicle is within two minutes clear driving of the child or young person’s home address, two minutes clear driving of arrival at their school, or two minutes driving of a hospital with an Accident and Emergency Department.*



Medical Emergencies

- It is important to note that drivers/VPAs (you) are not medically trained and therefore will not administer any medication to the child or young person.*



This information is given to parents when home to school transport is arranged and available to schools so they will always expect you to carry out these instructions if there is a medical emergency.

Reporting an incident or a concern



- If you witness an incident or an event happens that concerns you then you should contact and report it to your Transport Operator and the HTST Team office as soon as is safe to do so.
- If you are concerned that a child or young person is in **immediate danger of harm or abuse** then contact the Police by phoning 999
- For all other **safeguarding** concerns contact the Council's **Front Door for Families** by ringing 01273 290400 or complete their online referral form.
- We will explain safeguarding more fully in a later learning module.
- The HTST Team office contact details are:

01273 293501 / 01273 295196

hometoschooltransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Compliments and Complaints

- With your help we aim to provide a high-quality home to school transport service.
- It is good to get compliments, please make sure that you tell your Transport Provider and ask them to pass them on to the HTST Team.
- If you are asked to pass on a complaint, please make a note of the details as soon as you can and tell your Transport Provider and ask them to pass the details to the HTST Team.
- The HTST Team has a procedure for managing complaints which they will follow.



Confidential Information

- As a driver or VPA you will have access to **confidential information** about children and young people, their parents and carers details, and which school they attend ...
- This information is for **your use only** and only while you are working as a driver or VPA ...
- When not being used on a home to school transport journey any information should be **stored away securely** ...
- Make sure any confidential information is **not stored** in your taxi or vehicle overnight when it is not in use ...
- It is fine to talk about your job to others, especially how rewarding it is, but **not about specific children or young people** or to mention their names or personal details ...
- Any **breaches of confidentiality** around written documentation or other storage method (e.g. mobile phones) will be taken **extremely seriously** and is likely to result in the suspension of the route.

Training Requirements – 1 - Core

- The Brighton and Hove HTST Team have currently identified five core training modules for drivers and VPAs to undertake:
 - Module 1 – Introduction to your role as a HTST Driver or VPA (this module)
 - Module 2 – Safeguarding on Home to School Transport
 - Module 3 – Equalities and the Equality Act
 - Module 4 – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
 - Module 5 - Exploitation

Training Requirements – 2 - Extended

- Children and young people who use our service will be risk assessed. Some will have additional needs identified. We will expect drivers and VPAs to undertake the following modules relevant to the children and young people that they transport:
 - Module 1 – Language and Communication
 - Module 2 – Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)
 - Module 3 – Supporting Behaviour
 - Module 4 – Epilepsy
- We think training is really important if you want to complete them all you can do and we are sure it will help you do your job better.

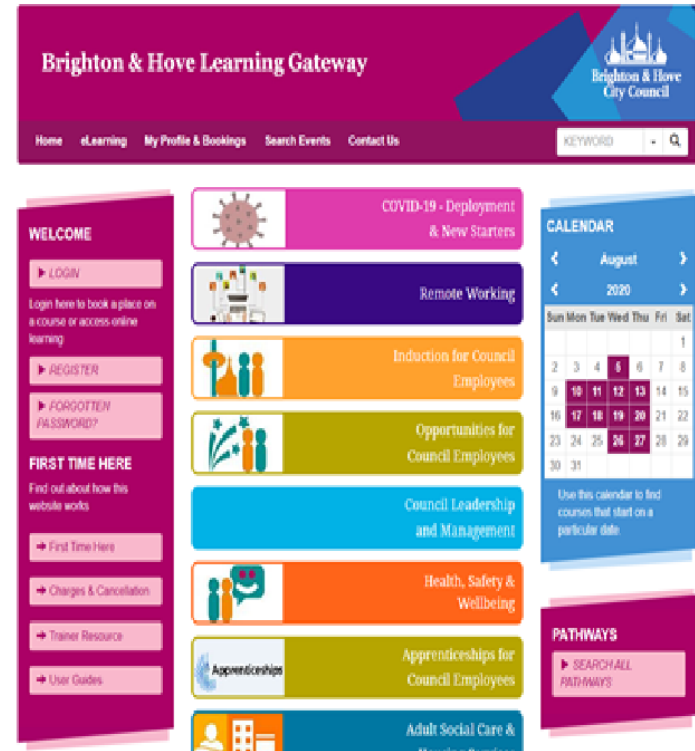
Training Requirements – 3 – Individual



- Some children or young peoples' needs are so specialised and individual that we will have to provide individual training to individual drivers and VPAs. If this is for a child or young person you transport, we will arrange this training for you.
- We also aim to arrange face-to-face training when the Coronavirus pandemic allows us to do so.

Brighton and Hove Learning Gateway

- You will access the training modules on Brighton and Hove Council's Learning Gateway.
- You can complete the training modules on a computer, tablet or phone.
- You will get an electronic badge for each module completed.
- If you use a computer or tablet with access to a printer you can print a certificate on completion of each module.
- Your Transport Provider will give you details of how to access the Learning Gateway and links to the training modules.



Subject:	Youth Participation		
Date of Meeting:	9th November 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Debbie Corbridge	Tel: 01273 292953
	Email:	deborah.corbridge@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 To provide information on current youth participation practice in the city and put forward a proposal that will further involve young people in making decisions on services in the city that impact on them

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee note and agree the action plan developed by young people that will increase young people's involvement in making decisions that impact on them

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Brighton and Hove City Council's 2020 to 2023 Corporate Plan outlines its commitment to giving young people a stronger voice in future services.

- 3.2 The benefits to young people being involved in decision making includes:

- Increased confidence, self-esteem and self-worth
- Working and communicating as part of a team
- Negotiating, decision making and leadership skills
- Planning and organisation skills
- Improved employability
- Sense of belonging
- Opportunities to have a voice on issues that matter to them
- The chance to facilitate positive change

- 3.3 Helen Baxter - Youth Coordinator from the Hangleton & Knoll Project stated that youth participation:

'supports the personal development of young people, gives them a sense of belonging and a community connection. It empowers young people to lead and take ownership in their communities. It also sows the seeds of change to enable them to deal with any challenges in their lives.'

- 3.4 Two young people from the Trust for Developing Communities, made the following points: -

- They feel more ownership and more proud and want to be more involved
- They get good experience which could lead to life opportunities
- The right amount of power at the right time can change someone's life
- Young people make better decisions about what they need, which means they are more likely to take part and stay involved
- Treats young people with the respect they deserve and you'll get the respect back

Other benefits include:

- Provides professionals with the understanding of the experiences, views and needs of service users, leading to greater insight into the services provided for young people and support any required change
- Improved services that are more responsive to the needs of users
- Young people are experiencing democracy, rather than taught it

- 3.5 3.5 There are several active youth participation groups in the city, both within the council and community and voluntary youth providers (see appendix in Youth Participation Action Plan)
- 3.6 In addition, feedback is regularly collated from young people from other Council services, such as, Social Work, Youth Employability Service, Integrated Team for Families, Adolescence Service and Brighton and Hove's Inclusion Support Service. This feedback is used to inform and change practice.
- 3.7 It was agreed at the Children and Young People's Committee on 13th January that a review of current youth services in the city would be undertaken and that the findings of this review to be presented back to Committee to be discussed and a proposal agreed.
- 3.8 As part of the review, an on-line survey was developed and was open for six weeks, during May and June 2020. In addition, 15 focus groups were held with young people, 50 young people attended from 12 different youth organisations. During the focus group they were asked following questions:
- Do you get involved with making decisions about what services are provided for young people?
 - If so, how do you get involved?
 - How could this be improved?
- 3.9 Young people fed back that they do have opportunities to be involved in decision making and their participation is generally good in the city with workers actively encouraging young people to take part.
- 3.10 The young people recognised that this is a good learning opportunity and a chance for their views to be listened to, heard and acted upon. They felt that more young people needed to be aware of participation opportunities, how to get involved and to recognise the potential benefits for them, other young people and wider community.
- 3.11 One of the recommendations of the Youth Review was to work alongside young people (via Youth Wise) to develop an action plan that will further the

involvement of young people in making decisions on services that impact on them.

- 3.12 To ensure all groups of young people have an opportunity and feel safe to have their voice heard, separate action plans may need to be developed for protected groups, particularly for BAME and LGBTQ young people and young people with special educational needs or disability.
- 3.13 Youth Wise met on 7th October and the focus of this meeting was to develop the action plan.
- 3.14 An action plan was written (see appendix) which focussed on promoting the current participation opportunities by:
- Improving links with secondary schools
 - Update and widely publicise both next year's Youth Council elections and Youth Wise
 - Update and widely publicise the Wheretogofor website
 - Find new ways of using social media to connect with hard to reach young people
 - Learn from other areas
- 3.15 Other actions include equality groups working on plans to further involve young people in decision making groups, young people reviewing the Youth Led Grant Programme framework and ensuring young people are actively involved in the Youth Service recommissioning process

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 As noted in this report there are many benefits to involving young people in decision making.
- 4.2 Young people very much value the current participation opportunities; however, it has been noted that there is more to do to improve and increase the visibility of these opportunities to ensure engagement from a wide range of young people, particularly those from protected groups

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation events, including young people's and stakeholders focus groups were held as part of the Youth Review that included consulting on young people's participation opportunities and gaining views on how this could be improved. A recent Youth Wise meeting took place recently where the focus was to develop this participation action plan.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed plan to improve participation opportunities for young people will result in increasing the opportunities for young people in the city to be more involved in influencing local and national strategies /policies, as well as improving services in Brighton and Hove that directly impact on their lives.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name: David Ellis

Date: 27/10/20

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 Local authorities are responsible for securing, so far as is reasonably practicable, a local offer that is sufficient to meet local needs and improve young people's well-being and personal and social development. Young people's involvement in making decisions that impact on them in a range of areas is likely to improve the understanding of local needs and inform good decision making.

Lawyer Consulted:

Name: Natasha Watson

Date: 29/10/20

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Youth Participation Action Plan

Youth Participation Action



What is Youth Participation and why is it important?

Youth participation is young people taking an active part in decisions that impact on their lives and in their communities. It gives young people a voice or a way to be heard about issues that are important to them, whether it is through schools, sports, groups, clubs or local government.

Young people have said via the Youth Review consultation and at a YouthWise meeting how youth participation can be improved in Brighton & Hove.

This report recognises that there is currently good examples of youth participation in the city from current youth providers and that young people's suggestions are to build on existing good practice, to reach more young people, who are not engaging at the moment.

Young people said that it was important to them for the following reasons:

- We would like ownership, pride and want to be more involved
- To get good experience which could lead to life opportunities
- The right amount of power at the right time can change someone's life



- Young People make better decisions about what they need, which means we are more likely to take part and stay involved
- Treat young people with the respect they deserve, and you'll get the respect back

- Provides professionals with the understanding of the experiences, views and needs of young people, leading to greater understanding of the services provided for young people and support any required change
- Leads to improved services, so they better meet the needs of young people.

Youth Participation can also help with the following:



What is currently happening?

There are several active youth participation groups in the city, for example:



In addition, feedback is regularly collated from young people from other Council services, such as, Social Work, Youth Employability Service, Integrated Team for Families, Adolescence Service and Brighton and Hove's Inclusion Support Service. This feedback is used to inform and change practice.

Although young people recognised that there are many opportunities to get involved in decision making in the city, there was still more to do.

(See appendix for a summary of the projects outlined above)

Young people stating what's needed

Other youth organisations to join Youth Wise and the Youth Council

To be better informed about what is happening

Better communication between clubs

Include more young people with more complex needs

Find ways to reach disadvantaged young people

Podcasts

Provide incentives for attending meetings

Youth voice groups in schools



Action Plan - What we are going to do

Improve Communication

- Improve links with secondary schools and colleges via head teachers to identify key personnel, to promote benefits to young people of taking part in youth voice groups and volunteering opportunities.
- Update and widely publicise the YMCA Right Here 'Where to Go for' (WTGF) website by:
 - The front page to have a link called 'have your say' and to list youth voice groups and opportunities
 - Contacting all service providers on WTGF to update their listing
 - Providers to be encouraged to create an Instagram social media post which WTGF will use as part of a social media service of the week promo campaign
 - WTGF to continue promoting in schools within PSHE lessons and via the YMCA Right Here Mental Health Champions programme
 - Encourage schools to add WTGF to their intranets
 - Youth proof content from Public Health around sexual health, and then upload the new Sexual Health area of the website
 - Develop a WTGF promotion plan with youth volunteers
 - Explore the costs of paid for Instagram advertising
- Youth providers to promote and encourage young people to attend Youth Wise to and reach out to other youth groups
- Youth Council to widely promote elections for next year and actively work to improve inclusivity. One suggestion is to have a representative from each of the equality groups on the Youth Council
- To investigate new ways of using social media to connect with hard to reach young people
- To share good practice and learn from other local authorities

What Existing Groups plan to do

- The Youth Council will be:
 - Raising the profile of the Youth Council and current elected Youth Councillors (YC)
 - Advancing their campaign around plastic reduction in the city
 - Meeting in November where members will discuss and plan the elections for next year
 - Usually young people remain on the YC for a 2-Year term, however due to Covid, members will be asked if they would like to remain on the council, rather than stepping down next year so young people know which schools will need to be targeted to recruit new Councillors
 - Learn from good practice in other areas

- The Children in Care Council will be:
 - Continuing to meet virtually with both the younger and older groups and work hard to sustain relationships with current members by engaging them in fun and interactive sessions via Zoom
 - Setting up a task and finish group with young people that will result in a proposal to change the format of the Corporate Parenting Board that would give children/young people in care and care leavers an opportunity to set the agenda and lead on meetings so their voice is central in these meetings
 - Encouraging young people aged 16+ to take part in a review of the local offer for care leavers. Each local authority across the country has developed a package of support to prepare young people for independence by making sure they get the advice and help they need
 - Exploring methods of reaching and hearing the voice of all children/young people in care and care leavers

- YMCA DownsLink Group Children & Young People's Involvement and Influencing Strategy is currently being refreshed into a 5-year plan, which includes their intention to create a youth voice communication platform/channel, with content co-delivered and curated by young people.

- Youth providers meeting to take place to discuss the wider youth participation agenda, ensuring there is strong collaboration across the city

- People to take part in all aspects of the recommissioning process for youth services in the city.
- Young people to review the framework for Youth Led Grants programme and plan, advertise and make all grant decisions of future programmes.

Equalities Groups Plans

Note: *It is recognised that all young people, particularly the equalities groups have been adversely affected by local and national events and circumstances beyond their control this year.*

- Building on established participation work with young people with SEND, an action plan is being developed by Extratime and Amaze to ensure the voices of young people with SEND are heard in decisions that affect them and to support their involvement in YouthWise and other relevant groups. This includes a new mini project in partnership with the Hangleton & Knoll project.
- BMEYPP is planning to develop is a BME young people's Engagement and Consultation Project. The project will recruit a group of young people as 'youth researchers' who will be trained in participatory engagement methods. They will then decide what experiences themes and topics to engage young people in, how they will engage with young people and organise youth consultation and engagement events with their peers. Young people's views, opinions, experience and ideas will be recorded and will form the basis of the BMEYPP youth strategy and will inform projects and activities we develop for the following three to five years. Young researchers will receive accreditation for their participation in the project at all levels that this project will enhance their employability skills.

(BMEYPP are currently promoting a mentor scheme for BAME young people to increase confidence and access to opportunities).

- ALLSORTS young people feel they have a voice and are listened to within their own organisation. They would like other groups to be more inclusive. Online meetings should offer the choice to have video or not, to have voice or not and the ability to only send in comments if wanted. Young people at Allsorts to be asked what they would like to go on the agenda

for future YouthWise meetings. The agenda to be sent out in good time to enable their young people time to respond if they are interested. Would like to feel welcome to attend. YouthWise to find signifiers of inclusivity, for example, a welcome message with invitations to attend and a statement at the start of each meeting.

They also suggested the following: -

- Have an officer/representative from all minority groups as a specific role in the Youth Council.
- Information about what diversity training both councillors and council officers have attended to be made public. This would increase their confidence to attend meetings.
- Inform people clearly about YouthWise and what it is about.

Appendix 1

Summary of some of the active youth voice groups in the city

- Youth Council - Aims to represent all young people's views and opinions and influence decisions made by politicians, councillors and other local and national decision makers. They run campaigns about important issues, attend youth voice meetings and have a seat on the Children & Young People's Skills Committee.
- Children In Care Council - Open to any young person aged 13-25 who has experience of being in care
- Youth Advocacy Project - Supports Brighton & Hove young people aged between 8-25 years who are supported by a social worker to get their wishes and feeling heard when decisions are being made about their lives.
- Young Ambassadors - Trained care experienced young people involved in recruiting social workers and other staff working with young people
- BMEYPP Management Committee - The Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's Project works with young people who are Black, Asian, Arab and Mixed Heritage aged 11 to 25 in Brighton and Hove
- Youth Climate Assembly - It is an opportunity for young people to critically and creatively reflect on the information given to us by experts in transport, urban planning and active travel among others to help us come up with local solutions for the future of Brighton & Hove.
- Youth Led Grants programme - A young person led grants programme.
- Youth Wise - The purpose of YouthWise is to gather the views of young people to share with Councillors from each main political party and the Director/Assistant Director of Families, Children and Learning to inform decisions. Views and recommendations from Youth Wise will be considered and will be represented at the Children Young People and Skills Committee by the Councillors and Youth Council representative.

- YMCA DownsLink Group - Children & Young People's Involvement and Influencing Strategy. - this is currently being refreshed into a 5-year plan, which includes an intention to create a youth voice comms platform/channel, with content co-delivered and curated by young people. This could provide a single portal to engage and consult young people on different issues/themes.
- Allsorts Youth Forum - opportunities for LGBTU+ young people to have their views and voices heard. LGBTU+ young people are vital in helping to influence and shape services within the Brighton and Hove area.
- Brighton Youth Centre - a decision making forum where young people meet regularly and play a key part in the planning and delivery of services and support on offer.
- Trust for Developing Communities Youth Leadership Group - Gives young people the opportunity to directly influence the direction of youth work at TDC. This includes volunteering in youth sessions, planning activities and training staff. The project will harness the skills, knowledge and enthusiasm of young people and maybe create their future youth team.
- Hangleton & Knoll, Step Out group - Step Out are a group of young people who volunteer in their community in a range of roles but who are also interested in having a voice on what youthwork looks like in the City. At HKP we have two young trustees who oversee the strategic development of HK youthwork and a young people led community group (18-21) who develop and bid for their own projects. All HKP activities are co-produced with young people on a six-weekly basis
- Youth Voice group - attached to the Violence Reduction group
- YMCA Right Here - a health and wellbeing project for 11-25 year old's. It is an award-winning project that works with a team of youth ambassadors to improve health outcomes for young people locally and nationally.

Subject:	Youth Service Grants Programme		
Date of Meeting:	9th November 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Debbie Corbridge	Tel: 01273 292953
	Email:	deborah.corbridge@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the current Youth Service Grants Programme, outline the challenges regarding completing the recommissioning process within timescale and put forward a proposal to extend the current programme for a further 6 months.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee acknowledges the challenges in completing the recommissioning of the Youth Service Grants Programme within the required timescale.
- 2.2 That the Committee agrees with the proposal to extend the current Youth Service Grants Programme for a further 6 months (until 30th September 2021).
- 2.3 That this Committee is presented with various options regarding developing a central youth hub along with detailed costings and financial implications and a decision made regarding how the Council proceeds.
- 2.4 A framework for the Youth Service Grant recommissioning process is presented to this Committee in March 2021

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Youth Service Grants Programme 2017-2020 funding period run from 1st October 2017 to 31st March 2020. Its annual budget is £400,000 (£250,000 from the Housing Revenue Account). £16,000 contributes to the ASPIRE database which enables users to manage their casework and report on outcomes.
- 3.2 The focus of this programme is to fund projects that support outcomes identified in the Brighton & Hove Youth Work Review 2015, equality outcomes and outcomes for Council tenants. The current grant agreements are monitored; with six monthly data and narrative reports being compiled and analysed. In addition, meetings with the service providers take place on a quarterly basis.

- 3.3 In June 2019 the Children, Young People and Skills Committee and Housing Committee agreed to extend the current agreements by six months, to the end of September 2020, subject to consultation with Area Panels. This consultation took place in September 2019 and the Area Panels agreed.
- 3.4 In January 2020 the Children, Young people and Skills Committee agreed to extend the current Youth Service Grants programme for a further six months from 1st October to 31st March 2021.
- 3.5 The Brighton and Hove City Council 2020 to 2023 Corporate Plan includes its commitment to deliver high quality youth services by protecting funding and reviewing youth services across the city to improve coordination, establish a central youth hub and deliver services directly where possible.
- 3.6 It was agreed at the Children, Young People's and Skills Committee on 13th January that a review of current youth services in the city would be undertaken; this was completed and it was agreed that the findings and recommendations of the Youth Review will inform the Youth Service Grants recommissioning process and the proposed framework for this is brought to Committee in November
- 3.7 The Youth Review Report was presented at the Children, Young People and Skills Committee on 14th September where it was that:
- Brighton Youth Centre (BYC) is recognised as one of the key youth providers in the city and for the Council to decide how to support with its refurbishment or rebuild by exploring all options.
 - That the Committee agrees that neighbourhood provision should remain and not be impacted on if any future investment towards a central youth hub is agreed
- 3.8 Options for supporting BYC with its refurbishment or rebuild and developing a Central Youth Hub therefore need to be explored with costs for each clearly outlined along with their financial implications.
- 3.9 There has, as yet, been no announcement on the Youth Investment Fund; therefore the eligibility criteria for this, along with other details are unknown. The announcement is expected imminently.
- 3.10 As there is no decision as yet regarding establishing a central youth hub, how much of the current Youth Service Grant Programme funding needs to be ring-fenced for this and what funding will be available, it is difficult to propose a framework for the recommissioning process in time for an April 1st 2021 start.
- 3.11 A further 6 month extension to the current Youth Service Grant Programme would allow time for various options for a Central Youth Hub to be explored, along with costings for each, gain information on the Youth Investment Fund and clarity around funding available for the next commissioning round.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Another option would be to go ahead with the commissioning process within the timescale, leaving it area based with the same amount allocated to each area (the formula used; council house density, areas of deprivation and numbers of young people have not changed significantly), noting that the council is exploring options to establish a central youth hub, therefore the central area funding could change; being clear with all youth providers that the funding is subject to decisions made at full budget council

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The findings from the recent Youth Review informed this paper which included a number of consultation events and an online survey for young people to complete.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Given the gaps in information regarding various options for developing a central youth hub, details of the Youth Investment Fund and the amount available for the Youth Service Grants recommissioning programme a further 6 month extension of the current programme is deemed appropriate. This would allow time to collate all of the information required to make an informed decision regarding any central youth hub development and clarity regarding available funding for the next round of the Youth Service Grants Programme

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The 2020/21 gross budget for youth service provision is £1.044m, including £0.005m one-off funding for 20/21 only. Of this £0.394m is for the Youth Service Commissioned services and £0.134m for the Youth Led Grants Programme.
- 7.2 The Council is facing unprecedented financial pressures, any arrangement to commit funding beyond March 2021 will need to be considered, to see if the financial implications outlined in the report, can be accommodated in the 2021/22 budget proposals. Any new commitments, including all options regarding developing a central youth hub along with detailed costings and financial implications, should be considered as part of the draft 2021/22 budget proposals at P&R committee.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name Davie Ellis

Date: 27/10/20

Legal Implications:

- 7.1 In January 2020 the Children, Young people and Skills Committee agreed to extend the current Youth Service Grants programme for a further six months from 1st October to 31st March 2021. The rationale for extending this is set put in the body of the report. The extent of any grant in the new financial year is not yet determined and will not be determined by this Committee. Ultimately any

recommissioning in due course will have to be informed by the funding available, and consideration given as to how to use the funding to meet the assessed needs of the city in order to meet statutory responsibilities to provide youth services.

Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson

Date: 29/10/2020

Ofsted update 2 October 2020

Schools inspected since last committee 2020

School	Date of Inspection	OE Grade	Previous grade
Ofsted Inspections			

Snapshot from October 2020

	% of schools judged to be Good & Outstanding	National % schools judged to be Good & Outstanding	% Pupils in a Good or Outstanding School	% of schools judged to be Outstanding	National % Schools judged to be Outstanding
Primary	88.5	87.7	89.1	11.5	16.6
Secondary	100	76.1	100	0	20.4
Special	66.7	90.4	89.5	66.7	38.3
Colleges	100	-	-	-	-
PRUs	100	84.6	100	0	18.4
All Schools (not colleges)	89.7	86.2	93.5	14.7	19.0

National figures as at end of August 2020 Ofsted Monthly Management data

Overview of School Ofsted Outcomes

As at end July	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Brighton & Hove: % Schools	14.7%	75%	8.8%	1.5%
Brighton & Hove: Number of schools	10	51	6	1
National : % schools	19.0%	67.2%	10.1%	3.7%

The pupil referral units are now one establishment: The Central Hub Brighton

Ofsted Interim visits

Currently education inspection by Ofsted is suspended. However this Autumn Term Ofsted are completing interim visits:

Further information re Ofsted Interim Visits can be found at [Ofsted Vimeo](#) and the [Ofsted page on interim visits](#)

Ofsted state:

“These interim visits are to reassure and inform parents, government and the public about how schools are managing the return to full education for all pupils.

Interim visits will help parents and the public to understand how individual schools are returning to the school’s normal curriculum. We will not be evaluating what leaders did during the spring and summer term 2020, when schools were not open to all pupils, but we may need to understand the broad context of its impact on the school.

The lead Her Majesty’s Inspector (HMI) will write a short letter after each interim visit. The letter will summarise briefly the discussions inspectors had with leaders. This is to provide parents with information about what leaders are doing to help pupils back into full-time education. Letters will not provide any evaluation or graded judgement. They will be published on our [reports website](#). We will also use our findings from the visits to report to the Secretary of State and the public on the picture across schools in England.”

The following schools received a visit:

1st October 2020 - St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School
20th October 2020 – Moulsecoomb Primary School

Overview of Early Years Ofsted inspections

- 98% of childcare providers on the Early Years Register in Brighton & Hove were judged good or outstanding (March 2020). This is above the figure of 96% in England.
- A high percentage of settings are judged as outstanding in Brighton & Hove, above national and local outcomes:
 - 26% (B&H), 21% (SE) and 19% (England).
- All Ofsted inspections of early years providers were suspended in March 2020 due to Covid 19

EY Ofsted inspections since last committee

Setting	Inspection date	Latest grade for overall effectiveness	Previous grade

Subject:	Anti-racist Schools Strategy		
Date of Meeting:	9th November 2020		
Report of:	Deb Austin		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Sam Beal	Tel: 01273 293533
	Email:	Sam.beal@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Committee of progress since Committee passed a [motion](#) on the 18th June, 2020 calling for more anti-racist action in schools.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Committee support the development of a strategy for anti-racist schools, which will be developed over the next three months, supported by engagement with educational settings and community partnerships
- 2.2 That Committee agree the principles of the draft strategy outlined in Appendix 1.

3. CONTEXT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 There has been a range of support and challenge for race equality work in Brighton & Hove schools from the local authority. However, this has not centred people of colour in the devising and delivery of strategy and has not been sufficiently well-resourced to make a significant difference to improve the experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff, pupils, students and their families.
- 3.2 Many Brighton & Hove schools have been committed to improving their approaches to race equality and there has been some progress made. However, racism remains a reality locally and nationally. Here are two national reports highlighting some of the key issues:

<https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Runnymede%20Secondary%20Schools%20report%20FINAL.pdf>

<https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Runnymede%20ReportNEW.pdf>

- 3.3 In June and July 2020, a group of school staff founded the Brighton & Hove Educators of Colour Collective (BHECC). The purpose of the collective is to support and empower educators of colour and to support anti-racist action in schools. A smaller group of people from this collective have worked with a consultant commissioned by the council, to draft a strategy with racial literacy

training at its centre and which prioritises the needs of pupils, students and staff of colour. Education and Skills thank this group for their expertise and experience which has informed the development of this strategy. It has been agreed that support in the future will either be funded or with permission from Head teachers staff released from duties during the school day.

- 3.4 The strategy will aim to both prevent and mitigate the racism within the educational system and to support more effectively those in school communities experiencing racism. A key principle within this strategy will be to recruit, resource and fund educators and experts of colour to lead and deliver work in partnership with the council. The strategy includes activity in the following areas: support for educators of colour, workforce development and training for school staff and governors, curriculum review and decolonisation, developing pupil and student racial literacy, school policy review, incident reporting and support for BAME pupils and students and their parents.
- 3.5 Training and engagement activities related to the strategy have been delivered or are planned in order to involve education settings and community and other partners in this work. In the autumn term this includes working with Equality Leads, Educators of Colour and governors with engagement work planned with community groups in the Spring term.
- 3.6 Further aspects of the strategy are also being delivered. For example; PSHE materials are being developed to support secondary students to understand the structural nature of racism, and racial literacy training is planned for equality leads and educators of colour in schools.
- 3.7 Education and Skills have committed to ensuring all their teams have received racial literacy training either through the council training offer or commissioned training by April 2021. This will ensure that all support offered to schools comes from a place of understanding systemic racism and so all can play a part in challenging it.
- 3.8 A strategy, action plan and delivery model will be in place by April 2021. The current proposal aims to recruit to new roles which will enhance the capacity of the council to deliver on this programme of work. This work requires significant funding to make a real difference to the systemic racism impacting on and causing harm to pupils, students and staff of colour in Brighton & Hove schools. Funding proposals going forward are being developed and will be presented to budget Council in February 2021 for approval.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 A strategy will be ready to share in November. Seed funding of £4000 has already been agreed so that engagement activities can take place with education settings, parents, carers young people, community groups between November and January. The purpose of the engagement will be to raise awareness and support for the strategy and to identify any gaps in provision.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The recommendations should be approved to enable the next steps in developing schools that are safe learning environments for pupils, students, families and staff of colour, free from racism and prejudice.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 As part of the development of the new strategy a full business case will be required to explore the alternative service delivery models and determine both the resources required and the funding options that may be available. This should be completed as soon as possible and submitted for consideration. Whatever final service delivery model is identified, resources will need to be either redeployed, savings found from other services or additional sources of funding found. Any significant funding implications will need to be agreed as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.

Finance Officer Consulted: David Ellis

Date: 22/10/2020

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The Equality Act 2010 protects employees and services users (school pupils) on the basis of 'protected characteristics' which includes race. Local Authorities have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with the three 'needs' articulated in this law through the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149):
- (i) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
 - (ii) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
 - (iii) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Local Authorities will require schools to act in accordance with these three 'needs'. The development of an anti-racist strategy for schools will assist the Council to fulfil this statutory duty

Legal Officer Consulted: Serena Kynaston

Date: 21/10/2020

Equalities Implications:

- 7.2 The strategy is based on the identified needs of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic children, young people and staff and takes an intersectional approaching acknowledging the specific needs of different groups of children and young people within this umbrella.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.3

Brexit Implications:

7.4

Any Other Significant Implications:

Crime & Disorder Implications:

7.5

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

7.6

Public Health Implications:

7.7 The strategy will contribute to the wellbeing of all groups of pupils and students in school.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

7.8 The strategy supports the Council's pledge to be an [anti-racist city](#).

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Brighton & Hove Anti-Racist Schools Strategy (DRAFT for engagement)

Introduction

Whilst it must be recognised that racism is a complex issue that is an entrenched problem in British society at large and in our school systems, and there are no simple solutions to 'eradicate' racism, the aim of this document is to lay out a strategic plan for anti-racism practices to be embedded in the Brighton & Hove school system over a 5 year timeframe. This work will build on some important and good race equality work that has been developed in Brighton & Hove schools but recognises the need to increase and deepen this work.

This draft strategy takes an evidence-based approach and will inform a business case for funding. Over the next two terms there will be a series of engagement events with school communities and other partners to get feedback on the strategy, to inform its development and to gain support for its implementation.

Guiding Principles

- A holistic approach that examines multiple overlapping areas of practice is required.
- Racism is understood to be a structural/systemic/institutional issue as well as an interpersonal issue.
- School education/communities are vital for socialising and equipping *all* young people to part of an inclusive, equitable and diverse society.
- BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) is a deep, broad, diverse categorisation and the experiences and needs of different groups must be considered and represented.
- An intersectional approach needs to be taken that recognises how, for example intersections with gender, SEND, economic disadvantage, refugee/asylum status, EAL and LGBTU can impact the needs of BAME people.
- BAME professionals must be involved at every level of decision making and delivery in anti-racist work.
- BAME school staff /pupils/ community members must be engaged with and included in anti-racist work.
- There must be a balance between *dismantling* and *navigating* work i.e. The resource/focus on *dismantling* racist practices, and the resource on supporting BAME pupils/staff/parents with *navigating* racist practices.
- There should be an emphasis on sustainable change as opposed to one-off projects.
- Emergent best practice for Anti-Racist leadership indicates BAME and White allies working in partnership (CIPD, 2020).
- A series of measurable outcomes and appropriate structures must be established for auditing and monitoring purposes (BAME staff representation, curricula changes, well-being indicators, structural changes, attainment, attendance, exclusions).

Overview

The diagram below shows the main areas of anti-racist work as applicable to school and educational settings. Each area is further detailed below.



Key areas of work

BAME Staff Recruitment and Retention

The teaching workforce/SLTs/governors are overwhelmingly white and there is a growing disparity between the ethnic/racial diversity of the pupil population and teachers, SLT and governors. This disparity is evident in Brighton & Hove at all levels of the education system and in trainee teacher numbers. BAME teachers leave the profession at nearly twice the rate of their white colleagues and cite discrimination in the workplace from pupils/parents/colleagues / SLT, lack of career progression, isolation and a lack of support as contributing factors (Haque, 2017).

Lack of diversity in the teaching workforce sends powerful messages to all young people about who holds authority, knowledge and leadership. BAME pupils repeatedly cite that lack of BAME adults in schools contributes to a culture that misunderstands them (Wah, 2020).

- Establish a city wide BAME teacher/staff network to provide peer-to-peer support, guidance, mentorship, information and training events
- Improve recruitment, retention and progression in the Brighton & Hove school workforce and governors at all levels
- Support schools in other initiatives to increase the BAME adult presence in schools e.g. visiting teachers/facilitators/ community elders, mentoring schemes, remote video teaching
- BAME labour for anti-racist work must be compensated (financial / time) and valued

Training for Staff

By their own admission, many teachers (White and BAME) are ill prepared to promote anti-racism through schooling and the curriculum (Joseph-Salisbury, 2020). The overwhelming white school leadership in schools typically lack understanding of personal and structural racism and what is required to build inclusive school environments (Miller, 2020).

Racial literacy training is required for all staff. Key aspects of racial literacy include a historical understanding of the construction of 'race', an understanding of structural/systemic racism and an understanding of contemporary manifestations and reproductions of 'race' both in and out of schools. This is in contrast to 'colour blind' approaches that have dominated race equality strategies in recent decades (Gillborn, 2008).

- Develop a programme of racial literacy training and an approach for rolling this across all staff. A balance of 'top down' and 'bottom up' approaches are needed.
- Roll out a programme of general and specific training courses for teachers, school staff, SLT and governors across early years, primary, secondary and special schools.
- Roll out a programme of training with key partners for ITT, NQT, RQTs.
- Specialist training should be provided for specific curriculum areas /key stages, welfare/behaviour staff, incident reporting/handling / safeguarding etc.

Racial Literacy for Pupils

There is ample evidence spanning decades that children as young as 3 years old begin to learn the markers of racial categories and racial hierarchy (Apfelbaum, Sullivan, and Wilton, 2020; Brown, 2005) and yet the widespread view that children, particularly young children, are racially ‘innocent’ persists. In addition, children learn throughout their schooling that racism is an uncomfortable topic for adults and consequently have few opportunities to develop their own understanding and capacity to discuss this complex topic.

Some aspects of pupil racial literacy can be addressed through curricula changes. However, particularly at key stages 2/3/4 pupils additionally need specific racial literacy focussed lessons as part of their PSHE and critical thinking programmes.

- Review and develop PSHE and critical thinking programmes.
- Provide teacher training for delivery of PSHE and critical thinking programmes.

Incident Reporting / Handling

BAME pupils and parents (and teachers) indicate that racist incidents and concerns often go unreported. Reasons cited for this include:

- Previous poor experiences (encountering defensiveness, made things worse, denial)
- A sense that “the school doesn’t want to know”
- A lack of confidence / language to report issues/concerns
- Uncertainty of whom to report to
- Fear of backlash / retaliation
- Challenges the self-image of school

Studies show that many teachers understand racism as individual prejudice thereby only recognise racism in schools when it appears in the use of racial slurs or other overt incidents as opposed to a recognition of systemic inequalities and bias (Lander, 2014; Asare, 2009). This limited understanding contributes to the way issues/concerns are understood and handled.

- Review of approach and guidance policies.
- School staff training on approaches.

BAME pupil / parent support and empowerment

It is important that BAME pupils and parents are supported with the realities of navigating racialised experiences, as well as being empowered to be active in resisting and challenging problematic practices. As outlined in the previous section, pupils and parents report facing a range of barriers in reporting incidents and issues.

- Focus groups and other methods to gather information on the lived experiences of BAME pupils, BAME parents, parents of BAME pupils.
- Identified trained staff allies in all schools for reporting and supporting (similar to LGBT allies system in some schools).

- Pupil (and parent) support groups / training.
- BAME Mentoring (e.g. Brighton University, internal mentoring schemes).
- Work with the Universities re. role models & aspirations.

School Curricula

The broad aims of diversifying and decolonising the curriculum is to

- teach a more inclusive, accurate and balanced world view, (move away from a Eurocentric approach)
- Embed Black History in the curricula
- teach a critical thinking approach to History in particular
- ensure that BAME pupils feel included and reflected in the curriculum, resources and environment
- challenge and deconstruct racial stereotypes (Moncrieffe et al,2019).
- Review all language used in the curriculum / school environment

This is a substantial and complex undertaking with different concerns, requirements and constraints for different subject areas and key stages. Constraints of exam syllabuses, for example, can severely limit the scope of schools to address the curriculum at key stages 4 and 5, but this does not mean that there is not scope for diversifying the curriculum in all key stages. Some examples include: ensuring the history curriculum adequately addresses colonial, pre-colonial and post-colonial history, early years and primary story books reflect a diverse range of characters and perspectives, scientific and mathematical knowledge from across the globe are recognised and teaching methods address the needs of all pupils.

There are a plethora of resources and guidance related to diversifying and decolonising the curriculum, and therefore potential value in coordinating efforts across schools.

- Establish a program of curriculum review and development over 5 years.
- Provide subject specific/ key stage specific training and guidance.
- Provide structures to share practice across schools e.g. recruit practising teachers. to specialise in subject / key stage.

School Policies

Certain school policies e.g. uniform, hair, holiday, food provision, can have a disproportionate negative impact on BAME pupils/parents.

- Review / consultation / guidance

An Example of Anti-Racist Practice in a school setting

Anti-Racism Lead Practitioner(s)

Appoint suitably qualified BAME and White joint leadership. In settings where two appointments are not feasible, organisations/schools can work in partnership with another small organisation/school.

Facilitated Focus Groups

Conduct facilitated focus groups for BAME pupils / parents / staff to effectively capture lived experiences and well-being information in the organisation.

Audit and Action Plan

Develop an audit and action plan approach so that schools can track their progress. The following documents might be useful.

- [NEU Anti-Racist Framework](#)
- [The Key for School Leaders Whole school anti-racism audit](#)
- [Runnymede Trust School Policies for Race Equality and Cultural Diversity](#)

Audit data should include:

- Overall and breakdown data on BAME teachers, SLT, staff and governors
- Attendance data
- Overall and subject specific attainment data
- Behaviour and exclusion data
- Racial literacy training data for staff and governors
- Reported incident and issues data / information
- BAME pupil / parent / staff experiences and well-being indicators

Draft Project Plan.

This will be developed when funding has been secured and in discussion with schools.

Year 1	Autumn Term 2020 and Spring Term 2021 (4k of funding provided) Establish BAME teacher/school staff network (Brighton & Hove Educators of Colour Collective already established independently of the council) Bulletin and emails to schools outlining plans for the strategy and advice / resources for Black History Month (completed September 2020) Deliver report to Children Young People and Skills Committee and secure funding (November 2020) Work with Brighton & Hove Educators of Colour Collective to establish an advisory group for the strategy and future developments (October and November 2020) Racial Literacy Training and Engagement sessions: Educators of Colour, Equality Leads and Governors (phase 1) (November – March 2021) Presentation and discussion of strategy at primary, secondary and special head teacher meetings (November and December 2020) Engagement activities with community and parent groups (January – March 2021) Completion of Anti-Racist Schools Strategy (March 2021) Review national and local audit tools for schools (January – March
--------	---

	2021) Development of racial literacy PSHE lesson plans for secondary schools (underway) and PSHE teacher training (By March 2021) Review of PSHE lesson plans for primary schools (Good to be Me, Anti-Racism) (By March 2021)				
Year 1 Summer Term 2021	Initial Racial Literacy Training for Head teachers, governors, key staff (curriculum leads, policy leads) Training for curriculum leads X as part of ongoing programme	Training for BAME pupils support groups secondary.	Training for BAME pupil / parent support primary.	Curriculum review for X subject secondary Conference	Curriculum review for X subject primary
Year 2 Term 1	Training for curriculum leads Y	Support to establish BAME pupil support groups.	Training for BAME pupil / parent support primary.	Curriculum review for Y subject secondary	Curriculum review for Y subject primary
Year 2 Term 2 – Year 5	To be developed				

Potential barriers to implementation

- Resource and capacity within the council and schools is required to make a significant impact
- With the many competing pressures in schools, and the discomfort for many with issues of race and racism, anti-racist work can be marginalised/ sabotaged.
- It is important to recognise that some staff/teachers/governors will be reluctant to acknowledge and participate in anti-racist work. This can lead to conflict and backlash that thwarts efforts for progress. It is advised that the program aims to initially engage with staff/teachers/governors that support the work and any mandatory engagement comes further down the line.
- Similarly, not all parents (including some BAME parents) will support the anti-racist work and schools must think carefully around how they communicate their approaches sensitively. Potentially schools may need to offer racial literacy programmes for parents.

Acknowledgments

Lead Author: Abha Aggarwal (RISC / Race Matters Education) commissioned by Brighton & Hove City Council.

With thanks to the members of the Brighton & Hove Educators of Colour Collective who contributed to discussions which helped inform and develop this document.

References

- Apfelbaum, E.P., Sullivan, J. and Wilton, L (2020) Adults Delay Conversations About Race Because They Underestimate Children's Processing of Race
- Asare, Y. (2009) 'Them and us': race equality interventions in predominantly white schools. London: Runnymede Trust.
- Brown, B (2005) Unlearning discrimination in the early years, Trentham Books.
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2020) Developing and Anti-Racism Strategy
- General Teaching Council for Scotland (2000) Educating for Anti-Racism
- Gillborn, D (2008) Racism and Education – Coincidence or Conspiracy? Routledge
- Haque, Z (2017) 'Visible Minorities, Invisible Teachers', The Runnymede Trust
- Joseph-Salisbury, R (2020) 'Race and Racism in English Secondary Schools' The Runnymede Trust
- Lander, V. (2014) Initial Teacher Education: The Practice of Whiteness. Advancing Race and Ethnicity in Education: Palgrave MacMillan
- Miller, P (2020) Anti-racist school leadership: making 'race' count in leadership preparation and development
- Moncrieffe M, Asare, Y, Dunford, R and Youssef, H (2019) Decolonising the Curriculum, University of Brighton
- Page, S. (2020) 'People get killed cause of their skin. It cannot be stopped': a midlands case study considering experiences of racism amongst pupils in UK secondary schools and the community. British journal of community justice
- Wah, I (2020) This is why diversity in schools matters so much'
<https://www.tes.com/news/racism-school-teachers-diversity-inclusivity-importance-education>

Subject:	Emotional Well-Being and Mental Health Support in Schools		
Date of Meeting:	Children, Young People and Skills Committee Monday 9 November 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director for Families, Children & Learning		
Contact Officer:	Georgina Clarke-Green		
	Name:	Mohammed Bham	Tel: 01273 292808
		Linsey McGill	
	Email:	Mohammed.Bham@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	(All Wards);		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the committee on Emotional Well-Being and Mental Health support in Schools.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the committee note the work being delivered in schools and colleges in Brighton and Hove.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service: Schools Wellbeing Service (BHISS SWS) continues to receive funding from Brighton & Hove City Council's Families Children & Learning Directorate (FCL), Public Health (PH) and Brighton & Hove's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).
- 3.2 The BHISS SWS works as part of a system of support for children and young people in Brighton and Hove; this includes Specialist Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Community Wellbeing Service (CWS).
- 3.3 BHISS SWS has Educational Mental Health Practitioner (Trainees) linked to primary and secondary schools; and Primary Mental Health Workers (PMHWS) embedded in secondary schools and colleges, providing mild to moderate mental health interventions (1:1 and groups) as well as Whole School Approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers.
- 3.4 Schools Wellbeing Service works closely with all services relating to Emotional Well-Being and Mental Health: Public Health Schools Programme, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) Service and Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS): Educational Psychologists, Specialist Teachers & Practitioners for Social Emotional Mental Health all work together with schools, families and children and young people to deliver a comprehensive offer.

3.5 During Covid-19, there continues to be a flexible and responsive, comprehensive menu of training available and delivered online to schools' teams that equip them to respond directly to poor mental health and low self-esteem. This includes: Mental Health First Aid, Attachment Aware* and Emotion Coaching, Self-Harm including suicidal ideation (with Grassroots), bereavement support and trauma informed practice.

*the city-wide 'Developing an Attachment Aware Behaviour Regulation Policy Guidance' for our schools can be found here: https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/Behaviour%20Regulation%20Policy%20Guidance%20-%20Sep%2018_1.pdf

3.6 To specifically address the emotional mental health and well-being needs of our children & young people and their families through our schools, BHISS SWS are able to provide specialist support for the following types of issues and these continue to be required amid Covid-19:

- anxiety
- conduct behaviour
- life event
- bereavement
- depression / low mood
- self-harm
- suicidal ideation
- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

3.7 BHISS SWS provide systemic work, that includes:

- school-based triage
- staff reflective space
- staff consultation
- staff training / workshops
- parent consultation
- parent training / workshops
- assemblies / year group work (currently on hold due to Covid-19)

3.8 With Council funding for Post 16 education provisions (6th form and FE Colleges) in Brighton & Hove City. Each school based 6th form has an allocation of half day per fortnight PMHW time. Each stand-alone 6th form college has an allocated one and a half days per week PMHW time plus half day per week Educational Psychologist (EP) time.

3.9 All colleges have worked with their PMHW and EP to identify key and current needs of staff and students. They continue to offer a menu of staff consultation, training, reflective practice and student group work.

3.10 BHISS SWS carefully monitor and utilise joint funding from the Council (FCL and PH) and CCG to provide a consistent offer across all our local primary schools. Primary schools are allocated 3 days per year (half-day per half term). During limited school openings, parents and carers were able to access the Schools Wellbeing Consultation line and the school summer holidays project offers (e.g. walk and talk; build your own future clay project). This is in addition to continued work with specialist CAMHS and youth groups, such as Safety Net. As we commence this return and recovery phase we have returned to schools using

combined methods of online and onsite presence for staff consultation, reflective practice, parent consultation and training. There is also some direct work with primary-aged children and their families.

3.11 Our telephone consultation line for parents/carers does not replace current provision of the Specialist CAMHS duty line;

3.12 During transition and school transfers from primary to secondary parents and carers were able to access online transition support. Schools could refer for enhanced support; and parents and carers could book sessions for light touch door-step visits, receive art-wellbeing activity packs and 'walk and talk'. Targeted support has been identified for emotionally based school non-attendance in years 11 and 12. Our approach to this has included Mountain-biking and Forest Schools, maximising outdoor wellbeing engagement with a PMHW.

3.13 SWS offers to be continued and developed

Offer	Form	Target	Benefits
Art therapy group	Online moving to small group	CYP from across schools	Better use of resources and using PMHW strengths Accessible for CYP not attending school Direct links into CAMHS
Mountain biking/Forest Schools CBT group	Outside group delivery	Year 11 and above Young people who are already known to CAMHS but not attending Post 16 not moved to college	Accessible for young people who are at risk of being NEET Links to groups and activities post intervention
Online staff training	On line Small group	All school staff	Being from across schools allowed for greater sharing of good practice Greater access as at flexible times and not needing to leave school site
Supporting the ASC and ADHD clinic at CAMHS	Online Family based	Families across B&H	CPD for PMHW's Collaborative working on a consultation level
Family Therapy Teams	Online Move into CAMHS Joint working with ITF	Working with ITF to provide systemic family therapy support for families in conflict	CPD for PMHW's on systemic family work
Door step activity packs	CYP doorstep drop and contact	Providing activity packs for CYP whilst at same time initiating contact	Enabled some contact with vulnerable CYP

- 3.14 Work between PMHWs & EMHPs; Public Health in Schools and School Nursing services continue to provide direct on-site health drop-ins and a texting service, CHATHEALTH. This service is seeing links developed with the texting response and school nursing service being able to provide one-to-one support.

Wellbeing Return to Education

- 3.15 Department for Education (DfE) has provided the local authority with grant funding and guidance to deliver city-wide training. An experienced specialist in child mental health, PMHW has been seconded to co-ordinate the roll-out for all our schools so that all staff have access to training. The materials have been developed with MindEd and Anna Freud Centre. The content will be adapted to meet local requirements. Feedback from this training will be used to inform future offers.

Performance Monitoring during Covid-19: April to June 2020

- 3.16 All measures of success have been delayed as part of the impact of Covid-19 and response. They include the following:
- Complete an evaluation of PMHW delivery to all schools (due December 2020);
 - Fully embed the new mental health support team to ensure additional support for primary schools and those CYP not in schools. (due February 2021);
 - To complete evaluation of primary and post-16 emotional health and wellbeing model (due February 2021).
- 3.17 During the 1st Quarter (April to June 2020) the SWS adapted and developed services due to lockdown and as Covid-19 has continued.
- 3.18 SWS swiftly moved therapeutic services online and delivered guidance and support to families and young people in accordance with Business Continuity plans.
- 3.19 PMHW specific offers included:
- Increased capacity around the consultation line;
 - Two PMHW's working with Intensive Team for Families to support with referrals;
 - Working with specialist CAMHS offering family support around ASC and ADHD;
 - Mentoring through BAME provision;
 - Sharing of resources and links with schools and parents/carers groups;
 - Moving to therapeutic offers being virtual/online;
 - Supporting school with managing a high-risk caseload around mental health;
 - Working with Community Wellbeing and CAMHS around managing triage;
 - Four PMHW's prepared to step to A&E for assessments;
 - Online training package for schools;
 - Coffee morning offers to parents/carers;
 - Liaison with PACC/AMAZE/FYP regarding areas where support required.

3.20 MHST specific offers included:

- Broadening of referrals to include community wellbeing, specialist CAMHS, youth groups and school nurses;
- Production of psycho education leaflets around low mood, eating, sleep and anxiety;
- Psycho education sessions for parents offered through schools and parent groups.

3.21 Data from offers specific to lockdown due to Covid-19

3.21.1 School Training

Bereavement and loss	74 sessions taken place (36 staff x2)
Attachment and trauma	97 sessions taken place

3.21.2 SWS Consultation Line

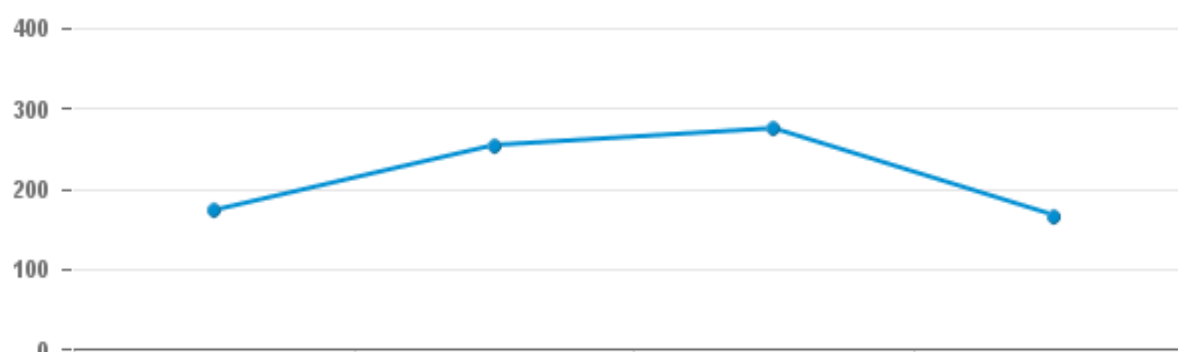
61 families supported	Outcomes included 1-1 work, sign posting to further support, advice and consultation
-----------------------	--

3.22 Total Contacts & Clients

The table below shows the total number of clients who had contacts recorded against them within the quarter, and the total number of contacts recorded against them.

	Q2 2019-20	Q3 2019-20	Q4 2019-20	Q1 2020-21
Clients	173	254	275	167
Contacts	635	906	1010	991

Total Clinets



3.23 Whilst there was a steady increase in contacts and clients throughout Q2, Q3 and Q4, there has been a drop in Q1, directly due to schools being closed and no new referrals being identified. However, the high level of contacts demonstrates that whilst some CYP did feel they required support to be continued, many did continue to have contact with PMHW's in some format, either virtual or by phone.

3.24 Total Contacts in Quarter by Purpose

The table below shows the total number of clients who had contacts recorded against them within the quarter and the form of intervention.

	Q2 2019-20 2019	Q3 2019-20 2019	Q4 2019-20 2020	Q1 2020-21 2020
Consultation	343	406	447	650
Direct Intervention	247	283	352	285
Group	37	205	191	40
Not Recorded	8	12	20	16
Sum:	635	906	1010	991

3.25 During Quarter 1 (April to June) has seen a shift from group-based work to consultations and direct interventions, this is due to lockdown, with CYP requiring a higher level of 1-1 advice and consultation work. These have not necessarily transferred to ongoing therapeutic interventions.

3.26 Current Performance: Direct Contact (2 counts or more)

The table below shows the total number of clients who had 2 or more contacts recorded against them within the quarter, the first measure only counts contacts with the young person, the second counts all contacts and represents the Access target.

	Q2 2019-20	Q3 2019-20	Q4 2019-20	Q1 2020-21
Client's with 2 or more direct contacts in the quarter	62	93	112	55
Client's with 2 or more contacts direct and indirect in the quarter. Access target	113	150	186	112

- 3.27 Whilst there was a steady increase in 2 or more direct contacts until Q4, this has reduced in Quarter 1 (April to June) due to the lockdown and limited opening of schools. There has been a steady increase in both direct and indirect contact with young people.
- 3.28 Children and Young People (CYP) receiving mental health intervention from a PMHW demonstrates improvements in outcomes (i.e. reduction in a child or young person's risk-taking behaviours such as self-harm) has been established, however it has not been possible to gather complete data as not all service users (young people) are completing the sessions required to monitor this activity.
- 3.29 BHISS SWS is working to establish clear evidence regarding the effectiveness of the early intervention work delivered to prevent pressure on Specialist CAMHS. Further analysis is also required on those cases that are escalated so we can use this to inform practice going forward.
- 3.30 **The 'percentage (%) of children and young people with mental health needs supported by the Schools Wellbeing Service (PMHWs) that do not need to be escalated to Specialist CAMHS or need further external interventions'.** This measure is capturable, robust and identifies the success of the service appropriately. This is not an existing measure so this will be explored and set up.
- 3.31 This is the best measure we can use to track how the council support children with mental health. There are not systems set up for measuring this Key Performance Indicator (KPI) currently. We need to ensure there is a robust monitoring system in place, and we would need to explore how easy it is to get robust historical data in order to set a target for the year. If this is not possible then we could set this with no target for this year and make it a baseline year.
- 3.32 If information and a measure is required around the number of children and young people on the Specialist CAMHS waiting list this would fall within the responsibility of the CCG and Specialist CAMHS.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 4.1 We continue engagement with all schools and colleges to promote mental health awareness with Headteacher/Principal, Mental Health leads and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). This being in relation to children and young people, families and staff.
- 4.2 Engagement with wider stakeholders continues to inform the model of service delivery as Schools Wellbeing Service fits within a wider children and young people's mental health system and will be informed by the outcomes of the 'Foundations for our Future' Report (Sussex-wide Review, 2020).

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 That the Committee note the update on the Schools Wellbeing Service amid Covid-19.

6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications:

6.1 Brighton and Hove CCG, Families, Children and Learning Directorate and Public Health within the Local Authority jointly fund the Schools Wellbeing Service.

6.2 The table below outlines the financial arrangements.

B&H Schools Wellbeing Service & Trailblazer Finances				
Year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
B&H CCG	212,000	212,000	212,000	212,000
BHCC FCL & Public Health	358,000	358,000	358,000	358,000
Health Education England	90,546	45,455	-	-
Education and Wellbeing Grant		24,291		
Trailblazer funding via CCG*	138,014	303,084	357,000	357,000
Total	798,560	942,830	927,000	927,000

*Includes £20k non-recurrent project support in 19/20.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steve Williams

Date: 23/10/20

Legal Implications:

6.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston

Date: 16/10/20

Equalities Implications:

6.4 We continue to work with stakeholders to develop improved access to our service, such as the Participation Project, training for staff from Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and links with parent/carers group representing BAME children and young people; Involvement with Mentivity to improve engagement with young boys and men for mentoring BAME young people and provision of mental health support.

Sustainability Implications:

6.5 Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service: Schools Wellbeing Service (BHISS SWS) continues to receive funding from Brighton & Hove City Council's Families Children & Learning Directorate (FCL), Public Health (PH) and Brighton & Hove's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Any Other Significant Implications:

6.6 None known at this time.

Subject:	Complex Adolescent Strategy		
Date of Meeting:	26.10.20		
Report of:	Deb Austin, Interim Director of Families, Children and Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Tania Riedel	Tel: 01273 296169
	Email:	Tania.Riedel@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 The Committee is asked to approve the Complex Adolescent Strategy for Brighton and Hove 2020-2023

1.2 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 there is a requirement for the multiagency Youth Offending Management Group to produce a local Youth Justice Strategy setting out how Youth Offending Services (YOS) will be resourced and provided.

1.3 The Complex Adolescent Strategy will incorporate the Youth Justice Strategy, produced in previous years. It widens the remit to better reflect the local arrangements and approach within Brighton and Hove.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the Committee approves the Complex Adolescent Strategy for Brighton & Hove 2020 - 23

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 There is a requirement through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for named statutory partners to form a YOT (Youth Offending Team). Section 38 identifies the statutory partners and places a duty on them to cooperate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. These statutory partners are: the local authority, the police, the probation service and health. Additional partners may also be asked to join the joint strategic effort to prevent offending by children and young people. In previous years, Brighton and Hove have formalised these arrangements and strategic planning through annual and tri annual Youth Justice Strategies. We are now in a position to move to a new three-year plan that will cover the services

relating to complex adolescents as well as youth justice. This will be a better fit with the local arrangements

3.2 In order to provide a comprehensive and cogent response to complex needs of this cohort, the key teams in Brighton & Hove were brought together in 2018 to form one co located Adolescent Service. This multi-disciplinary service consists of:

- The Youth Offending Team
- ru-ok? a substance misuse team for young people
- A health team providing sexual health, mental health and wellbeing support
- An Adolescent Social Work Pod who work with the most vulnerable and risky young people in the city
- Functional Family Therapy
- Extended Adolescent Service, which offers flexible support to children and young people at risk of becoming looked after or being exploited.

The Youth Employability Service (YES) are also co-located with the service.

3.3 The teams work closely together whilst still retaining their distinct identities. The management structures, processes and staff recognise the need to work differently in order to meet the needs of this complex cohort of young people.

3.4 The key priorities developed and agreed by the Strategic Adolescent Management Board are:

- To continue to divert the right children away from the criminal Justice System
- To gain a better understanding of why children reoffend to respond appropriately
- To continue to maintain the low number of custodial sentencing and to avoid this wherever possible
- To embed contextual safeguarding approaches in the city and ensure there is a robust multi agency response to child exploitation
- To increase service user participation
- To ensure there is a shared understanding of children and young people's substance use across the city, and there are appropriate responses in place to address the harm caused in relation to this.

3.5 The Strategy will also be taken to the city's Safe in the City Partnership Board for discussion and agreement and will be submitted to the Youth Justice Board.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 Publication of the Youth Justice Strategy is normally a statutory requirement. However, there is no requirement to publish this year due to the impact of the COVID 19 restrictions. It is likely that this statutory requirement will return in 2021.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 Direct community engagement and consultation has not been a part of the development of this strategy. However the operational Business Plans which underpin the strategy do ensure the involvement and participation of young people in the design and delivery of services and include specific community orientated initiatives such as Restorative Justice.

5.2 The strategy has been discussed and consulted upon at the Strategic Adolescent Management Board which is made up of partner agencies and the CVS.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The Committee is asked to approve the strategy as part of discharging the council's statutory responsibilities.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

7.1 The financial information detailed within the body of the attached supplementary report accurately reflects the current budgetary position of the YOS. The risk attached to any reduction in anticipated funding from the external partners would need to be managed, with Finance support, within the service with economies made and service delivery assessed/re-designed accordingly

Finance Officer Consulted: David Ellis

Date: 15.10.20

Legal Implications:

7.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory responsibility on local authorities acting with statutory partner agencies to establish a Youth Offending Service. The strategy meets the requirements under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce a local Youth Justice Strategy setting out how Youth Offending Services will be resourced and provided. The strategy must be published, and refer to the key requirements referred to in the body of the report.

Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson

Date: 15.10.20

Equalities Implications:

7.3 The strategy explicitly addresses equalities implications through the cross cutting theme and principle, that the service will strive to best meet the diverse needs of the residents and communities of Brighton and Hove

Sustainability Implications:

7.4 There are no sustainability implications.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

7.5 The Complex Adolescent Strategy is one of the key multi-agency strategies addressing crime and disorder in the city.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

7.6 Section 15 of the Strategy addresses risk to future delivery, Section 14 covers the implications of COVID 19 and Section 16 sets out the priorities.

Public Health Implications:

7.7 Public Health are members of the Adolescent Service Management group and have been fully involved in producing the strategy.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

7.8 The strategy will also be taken to the Safe in the City Partnership Board as part of ensuring a consistent corporate and city wide approach.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Brighton and Hove Youth Complex Adolescent Strategy 2020-23

Documents in Members' Room

Background Documents

Complex Adolescent Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 The aim of this strategy is to set out how we plan to address and respond to the needs and challenges faced by complex adolescents within Brighton and Hove. It will also look at how we aim to reduce the harm caused by some of the behaviours. The strategy will incorporate the Youth Justice Strategy, produced in previous years. It widens the remit to better reflect the local arrangements and approach within Brighton and Hove.

2. Background and context

2.1 There is a requirement through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for named statutory partners to form a YOT (Youth Offending Team). Section 38 identifies the statutory partners and places a duty on them to cooperate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. These statutory partners are: the local authority, the police, the probation service and health. Additional partners may also be asked to join the joint strategic effort to prevent offending by children and young people. In previous years, Brighton and Hove have formalised these arrangements and strategic planning through annual and tri annual Youth Justice Strategies. We are now in a position to move to a new three-year plan that will cover the services relating to complex adolescents as well as youth justice. This will be a better fit with the local arrangements.

2.2 In order to provide a comprehensive and cogent response to complex needs of this cohort, the key teams in Brighton & Hove were brought together in 2018 to form one co located Adolescent Service. This multi-disciplinary service consists of:

- The Youth Offending Team
- ru-ok? a substance misuse team for young people
- A health team providing sexual health, mental health and wellbeing support
- An Adolescent Social Work Pod who work with the most vulnerable and risky young people in the city
- Functional Family Therapy
- Extended Adolescent Service, which offers flexible support to children and young people at risk of becoming looked after or being exploited.

The Youth Employability Service (YES) are also co-located with the service.

2.3 The teams work closely together whilst still retaining their distinct identities. The management structures, processes and staff recognise the need to work differently in order to meet the needs of this complex cohort of young people.

2.4 A team around the relationship ethos is central to the working practice of the Adolescent Service. In supporting our complex adolescents, the young person is at the centre, with the team supporting the worker with the relationship to assist the young person in addressing their needs.

2.5 The Adolescent Service also works closely with partners including voluntary sector partners to ensure effective joint working and where possible services complement each other to best meet the needs and to engage with this vulnerable cohort of children.

3. Themes/principles

3.1 The following themes will underpin all of the activity outlined within this strategy:

- Wherever possible and appropriate a whole-family approach will be used in the delivery of services;
- The service will strive to best meet the diverse needs of the residents and communities of Brighton and Hove;
- All of the service delivery will be child-centred; and
- Services will use trauma-informed approaches.

4. Local strategic plans

4.1 Brighton & Hove City Council has adopted a vision of 'a fairer city, a sustainable future'. The draft plan has six core outcomes that we will be working to achieve for the city.

1. A city to call home
2. A city working for all
3. A stronger city
4. A growing and learning city
5. A sustainable city
6. A healthy and caring city

Each outcome has a set of priority actions which shape directorate and service plans, and day to day business.

4.2 The Adolescent Service sits within the Families, Children and Learning (FCL) directorate within the city council. The FCL directorate plan has the following objectives:

- Take a whole family approach to support safe and stable lives
- Improve outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable people by promoting independence, resilience and learning
- Provide high quality and inclusive education, SEND and employment support and early years, social care and youth provision
- Develop and engage with staff and stakeholders to deliver good quality services and change within the directorate and across council services

4.3 Brighton & Hove's Community Safety Partnership's overarching duty is to reduce crime and disorder, improve community safety, and to reduce reoffending in Brighton & Hove. This is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in or visits the city. The focus of the Community Safety & Crime Reduction Strategy 2020-23 is on taking early action to prevent crime and disorder, tackling the issues which have the biggest impact on people and reducing fear of crime and meeting the needs of victims. This strategy contains a section related to exploitation including modern slavery and trafficking. There is a multi-agency exploitation action plan to deliver the aims of the strategy.

4.4 Brighton & Hove City Council is part of a pan-Sussex group that has developed contextual safeguarding principles to ensure people involved in gangs / local crime groups are supported and their needs met. We will also seek to prevent vulnerable people becoming involved with gangs / local crime groups through peer support and workshops for families, parents, carers and guardians.

4.5 There will be ongoing work to disrupt criminal activity via multi-agency tactical operations and intensification weeks for emerging vulnerable locations or issues. Our enforcement activity will continue to use tools and powers against those who exploit vulnerable people. The numbers of people referred into the National Referral Mechanism as potential victims of modern slavery or trafficking are relatively low and we aim to raise awareness of criminal exploitation amongst young people into organised criminal activity such as county lines.

5. Data and performance

Performance and progress against previous priorities.

The following priorities were set in the Youth Justice Strategy 2019/20:

5.1 Reduce entrants into the Youth Justice System:

The Brighton & Hove target for reducing first time entrant to the criminal justice system is to maintain the FTE rate at under 31 per annum.

The number of FTEs in Brighton & Hove from April 2019- March 2020 is 20, with quarterly (Q) data showing slight variations: Q1:7; Q2:3; Q3: 5; Q4: 5. This suggests that the rate of FTEs in Brighton and Hove has averaged at 5 FTEs per quarter. This compares favorably to the 2018-2019 FTE rate, which was 31 for the year April 2018- March 2019, with the quarterly numbers of 9,5,11 and 6 respectively (there is a slight discrepancy between YJB data and local data).

In the past 4 years from March to April, the FTE rate for Brighton & Hove has shown variations, with annual numbers being 30 (year ending 2017), 24 (year ending 2018) 30 (as described above) for 2019, which is followed by a drop to 20 for the year ending 2020.

There have been some changes in Policing, in the past 24 months, for example due to the response to knife crime and changes in legislation, which for example increase the gravity of offences. There has been an increase in the use of Youth Conditional Cautions for young people committing high gravity offences, which may partly account for the increase in FTEs. There is an analysis underway of the 2019 data to explore the reasons for the increase. However, the data overall shows that Court is generally being used only where proportionate and necessary in respect of gravity and harm to victims. For example, for Quarter 4 2019/20 data, all 5 FTEs were male, had a substantive outcome of Referral Order and the offences were of Violence Against the Person. Overall the FTEs for Brighton and Hove remain low and within the target set by the management board.

5.2 Reduce reoffending:

There are quite significant variations in the re-offending rates for Brighton & Hove between quarters, considered to be due to the low number in the cohort, which can lead to distortions in the data. Therefore, it is useful to look at annual data.

There is an overall reduction in the re-offending rate, according to the latest available YJB annual data. For April 2016- March 2017, the number of young people who offended was 117, of whom 68 re-offended, with a binary rate (% of re-offenders) of 58.1%. For the following year's cohort, April 2017- March 2018, the total number of young people who offended was 61 and of those, 27 re-offended, with a binary rate of 44.3 %. In terms of the frequency of offending (number of offences per offender), the annual data shows a slight decline, with the aggregate quarterly average decreasing from 4.47 (March 2017- April 2018 cohort) to 4.44 (April 2017 – March 2018 cohort). The quarterly data shows spikes and drops in the past year's recording, with the latest

recording on the cohort January 2018- March 2018 being 3.4 (compared to the previous year 4.18). Although slight, the reduction in frequency needs to be considered alongside the significant reduction in custodial sentences and remands in the past two years and the smaller cohort of young people in the youth justice system. This indicates that even slight decreases in the re-offending rate are more significant given the complex and high-risk cohort of young people being supervised in the community. This also needs to take into account the fact that a small number of young people who are prolific offenders can distort the data.

There have been historically high re-offending rates in the Brighton & Hove area compared to national data and neighboring areas, which is associated with the contextual issues, such as child exploitation, high levels of drug use, organised crime and gang activity including county lines and the associated increase in violence and weapons offences.

It is positive that the data shows gradual improvements in re-offending rates in the past two to three years. However, reducing re-offending, and particularly targeting the high risk (and often vulnerable) cohort of young people in the area remains a key priority for the service both in terms of strategy and practice. It is recognised that the most prolific offenders are often hard to reach young people with complex needs, and managing and preventing re-offending requires a robust and long term multi-agency response.

5.3 To reduce the numbers of young people sentenced to custody:

There has been a strong strategic and operational focus on reducing the numbers of young people in custody. In the past four years, the numbers of custodial sentences have decreased from 12 in 2016, to six in 2017, to three in 2018, to one in 2019. No young people were sentenced to custody in Q1-3 2019/2020 and one young person was sentenced to custody in Q4.

The custody rate has therefore significantly reduced and remains below the national rate, the YOT family average and the southeast average. Brighton and Hove's custody rate is ranked 11th lowest out of 155 YOTs in England and Wales.

This objective has been achieved but continues to be a strategic priority for the Adolescent Service.

5.4 To embed and enable Trauma Informed Practice in the YOT:

The YOT has continued to develop and embed trauma-informed practice (TIP). All YOT practitioners have been trained in TIP and case formulation, starting with an intensive two day whole service training in October 2018 delivered by Beacon House. At the same time, Families, Children & Learning rolled out bespoke training to social workers and professionals working with children and young people, with the trauma informed model being promoted in the wider services as key to effective practice.

Assessments, including those completed for Out of Court Disposals and Courts Orders via AssetPlus, include a case formulation as part of the analysis of offending behaviour and desistance. This has supported practitioners in understanding the behaviour of young people through a more clinical lens and in making appropriate referrals to CAMHS and the Clinical Health Adolescent Team (CHAT).

With CHAT as consultants and/ or for direct work with young people where appropriate, YOS have used the trauma informed and AMBIT models to work effectively with young people with complex emotional and mental health needs. Whilst there is not currently specific numerical data relating to referrals and outcomes, it is evident that the engagement of young people with complex needs has improved in the past two years, given the low breach rates in YOT. Also,

relationship-based practice and engagement of young people has been highlighted in audits as a strength and area of excellent practice in YOT.

5.5 To develop more child-friendly intervention plans across the service that incorporate the good lives model, balanced with risk and safety planning:

In the past year, there has been significant work to develop child friendly plans. Firstly, the Referral Order process and paperwork have been fully reviewed, including child-friendly packs, with visual designs and child-friendly language, designed by practitioners to increase the engagement of children and young people in planning and in their Referral Order panels. Volunteers have received additional guidance and training to ensure the panel process is more child-friendly and restorative. This has led to an improvement in Referral Order contracts, including more focus on desistance activity and objectives for the young person that focus on what they can/ and want to achieve. The Good Lives model is used by practitioners to explore needs and goals with young people..

For Youth Rehabilitation Orders, a new plan format has been designed to be completed with the young person and parent, so that the young person can either write their objectives or have these written in their own words. Unfortunately completing plans face to face with young people and their parents/carers has been very challenging during COVID and lockdown and plans have had to be completed through virtual contact in many cases. Guidance and advice has been provided to staff to manage this with good practice examples being discussed in group supervision (e.g. peer support).

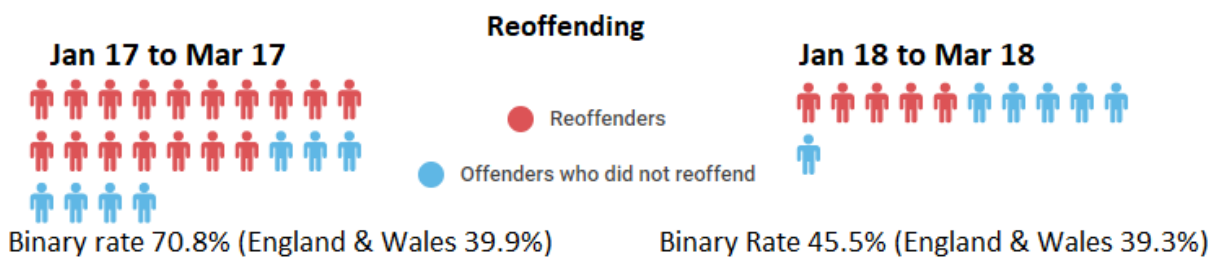
In terms of risk and safety planning, a YOT risk/safety plan was developed in 2019 as part of the Adolescent Vulnerability and Risk Meeting (AVRM) review. The YOT risk management plan (RMP) is now being used routinely for all young people being referred to the AVRM and also other cases (e.g. medium risk) where this is appropriate. The use of a separate RMP (which can include safety measures where appropriate) has enabled more a focussed and robust approach to risk management in the YOT and allows clear information sharing and multi-agency collaboration in managing risk. The RMP is shared and discussed with the young person and parent / carer as part of this process.

5.6 To deliver a more strength-based service which focuses on building resilience in young people and families

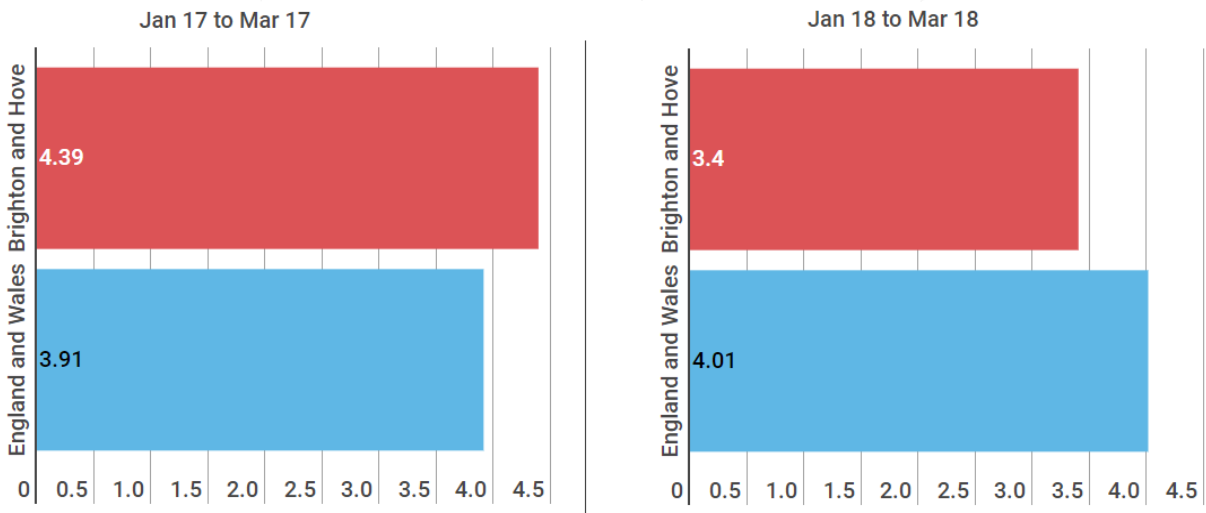
There has been a strong focus on developing a service to young people and families which emphasizes building on existing strengths and supporting desistance through positive activities, training and education. This is a key area assessed via YOT whole case audits (in line with HMIP standards) and the self-assessment for the Standards for Children & Young People in Youth Justice 2019. The results overall have been positive, with assessments, plans – and intervention in particular - showing a strong focus on encouraging young people to engage in education, training and employment, skills-based and sporting activities. For example, the use of AudioActive and projects such as Albion in the Community and WBC (boxing) projects. The YOT performed well in audits in terms of strength-based work, demonstrated in the recent Self-Assessment, which was rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' in the five areas of practice. One area of outstanding work was a pro-active approach to desistance work.

5.7 Performance Data

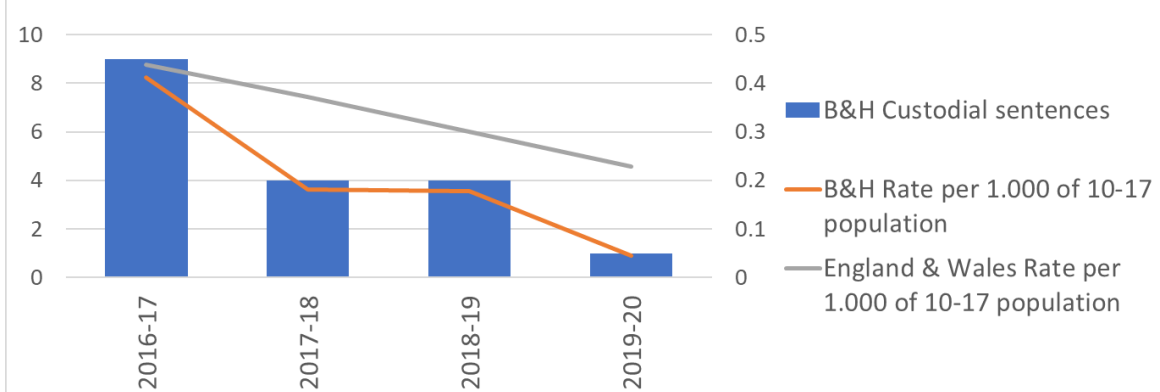
First Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice System



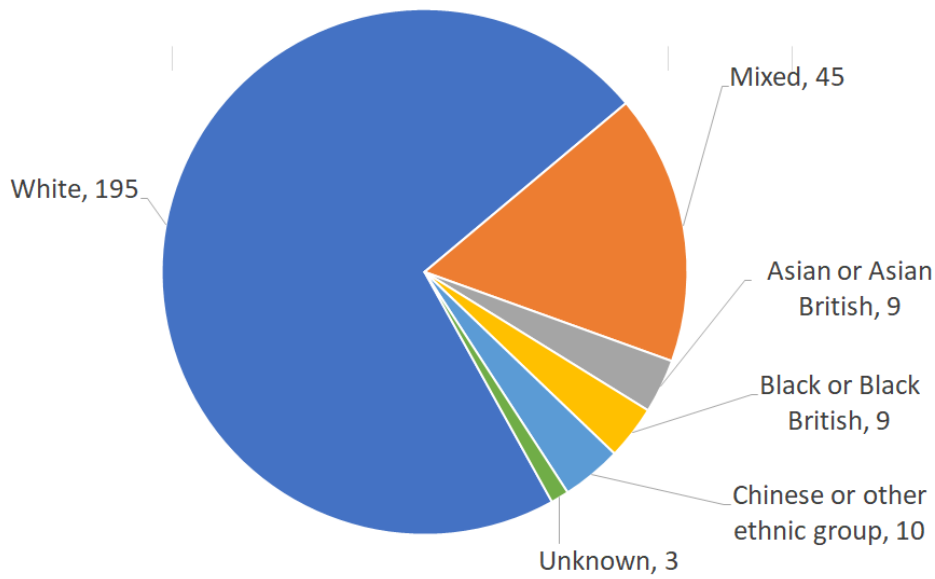
Frequency Rate (the number of reoffences per reoffender)



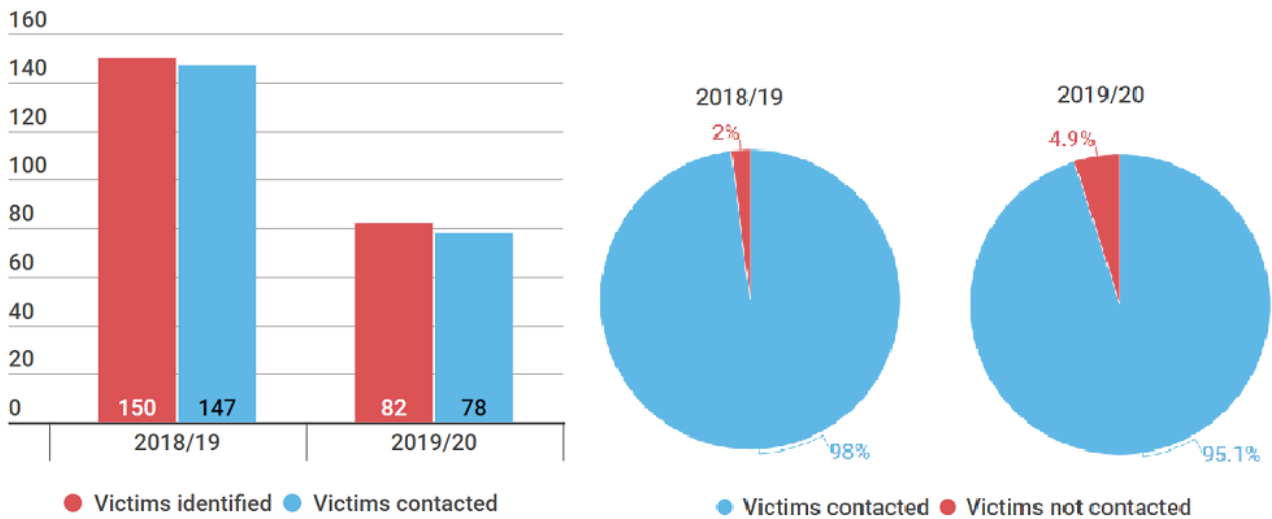
Use of Custodial Sentences



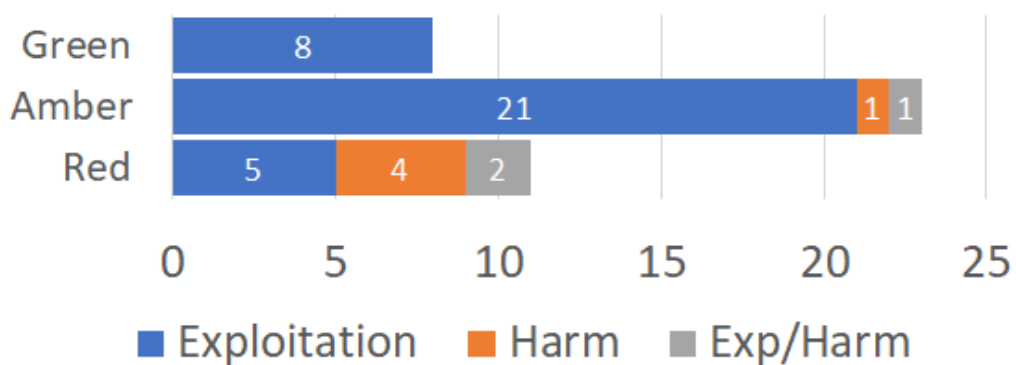
Youth Offending Service 2019-20 Caseload by Ethnicity



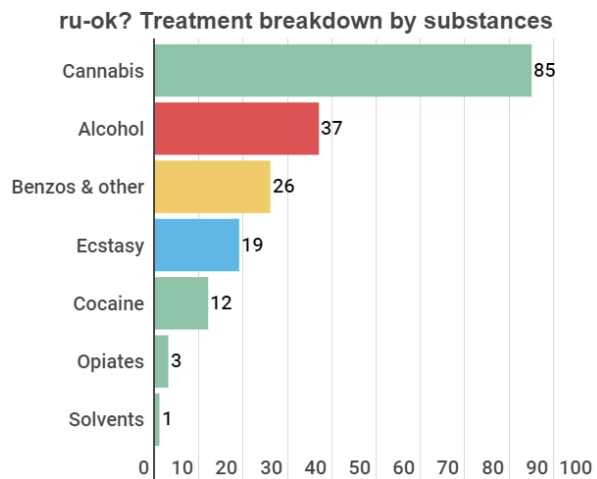
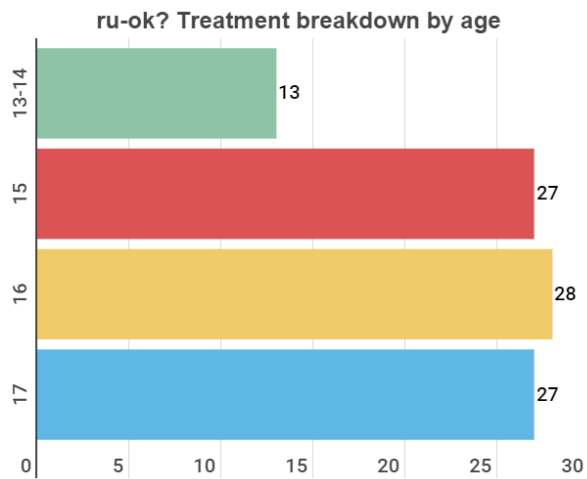
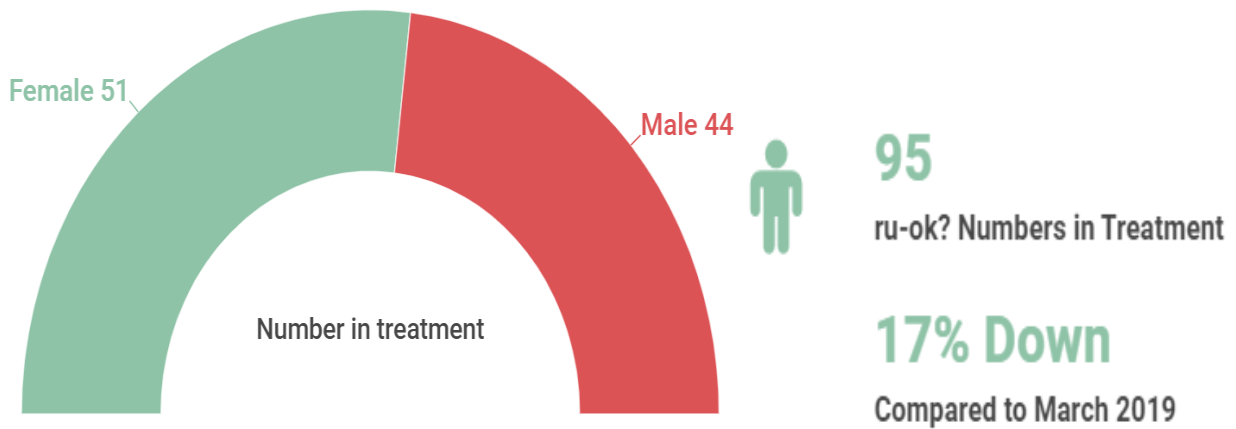
Victims contacted with an offer to take part in a restorative process



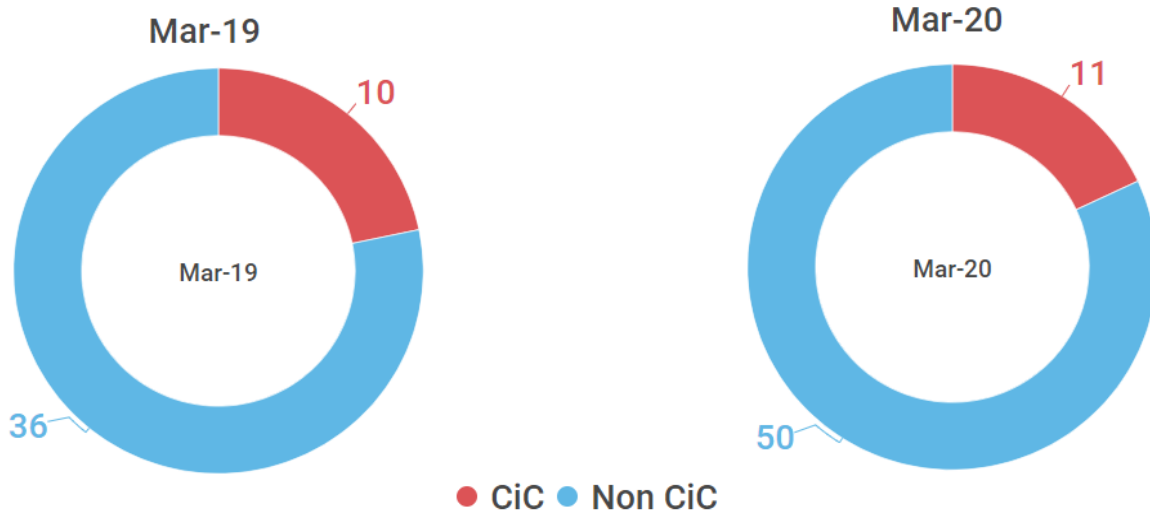
AVRM Cases



ru-ok? treatment, breakdown by gender



Number of young people on the Caseload who were Children in Care (CiC) on the last day of the quarter.



6. National Standards Self-Assessment

6.1 Overall, the YOT performed well on the self-assessment of Standards for Children & Young People in Youth Justice. The overall ratings for Strategic / Operational audits respectively were as follows:

Out of Court Disposals:	Good/ Outstanding
At Court:	Good/ Good
In the Community:	Outstanding/ Outstanding
In Secure Settings:	Good/ Outstanding
On Transition:	Requires Improvement/ Outstanding

The findings are summarised broadly below:

6.2 National Standards - Strengths:

Overall, YOT being integrated into the Adolescent Service with the structure, co-location and joined up working in the service highlighted as a strength, supporting effective work in all areas of youth justice from prevention and diversion through to community and custody work, as well as transitions between services. Specifically, the ability of YOT practitioners to build relationships and work closely with other professionals, including social workers, substance misuse workers and family therapists, from the assessment and planning stages to delivery and review. The audit highlighted good access to bespoke services for young people, supported by the structure and location of services, with in-house services, such as CAMHS and educational psychology and links to wider services for specialist support being key to a therapeutic approach.

This means that children and young people coming to the attention of Police are treated in a holistic way, with a focus on their diverse needs and abilities and there is correspondingly a strong emphasis on diversion and avoiding the unnecessary criminalisation of children. This is supported by a strong strategic adolescent partnership board with shared principles in relation to youth justice and child welfare, chaired by the Director of Children's Services.

Overall, operational practice was found to be strong, with outstanding practice in three of the five areas. Having a dedicated team of qualified and highly skilled case workers in YOT with specialist knowledge of criminal justice processes was highlighted as a strength. Recognised and approved models of practice are embedded and effectively utilised by YOT to improve outcomes, such as the relationship-based model, trauma-informed practice and desistance models. This shows intervention led by a deep understanding of young people, a therapeutic approach and focus on young people achieving their goals with practical and emotional support.

Multi-agency working was strong across YOT case management, with evidence of well co-ordinated approaches to risk and safeguarding. An example of this is the response to complex safeguarding and risk management regarding child exploitation, via the AVR. M.

The audit found a high level of management oversight and accountability, with robust quality assurance in place and regular reporting to the management board of performance outcomes.

In terms of OOC, strong partnership working was identified, with information sharing agreements which are clear and effective in identifying children and young people at an early stage when coming to notice of Police and services and preventing the majority of young people from unnecessary escalation into the criminal justice system. Early intervention offer through

universal, as well as targeted, services and clear protocols in place to divert young people from the criminal justice system by offering robust multi-agency packages of support and intervention.

In terms of court work, there is good partnership agreements in place and regular meetings with legal advisors and magistrates, with good relationships and feedback being openly discussed around court issues, reports and court processes. Regular liaison with courts, especially during COVID-19, when there have been daily court user briefings for the southeast region. Evidence of this includes positive feedback from the courts, 100 % congruency with YOT proposals since 2018 and low levels of custodial remand & sentence (significantly reduced in last three years for Brighton & Hove).

In community work, in addition to the overview above, excellent practice was highlighted in restorative practice and reparation, with a focus on developing skills and strengths, sense of achievement, and links to community (e.g. food bank projects, cooking projects, day centres, Headway clinic, Christmas cards for elderly, etc).

In Secure Settings, the overall standard of practice is high with pro-active and persistent approach by YOT workers to promote best interests of young people, including access to education and specialist support. Relationship-based model highlighted as effective in managing safety and risk, with resettlement planning with focus on desistance also being areas of strength.

6.3 National Standards - Areas for development

The key areas for development highlighted are as follows:

- Finalisation of pan-Sussex OOCB protocol and implementation of new process by police to ensure clear pathways for prevention & diversion;
- Improved partnership working and oversight via Police strategic lead attendance at management board;
- Development of bespoke services for young people at risk of or being affected by criminal exploitation and gang culture - in progress following termination of two year St.Giles Trust contract;
- Clear escalation process to be formalised between YOT & secure estate, particularly HMYOI Cookham Wood, where there have been ongoing difficulties with communication and information sharing;
- Transition process strong in practice, however YOT needs to work with National Probation Service (NPS) to ensure there is a Probation Officer in place to ensure smooth transitions to adult services;
- Service Level Agreement (SLA) with CAMHS to be agreed and written in relation to seconded staff and escalation processes;
- Deep-dive analysis of data better understand themes in youth justice, such as FTE numbers and disproportionality, e.g. with BAME focus;
- Reporting of audit outcomes and plan to the management board - to be formalised;
- Reporting to the board of more in depth case studies where appropriate to highlight issues e.g. custody case;.
- YOT manager to disseminate practice guidance aligned with Standards in all five areas to ensure clarity and consistency of practice.
- Development of user engagement and participation to inform development on operational and strategic levels (Regency Road User Group (RRUG) planning in progress);
- More consistent use of formal reviews with young people, parents/carers (e.g. YROs);
- Specific transition plans to be introduced in relevant cases.

7. Inspections

7.1 The last inspection of the YOT was a Short Quality Screening (SQS) in November 2012. We are therefore expecting and preparing for an inspection in the near future. All inspections will now include judgements and ratings about YOT governance, leadership and partnership arrangements. The quality of service will be rated using a new set of standards. The standards framework covers three domains: organisational delivery, court disposals and out of court disposals. Following the COVID-19 restrictions, HMIP are currently in the process of exploring how inspections will be conducted virtually.

7.2 Brighton & Hove Children's Services had a focused visit from Ofsted in February 2020. A range of evidence was reviewed, including case discussions with social workers, managers and parents. Inspectors looked at case records and local authority performance management and quality assurance information. The inspectors found that "vulnerable and at risk adolescents benefit from thoughtful, creative and well planned work that is focused on securing their engagement and participation. This is supported by effective multi agency teamwork. Staff listen to children and make plans with them that are informed with careful consideration of risks, for example by supporting an older adolescent under a child in need plan, while ensuring that the nature and timeliness of visits and network meetings reflect the level of risk. The child accepts this approach and it has empowered them".

8. Serious incidents

8.1 There are local arrangements in place to ensure safeguarding and public protection incidents are brought to the attention of the Adolescent Strategic Management Board. A decision will be made in relation whether a review is required and the type of review. There were no reviews required in 2019/20.

9. Structure

9.1 Youth Offending (YO) work sits within the Adolescent Service within the Social Work branch in the Families, Children and Learning Directorate within the city council. The Head of Service is accountable to the Director of Families, Children and Learning through the Assistant Director of Social Work. The Adolescent Strategic Management Board reports to the Community Safety Partnership Board, chaired by the Chief Executive of Brighton & Hove City Council, in regard to youth offending.

10. Governance

10.1 The governance arrangements for complex adolescents, which includes youth offending, is provided by the Adolescent Strategic Management Board. It oversees the local delivery of responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Chaired by the Director of Families, Children and Learning, the Board is responsible for the governance of the Service and monitors and challenges the functions and performance of the Adolescent Service and the wider partnership. The Board reports to the City Council's Children and Young People's committee/Health and Well Being Board annually on the strategic plan and quarterly to the Community Safety Partnership. The Adolescent Strategic Management Board will also report to and seek governance from the Sussex Criminal Justice Board as appropriate.

10.2 The Adolescent Board meets quarterly and is made up of partners from statutory and voluntary sector organisations. The board is made up of members who are senior representatives of their organisations and are able to make a significant contribution to the prevention and reduction of youth crime, with enough seniority and authority to be able to commit resources to address youth offending and wider youth crime agenda.

10.3 The Adolescent Board scrutinises performance and develops actions for improvement where necessary. Its purpose is also to provide clarity for partners about the scope of their role in governing the service and to maintain a good understanding of the range and quality of services delivered in Brighton & Hove. Staffing and resource issues are reviewed and the Board assists in setting the strategic direction of the service as a whole and the work around youth offending and issues relating to complex adolescents.

10.4 All key partners are represented on the Management Board and where appropriate the Board will extend its membership to other partners to ensure the progression of a specific development issue.

11. Resource and value for money

11.1 The Youth Offending element of the work funded through contributions from the statutory partner agencies in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. These are the Local Authority (including Education), the National Probation Service, the National Health Service and the Police Service. The Adolescent Service is mainly funded through the City Council, however there are elements funded by other partner agencies, such as Public Health. The total budget for the Adolescent Service is currently £2 303 400. The table below shows the percentage of funding contributions from each of the partner agencies for the year 2020/21

Source	%
BHCC	73.10
YJB	8.17
OPCC	2.86
Sussex Police	1.43
Probation	0.16
Public Health	10.25
DSG	1.35
Other	2.69

11.2 It is impossible to compare Brighton & Hove with other authorities to compare value for money as all authorities include different elements in their YOT budget, therefore we are unable to complete like for like comparisons.

12. Staffing

12.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the YOT has a workforce which is made up of professionals from a variety of agencies whose skills and experience complement the needs of our services users. Staff are recruited into all the posts

based upon their experience and expertise and their skills are developed through supervision, appraisal and training.

12.2 Regular analysis of need and review of service provision have underpinned staff training and development to ensure that partnership resources are used effectively. This will continue to be a priority and through the use of performance development plans we ensure that staff have clear direction and are enabled to further develop the skills required to respond to new youth justice legislation and the changing landscape in regard to regulation and inspection.

12.3 To ensure the quality of practice by the workforce, and as part of the workforce development plan, all staff will be supervised in line with Families, Children and Learning social work supervision policy and Performance Development Plans will be undertaken on a yearly basis with a 6 month review cycle. There is also a robust quality assurance framework in place to ensure staff are working in an effective evidence based way.

13. Partnership arrangements

13.1 There are well established and effective partnership arrangements in place within Brighton and Hove. The work of the Adolescent service relies on the support of these arrangements in order to deliver good outcomes for the complex adolescent cohort.

13.2 The Adolescent Service Model enables effective joint and partnership working across the teams. The Youth Offending Team is one of the teams within the service, though much of the work is spread across the wider service. This Service sits within the Families, Children and Learning Directorate, which promotes a good operational and strategic fit with the wider services for children, young people and their families. The YOT is also currently represented on the Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) and will continue to be included in the future developments in relation to safeguarding arrangements.

13.3 Brighton and Hove is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people, their needs and their impact on the community and to others. AVRMs (Adolescent Vulnerability and Risk Meetings) are city wide multi agency decision making forums, designed to ensure that adolescent need is holistically and robustly assessed and monitored. The purpose of the meeting is to bring together agencies with the aim of facilitating joint work to identify, share information and mitigate risk to young people who are considered to be at risk of exploitation or harm to others. The Adolescent Vulnerability and Risk Meeting, while also offering consultation will review risk plans.

13.4 There are good links between the adolescent work and the community safety agenda. There is strategic representation on the Community Safety Partnership Board and the Sussex Criminal Justice Board. There is an Exploitation and Serious Violence Action Plan in place as part of the city's Community Safety & Crime Reduction Strategy . Youth Offending and the wider Adolescent Service are well linking into this planning with the Head of Service being one of the strategic leads. The Adolescent Service is also a key partner in the Pan Sussex work in place to embed contextual safeguarding principles across the partnerships in Sussex.

13.5 Sussex received funding to set up a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in Sussex. There is a Pan Sussex Steering group, led by the Police and the PCC to oversee the development and establishment of this. A Brighton and Hove VRU has recently been set up to establish the local arrangements and direct the Brighton and Hove elements of this work. This has been jointly led by the Police, the Community Safety Team and the Adolescent Service. The activity intervention

within this arrangement has been commissioned out to Brighton Streets Project, a collaboration of Brighton voluntary sector groups delivering a targeted detached youth work based model.

13.6 The Adolescent Service is linked into the wider arrangements in Brighton & Hove to fulfil the duties involved in the Prevent agenda. The Adolescent Service is represented on both the Prevent Board and the Channel Panel. The staff team has received training on recognising the signs of radicalisation and procedures are included in the risk policy.

13.7 There continues to be strong partnerships with the Police and the Courts. There is representation on the Police Youth Oversight Board and the pan Sussex Youth Justice/Courts Agreement was reviewed in 2019.

13.8 The YOTs across Sussex continue to work closely together, working collaboratively on initiatives where appropriate. There has been work together with Sussex Police to reduce the numbers of children kept in police custody overnight. A Pan Sussex protocol has been implemented. A multi-agency scrutiny panel oversees, challenges and learn from cases in where children have been detained overnight. This has resulted in a significant reduction. There are also Pan Sussex protocols in place for the use of Appropriate Adults for children, ensuring their needs are met whilst in custody. The Sussex YOT are in the process of working with key partners to review the local protocols to reduce the criminalisation of children in care. The YOT managers also represent all of the YOT at strategic meetings and boards, for example the Head of Service in Brighton & Hove represents all of the Sussex YOT at the Sussex Criminal Justice Board and the YOT Manager in West Sussex sits on the MAPPA Strategic Board.

13.9 The Brighton & Hove Head of Service is also currently the co-chair of the national Youth Justice Sector Improvement Programme Board, working in partnership with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and Association of YOT Managers (AYM) to develop and improve sector led improvement across England and Wales.

13.10 Restorative Justice (RJ) continues to be a key component of youth offending work. RJ has found that such an approach can have a positive effect on victim satisfaction and on re-offending rates. Brighton & Hove has always seen RJ work as a priority. The service works closely with partners across the city and with the PCC and Sussex Criminal Justice Board to ensure the work of the YOT compliments the wider RJ strategy across Sussex. The YOT is represented on the Sussex Restorative Justice Partnership. The service achieved the Restorative Service Quality Marker (RSQM) in 2018 and is an accredited training provider.

13.11 There are also strong partnership arrangements with the voluntary sector. The Adolescent Service has a partnership programme with Audio Active and the Clock Tower Sanctuary funded by Youth Music to provide a music mentoring service. There is ongoing work in place to identify how we can best increase the skill set and confidence jointly between the Adolescent Service and the voluntary sector to support young people involved in gang activity or county lines. The Adolescent Service works closely with the YMCA Wise Project to support young people at risk of CSE. The Adolescent Service also works closely with and is represented on the Steering Group for the Reboot, early intervention and diversion project.

14.COVID-19

14.1 The impact of the COVID-19 has been a challenging time for the Adolescent Service and for the further developments of the work with complex adolescents. The work for this strategy started before the pandemic, and the priorities for this strategy were set by the board, without the current context. As this is a three-year strategy, the initially identified priorities for the service will

remain, however alongside this we will deliver a recovery plan which will outline how the service will continue to deliver the required service in a new and more flexible way. In 2020/21 it will not be possible to deliver on the priorities to the same extent in which we first envisaged, however with the outlined plans and the oversight of the board we are confident that we will continue to be able to deliver an effective service with good outcomes for young people.

14.2 A COVID Contingency Plan was produced at the start of the restrictions. This has worked well and the YOT and Adolescent Service have been able to deliver a service throughout this period. We are now at the stage where we have moved into the recovery phase. This plans how we move into the new normal, identifying areas of work that have worked well and that we will keep, along with ways in which we can increase the level of face to face interventions and continue to plan the future arrangements. Moving forward the service delivery will need continue to be flexible, responsive and nimble in order to quickly switch from one set of working arrangements and restrictions to another. The recovery planning will be detailed alongside the planning to meet the agreed priorities and the improvements identified through the National Standards audit, in an overall workplan. This will be a live document that will be brought quarterly to the Adolescent Strategic Management Board.

15. Risks and challenges

15.1 COVID-19 clearly brings the current most significant risk to service delivery. The Contingency and Recovery Plan will mitigate a lot of this risk by detailing how the services will continue to be delivered. The potential increase in demand for services and reduction in the resilience within families will be regularly monitored and address where possible. Where there are identified spikes and pressures on services, issues will be reported to the Adolescent Strategic Management Board for partnership support

15.2 One of the main risks to the service delivery as a result of COVID is the potential reduction of resources or cuts to the grant or budget. The resources available to the service was an identified risk prior to the additional pressure present by COVID. Despite there being very little change to the YJB grant in the previous two years, prior to this there have been significant reductions. This has resulted in a much leaner service, which means there is less resilience if further reductions are required.

15.3 The Adolescent Service, including the YOS cohort, continues to increase in complexity, vulnerability and risk. The Adolescent Service Model has helped to mitigate this risk through the key teams working closely together to manage this. The COVID restrictions have added pressure to this as it is more difficult to work as collaboratively with the majority of the workforce continuing to work mainly from home. Partnership work is also more difficult, as all partners have needed to focus on core business, and therefore there is a greater risk of silo working. Different ICT systems, resources and policies across the partnership also present challenges. This will be monitored and addressed at an operational and board level and will covered in the recovery plan.

15.4 There continues to be concerns around County Line activity in Brighton & Hove. Local children are safeguarded through the AVRMA (Adolescent Vulnerability and Risk Meeting Agenda). However, we see a number of young people for other areas arrested for related offending, often with adults. We work with other areas to ensure there is good exchange of information, and also have started some work with CPS and the Courts to ensure the information required around the children's needs and vulnerabilities is available. There has been joint training with the police and Adolescent Service on the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) process. All out of area county line related strategy meetings are now chaired through the Adolescent Service, to enable us to have a better understanding of local activity. We have seen an increase

in this since the COVID restrictions, though still relatively low numbers. This is being closely monitored.

15.5 The Adolescent Service will continue to monitor and address areas of disproportionality which can have an adverse impact on certain cohorts. Thematic reviews of BAME children and Children in Care have been taken to the Strategic Adolescent Management Board to ensure board members have a good understand of the challenges and are working together to readdress any concerns. Brighton & Hove City Council has signed up to be an anti-racist council. Work is being done within the Adolescent Service to ensure that the partnership is proactive in support this.

15.6 There will continue to be a need to closely monitor the work of the youth justice elements of the Adolescent Service and the Strategic Adolescent Board to ensure that this aspect of service delivery and cohort continue to receive appropriate attention and priority and that service delivery is not compromised through the new structure. This will be monitored by the Strategic Adolescent Board. There are robust quality assurance arrangements in place including regular case audits. A peer review was planned for June 2020 to provide some external scrutiny. This has been postponed due to the COVID restrictions.

16. Priorities 20/23

16.1 The Adolescent Strategic Board Members held a special workshop in December 2019, to set the priorities for 2020/23. The following priorities were subsequently agreed. This was prior to the COVID restrictions being put in place. The plan will continue to work towards these priorities, however in 20/21 the main focus will be the recovery plan. The board will closely monitor the progress through the work plan (Appendix 1).

16.2 The agreed priorities for 2020/23 are:

- To continue to divert the right children away from the criminal Justice System
- To gain a better understanding of why children reoffend to respond appropriately
- To continue to maintain the low number of custodial sentencing and to avoid this wherever possible
- To embed contextual safeguarding approaches in the city and ensure there is a robust multi agency response to child exploitation
- To increase service user participation
- To ensure there is a shared understanding of children and young people's substance use across the city, and there are appropriate responses in place to address the harm caused in relation to this.

17. Sign off

This plan has been agreed at the Adolescent Strategic Management Board on 28th July 2020. It is signed off by the chair on behalf of the board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah Austin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Deb Austin

Chair of the Adolescent Strategic Management Board, Interim DCS

Date 4th September 2020

