



THE LONDON BOROUGH
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DATE: 24 January 2024

To: Members of the
**CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Kira Gabbert (Chairman)

Councillor Jonathan Andrews (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Graeme Casey, Sophie Dunbar, Robert Evans, Hannah Gray,
Colin Hitchins, Alexa Michael, Ryan Thomson and Rebecca Wiffen

Church Representatives with Voting Rights
Reverend Roger Bristow and Vacant

Parent Governor Members with Voting Rights
Shamilah Martin, Vacant and Vacant

Non-Voting Co-opted Members

Rosie White, Non-School Representative (Early Years)

Alice Kirby, Bromley Youth Council (Part 1 Only)

Tommy Velvick, Bromley Youth Council (Part 1 Only)

A meeting of the Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny
Committee will be held at Bromley Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH
on **THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7.00 PM**

TASNIM SHAWKAT

Director of Corporate Services & Governance

**Paper copies of this agenda will not be provided at the meeting. Copies can
be printed off at <http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>. Any member of the public
requiring a paper copy of the agenda may request one in advance of the
meeting by contacting the Clerk to the Committee, giving 24 hours notice
before the meeting.**

**Items marked for information only will not be debated unless a member of the
Committee requests a discussion be held, in which case please inform the
Clerk 24 hours in advance indicating the aspects of the information item you
wish to discuss**

A G E N D A

PART 1 (PUBLIC) AGENDA

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contact details are shown on each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting.

STANDARD ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, members of the public may submit one question each on matters relating to the work of the Committee. Questions must have been received in writing 10 working days before the date of the meeting - by **5.00pm on Thursday 18 January 2024.**

Questions seeking clarification of the details of a report on the agenda may be accepted within two working days of the normal publication date of the agenda – by **5.00pm on Friday 26 January 2024.**

a QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

b QUESTIONS FOR THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

4 MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2023 (Pages 5 - 16)

5 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 17 - 22)

HOLDING THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO ACCOUNT

6 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

7 OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Pages 23 - 42)

8 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF DECISIONS FOR THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

a 2024/25 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) (Pages 43 - 62)

9 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS

- a **CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25** (Pages 63 - 84)
- b **CEF RISK REGISTER 2023/24** (Pages 85 - 90)
- c **PERFORMANCE REPORTING - CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY DATASET PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT** (Pages 91 - 98)
- d **DEEP DIVE: YOUTH SUPPORT AND NEET** (Pages 99 - 112)

10 CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES INFORMATION ITEMS

The briefing comprises:

- Contracts Activity Report

This briefing is circulated for information only, but issues can be debated at the meeting at the request of any member of the Committee. Such requests should be made to the Democratic Services Officer at least 24 hours before the meeting and should set out which aspects of the information briefing need to be discussed.

Members have been provided with advance copies of the briefing via e-mail. The briefing is also available on the Council's Website at the following link:
<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=559&Year=0>

Printed copies of the briefing are available on request by contacting the Democratic Services Officer.

PART 2 (CLOSED) AGENDA

11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

The Chairman to move that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

Items of Business

Schedule 12A Description

- 12 **EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2023**
(Pages 113 - 114)

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

13 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS PART 2 (EXEMPT)

**a PERFORMANCE REPORTING –
CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY DATASET PART
2 (EXEMPT) REPORT (Pages 115 - 122)**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

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CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 22 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Kira Gabbert (Chairman)
Councillor Jonathan Andrews (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Graeme Casey, Sophie Dunbar,
Simon Fawthrop, Hannah Gray, Colin Hitchins,
Ruth McGregor, Alexa Michael and Rebecca Wiffen

Shamilah Martin
Alice Kirby and Tommy Velvick (Part 1 only)

Also Present:

Councillor Kate Lymer, Portfolio Holder for Children,
Education and Families
Reverend Roger Bristow (observing)

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Robert Evans and Ryan Thomson and Councillors Simon Fawthrop and Ruth McGregor attended as their respective substitutes. Apologies for absence were also received from Rosie White.

Apologies for lateness were received from Reverend Roger Bristow.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Sophie Dunbar declared that she had a close family member in receipt of transport services and a Special Educational Needs-funded placement out of the Borough. She also declared that she was a Ward Councillor for Biggin Hill with respect to Items 8a/13a: Award of Contract for Capital Works at Oaklands Primary Academy.

28 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions were received.

29 MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

30 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME Report CSD23136

The report set out progress against outstanding actions from previous meetings and the forward work programme of the Committee.

A Member suggested that a future Deep Dive be undertaken on the first destinations of 16- and 18-year-old school leavers in the Borough, including those being educated at home and this was supported by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

31 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families provided an update to the Committee on her activities.

As Lead Member for Children, Education and Families, the Portfolio Holder continued to represent the Local Authority in a range of settings both locally and regionally and had recently visited Bromley's Early Years team to learn more about the support strategy overseeing the quality of 500+ Early Years Providers in Bromley. Ofsted had inspected Children's Services in November 2023 and the Portfolio Holder was pleased to advise that initial feedback had been positive with the official report due to be published on 12 January 2024. The inaugural Bromley SEND Stars Event had taken place in early November and had been a great success with over 90 nominations received for eight awards. Upcoming events included the official re-launch of the Streetwise Youth Centre on 24 November 2023 and Disability Pride in Bromley Town Centre on 25 November 2023 and Members were encouraged to attend both celebrations.

The Portfolio Holder introduced the Director of Children, Education and Families who made a statement regarding two rulings by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in relation to the way that the Local Authority had applied the law in relation to children that were out of school for more than 15 days:

I am now setting out the challenges we have recently had from the Ombudsman.

On two recent occasions the Ombudsman has taken the view that we have not correctly adhered to our Section 19 duties in relation to providing suitable alternative education when children are out of school for more than 15 days. Having reviewed the challenge from the Ombudsman, it does appear that our own guidance is at fault and has been wrong for a number of years.

In essence we have been insisting on parents providing medical evidence before we provide alternative education outside of school. Guidance on how to apply the legislation makes it clear that it is reasonable to ask for medical

evidence, but crucially it cannot be insisted upon. The legislation goes further to state that the council has a duty to provide education where for medical reasons or otherwise, a child has missed 15 days of school. The broad nature of the term 'otherwise' means that the council's duty extends to support children unable to attend school regardless of whether medical evidence is available to that effect. As a result of this incorrect interpretation, the Ombudsman is insisting that we share this concern with members and provide confirmation that we have done so. On this basis can I suggest that we undertake the following actions;

- We highlight the concerns in the Portfolio Plan to show that this is something we have highlighted to this Committee, and that the Portfolio Holder, myself and the Director of Education will now track to ensure that the required changes are taken forward and embedded in practice, procedures and decision making;*
- We have amended our interpretation of the legislation so that it conforms with that set out by the Ombudsman; and,*
- We have already undertaken additional legal training undertaken by a barrister with staff so that all those involved in these decisions have a correct understanding of the legislation and that this is reflected in future practice.*

In response to questions from Members, the Director: Children, Education and Families clarified that going forward, the Local Authority's first priority would be to identify alternative education provision for affected children although medical evidence would continue to be sought, particularly in relation to identifying individual support and learning needs. The cost implication of the two rulings would include a remediation payment for each term the child was out of education. This payment level was set by the Ombudsman and further details on the total cost of the two rulings would be provided to Committee Members following the meeting. The Director of Education added that a number of local authorities had raised concerns regarding the Ombudsman's application of Section 19 duties, particularly as the number of children experiencing social and mental health needs affecting their engagement in education was increasing and in light of the difficulties with providing appropriate alternative provision without an assessment of the child or young person's medical needs. A Member queried whether the 15-day period was reset if a child or young person was able to attend school for a few hours and the Director of Education explained that the expectation of the Ombudsman was that every child and young person had an entitlement to a full-time education but that engaging with a small amount of provision would likely be viewed as a positive step towards re-integrating that child into full-time education.

In summation, the Chairman acknowledged that the Local Authority had changed its ways of working to reflect the rulings of the Ombudsman. The Chairman also led the Committee in thanking Officers for their hard work in preparing for and supporting the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services.

22 November 2023

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

**A CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO PLAN -
2023/24 Q2 UPDATE
Report CEF23052**

The report presented the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan Quarter 2 update for the 2023/24 financial year.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Service Strategy & Performance (Children & Education) clarified that as of 30 September 2023, 67% of eligible children were accessing funded early education and childcare places for 2-year-olds. Whilst this was slightly below national performance, it compared well with other London Boroughs and extensive work would continue to be undertaken to engage eligible Bromley families with this offer. Another Member asked whether sufficient provision was in place if all eligible families decided to take up the offer and the Director of Education advised that whilst availability of places varied across the Borough, recent sufficiency works indicated that there were adequate places to meet anticipated demand. Another Member asked about Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and it was confirmed that there were no Looked After Children currently awaiting CAMHS assessments or interventions.

RESOLVED: That progress on actions associated with the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan be noted.

**32 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF DECISIONS FOR THE CHILDREN,
EDUCATION & FAMILIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

The Committee considered the following reports where the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Holder was recommended to take a decision:

**A BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24
Report CEF23055**

The report presented the budget monitoring position for the 2023/24 financial year which showed a projected overspend of £6,612,000 forecast on the controllable budget based on activity to 30 September 2023.

The Head of Children, Education and Families Finance outlined a number of factors contributing to the overspend including the increasing level of demand and delivery costs in a number of areas including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport, special education provision and high needs placements in Children's Social Care. A Member stressed the importance of innovation in addressing these pressures, including expediting any existing proposals within the Transformation Programme that could help manage costs going forward. Another Member queried the escalation in the cost of high needs placements in Children's Social Care and was advised that

placements in this area were increasingly expensive as local authorities competed to secure the limited available places for a rising number of young people with specialist needs. The Director of Children, Education and Families confirmed that work was undertaken across all services to reduce costs and maximise efficiency. This included the recent optimization of SEND transport routes alongside the use of personal budgets and travel training which had helped mitigate a recent increase in demand as well as enabling a number of Bromley's children and young people to benefit from increased travel independence. Other workstreams included participation in a Pan London Vehicle to develop a secure children's home for London and forward-thinking recruitment practices to maximise the proportion of permanent Children's Social Care staff, including overseas recruitment.

Moving forward, a key focus would be placed on innovative practice across all services and could include looking at ways to increase the number of in-Borough placements for young people at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation and exploring the potential for the Local Authority to establish its own specialist facilities, such as children's homes where a viable business case could be made. A Member suggested that the possibility of establishing an in-house SEND Transport service be revisited in light of the recent increase in demand and inflationary costs.

RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) Note the latest projected overspend of £6,612,000 forecast on the controllable budget based on information as at September 2023; and,**
- 2) Recommend the Council's Executive agree the release of funds from the Central Contingency as set out in Section 5 of Report CEF23055.**

**B CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - QUARTER 2 2023/24
Report CEF23056**

The report presented the capital monitoring position for Quarter 2 of the 2023/24 financial year and the revised capital programme for the four-year period 2023/24 to 2027/28.

The Chairman observed that £19,076k had been moved into the Portfolio's approved capital programme to fund capital works arising from the Operational Property Review for services that fell within the Children, Education and Families Portfolio.

RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to note the current position in respect of capital expenditure and receipts following Quarter 2 of the 2023/24 financial year and the proposed revised capital programme for the four-year period 2023/24 to 2027/28 to be reported to the Council's Executive on 29 November 2023.

33 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS

A AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CAPITAL WORKS AT OAKLANDS PRIMARY ACADEMY PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT Report CEF23063A

The report sought approval from the Council's Executive to award a contract for the construction of classroom and ancillary accommodation at Oaklands Primary Academy for a new additionally resourced provision for children with Education Health and Care Plans.

The Head of Strategic Place Planning advised that this scheme was part of a wider expansion of specialist education places across the Borough and would provide 30 additional places for children with Education, Health and Care Plans in the Biggin Hill area.

RESOLVED: That the Council's Executive be recommended to agree the award of contract for capital works at Oaklands Primary Academy.

B CASTLECOMBE YOUTH CENTRE AND MOTTINGHAM COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE Report CEF23064

The report sought approval from the Council's Executive to co-locate the Mottingham Community Support Centre with the Castlecombe Youth Centre and to proceed to procurement for the planned refurbishment of this site to make it fit for purpose for both services. The report was also considered by the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee at its meeting on 15 November 2023 and the recommendations had been supported.

In discussion, Members expressed support for the proposed co-location. A Member noted that an additional community organisation had expressed interest in co-locating on the Castlecombe Youth Centre site and the Assistant Director: Culture and Regeneration confirmed that work was being undertaken to identify whether this would be feasible.

RESOLVED: That the Council's Executive be recommended to:

- 1) Agree to the relocation of the Mottingham Community Support Centre to be co-located with Castlecombe Youth Centre;**
- 2) Note that up to £1.153m of the Operational Property Review budget be used for the repair and remodelling works for Castlecombe Youth Centre to make the site fit for purpose for both services;**
- 3) Agree to proceed to procurement for the works contract at an estimated value of £1.038m as set out in paragraphs 3.18 to 3.21**

of Report HPR2023/064, with delegated authority to the Director: Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration to determine the detailed procurement strategy; and,

- 4) Delegate authority to the Director of Corporate Services and Governance to enter into and manage legal matters relating to these works to allow works to progress.

34 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS

A YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE ANNUAL UPDATE Report CEF23060

The report provided the annual update on the work of the Bromley Youth Justice Service, including performance and work to address offending.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Youth Justice and Youth Services confirmed that the Youth Justice Service undertook a range of work with the parents and carers of service users including a parenting assessment and the provision of additional support where needed.

RESOLVED: That the annual update be noted.

B BROMLEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 Report CEF23057

The report set out the activity of Bromley Safeguarding Children's Partnership (BSCP) for the 2022/23 financial year. It was a statutory requirement for safeguarding partnerships to publish an annual report under *Working Together 2018*. In line with statutory guidance and best practice, the report would also be submitted to the Chief Executive; the Lead Member and Director for Children's Services; the Chairs of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safer Bromley Partnership Board; the Independent Chair of the Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board; Bromley Youth Council; the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime; the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the *What Works Centre for Children's Social Care*.

The Chairman led Members in welcoming what was a comprehensive report. A Member queried whether larger reports should be provided to the Committee in electronic format in future and this would be considered as part of wider conversations around the Local Authority's move towards paper-light working.

RESOLVED: That the annual report be noted, including the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership's focus on coordinating the safeguarding work of agencies and ensuring this work is effective.

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**C INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT
2022/23
Report CEF23058**

The report set out the activity of the Independent Reviewing Service for the 2022/23 financial year and evaluated the effectiveness of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service in ensuring the Local Authority discharged its statutory responsibilities as a Corporate Parent towards Looked After Children.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Service Quality Improvement confirmed that Independent Reviewing Officers primarily focused on ensuring the Local Authority discharged its statutory responsibilities as a Corporate Parent towards Looked After Children but also served as the Chairpersons of Child Protection Conferences and contributed to quality assurance work within Children's Social Care.

RESOLVED: That the progress and actions of the Independent Reviewing Officers in discharging their statutory duties and contributing to the aims of the Corporate Parenting Strategy for the 2022/23 financial year be noted.

**D LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT
2022/23
Report CEF23059**

The report provided an overview of the activity of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for the 2022/23 financial year in managing allegations against people who worked or volunteered with children and were therefore in a position of trust.

The Head of Service Quality Improvement outlined a range of work that had been undertaken over the past year to increase the awareness of the LADO service including a twilight training programme for the Early Years Sector which had increased referrals from this area. Going forward, it was planned to engage more with the voluntary sector and faith groups working with children and this was anticipated to provide assurance for both children and those who worked or volunteered with children moving forward. The Chairman queried the number of complaints outstanding for significant periods and the Head of Service Quality Improvement explained that the majority of long-term ongoing cases were more complicated and often had police involvement for which additional time was needed to investigate and prepare cases for consideration by the Crown Prosecution Service. In considering the reasons for referral for complex cases, the Vice-Chairman observed that some complaints could fall within two or more Department for Education data collation descriptors, and it was requested that secondary reasons for referrals be captured in future data collection where appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the annual update be noted.

**E CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES RISK REGISTER -
UPDATE QUARTER 2 - 2023/2024
Report CEF23054**

The report set out the Children, Education and Families Risk Register update for Quarter 2 of the 2023/24 financial year.

The Chairman underlined that the highest rated risk within the Risk Register was 'Failure to delivery Children's Services Financial Strategy'. This had been discussed at length earlier in the meeting and would continue to be an area of key focus for the Committee alongside the other identified risks. A Member suggested that consideration be given to how the Risk Register was presented to the Committee as some committees alternated between considering a detailed report on the highest rated risks and the full contracts register.

RESOLVED: That the current Children, Education and Families Risk Register and the existing controls in place to mitigate the risks be noted.

**F PERFORMANCE REPORTING - CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY
DATASET PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT
Report CEF23053A**

The report presented a regular update on the performance of services for children across a suite of performance measures.

The Vice-Chairman welcomed the continued improvement in performance for the number of Education, Health and Care Plans issued within the statutory 20-week timescale. The Assistant Director: Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation advised that whilst overall performance for the 2023 calendar year was below expectations, this was improving month-on-month and reflected the excellent work of the team in clearing the backlog and improving performance as well as the increasing numbers of children and young people able to access services via the graduated offer.

RESOLVED: That the September 2023 outturn of key performance indicators and associated management commentary be noted.

**G CONTRACTS REGISTER PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT
Report CEF23062A**

The Committee considered a report setting out the Contract Register for the Children, Education and Families Portfolio.

The Commissioning Support Officer advised the Committee that as of the current date, all contracts were RAG-rated as 'Green'. The Chairman was pleased to note that a commentary had been included in the Part 2 (Exempt) Contracts Register to provide further information regarding specific contracts

22 November 2023

and requested that a short commentary also be included in the Part 1 (Public) report where possible.

RESOLVED: That Members' comments on the Contracts Register as at 30 August 2023 be noted.

35 CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES INFORMATION ITEMS

The items comprised:

- Annual Complaints Report and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Letter 2022/23

RESOLVED: That Information Items be noted.

36 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it was likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

The following summaries
refer to matters involving exempt information

37 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Part 2 (Exempt) minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

38 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF PART 2 (EXEMPT) EXECUTIVE REPORTS

A AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CAPITAL WORKS AT OAKLANDS PRIMARY ACADEMY PART 2 (EXEMPT) REPORT

The Committee considered a Part 2 (Exempt) report on the award of contract for capital works at Oaklands Primary Academy.

39 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS PART 2 (EXEMPT)

**A PERFORMANCE REPORTING - CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY
DATASET PART 2 (EXEMPT) REPORT**

The Committee considered a report setting out Part 2 (Exempt) aspects of performance reporting against the Children's Scrutiny Dataset.

B CONTRACTS REGISTER PART 2 (EXEMPT) REPORT

The Committee considered a report setting out Part 2 (Exempt) aspects of the Contract Register for the Children, Education and Families Portfolio.

The Meeting ended at 8.52 pm

Chairman

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Report No.
CSD24014

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: CHILDREN EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 1 February 2024

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND FORWARD WORK
PROGRAMME

Contact Officer: Kerry Nicholls, Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 020 8461 7840 E-mail: Kerry.Nicholls@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Corporate Services and Governance

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for decision/report and options

1.1 This report deals with the Committee's business management including:

- Monitoring progress against actions arising from previous meetings; and
- Developing the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 That PDS Committee reviews and comments on:

1. Progress on matters arising from previous meetings; and
2. The Committee's Forward Work Programme, indicating any changes or particular issues that it wishes to scrutinise for the year ahead.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: None
-

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate): Not Applicable
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Democratic Services
 4. Total current budget for this head: £366k
 5. Source of funding: Revenue Budget
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 6
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: Non-Executive reports are not subject to call-in
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
-

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
-

Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
-

Impact on the Local Economy

1. Summary of Local Economy Implications: Not Applicable
-

Impact on Health and Wellbeing

1. Summary of Health and Wellbeing Implications: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): This report is intended primarily for the benefit of Committee Members.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

Matters Outstanding from Previous Meetings

- 3.1. **Appendix 1** provides a progress update on requests made by the Committee at previous meetings. This list is checked after each meeting so that any outstanding issues can be addressed at an early stage and timely progress made.

Work Programme

- 3.2 Each PDS Committee determines its own work programme, balancing the roles of (i) pre-decision scrutiny and holding the Executive to account, (ii) policy development and review and (iii) external scrutiny. E&R PDS Committee has the additional role of providing a lead on scrutiny issues and co-ordinating PDS work.
- 3.3 PDS Committees need to prioritise their key issues. The work programme also needs to allow room for items that arise through the year, including Member requests, call-ins and referrals from other Committees. Committees need to ensure that their workloads are realistic and balanced, allowing sufficient time for important issues to be properly scrutinised. Members also need to consider the most appropriate means to pursue each issue – the current overview and scrutiny arrangements offer a variety of approaches, whether through a report to a meeting, a time-limited working group review, a presentation, a select committee style meeting focused on a single key issue, or another method.
- 3.4 The Committee may wish to consider establishing Task and Finish Groups for specific focused policy development work.
- 3.5 **Appendix 2** sets out the Education, Children and Families PDS Committee Work Programme for 2023/24. The Committee is invited to comment on the proposed schedule and suggest any changes it considers appropriate.
- 3.6 Other reports will be added to the Forward Work Programme as items arise.

Non-Applicable Headings:	Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children, Transformation/Policy/Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Property/Carbon Reduction/Social Value Implications, Impact on the Local Economy/Health and Wellbeing/Customer, Ward Councillor Views
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Minutes of previous meetings

MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minute Number/ Title/ Date	Action/PDS Request	Update	Action by	Expected Completion Date
30: Matters Outstanding and Forward Work Programme (22 November 2023)	Deep Dive on First Destinations of 16- and 18-year-old school leavers, including those educated at home to be added to the Forward Work Programme.	Provisionally scheduled in the Forward Work Programme for June 2024.	Director of Education.	June 2024
31. Portfolio Holder Update (22 November 2023)	Details of payments made with respect to the rulings of the Ombudsman to be provided to the Committee.	To be provided when available.	Director: CEF	February 2024
34b: Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report (22 November 2023)	Committee Members to be canvassed regarding agenda format (hard copy vs e-copy)	All Councillors were canvassed regarding their preferred agenda format (including paperless) at the start of 2024.	Clerk	Completed.
34d: LADO Annual 'Report (22 November 2023)	Secondary reasons for referral to be captured in future reporting.	To be included in future reporting.	Head of Service Quality Improvement	Completed.
34g: Contracts Register (22 November 2023)	Brief commentary on specific contracts to be included in Part 1 (Public) update where appropriate.	To be included in future reporting.	Head of Service: Complex and Long-Term Commissioning	Completed.

Children, Education & Families Work Programme 2023/24

Children, Education & Families PDS Committee	20 March 2024
Item	Status
Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan Update	Holding PH to Account
Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 Q3	PH Decision
Budget Monitoring	PH Decision
Award of Contract for Capital Works at Red Hill Primary School	Exec Decision
Basic Need Capital Programme Update	Exec Decision
Virtual School Annual Report	PDS Item
Performance Management 2023/24 (Parts 1 and 2)	PDS Item
Education Outcomes	PDS Item
Bromley Youth Council End of Year Report (BYC Representatives to present with Danie Gibbs support)	PDS Item
Risk Register	PDS Item
Deep Dive: Supporting Vulnerable or Disadvantaged Young People to transition from Education into Employment	PDS Item
Children, Education & Families PDS Committee	June 2024
Item	Status
Deep Dive: First Destinations of 16- and 18-year-old school leavers, including those educated at home	PDS Item

*Items in italics are tentative

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Report No.
ECHS19017

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE

Date: 17 January 2024

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Contact Officer: Richard Baldwin , Director of Children's Services

Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director of Children's Services

Ward: All wards

1. Reason for report

1.1 On 6th November 2023, Ofsted inspectors notified the London Borough of Bromley to complete a one week ILACS inspection of children's social care services in Bromley. A team of seven inspectors reviewed the effectiveness of services for children in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers. The inspectors also judged the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families and evaluated the overall effectiveness of children's services in Bromley. The inspection team gave a feedback presentation on Friday 17th November.

1.2 On 12th January 2024, the Ofsted inspection report was published and formally outlined the following awarded judgments:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children in care	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of Care Leavers	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding

1.3 This report provides Members with:

- A summary of the key feedback for each judgment area and any identified areas for improvement
 - The next steps for the completion of an improvement plan to address the recommendations identified in the report
-

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Executive and Children, Education and Families PDS Committee are asked to:

- i) Note the findings of the Ofsted report and the outlined plan to address the recommendation identified in the report.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact:
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Excellent Council Safe Bromley Supporting Independence
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Non-Recurring Cost
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head: £
 5. Source of funding:
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional):
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications:
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The previous inspection of Children’s services was undertaken in November 2018 and provided an overall grade of “Good” with “Outstanding” leadership. This outcome was a significant achievement given the judgement of “Inadequate” that had been received in 2016. On this basis, the judgement of “Outstanding” in all areas allows LB Bromley to have completed the improvement journey over the past 7 seven years.
- 3.2 During the first (off site) week of inspection, the Council provided the inspection team with a comprehensive evidence library of local and multi-agency policies and procedures. The Council also produced the relevant performance management and data information to meet the Annex A requirements, comprising the 11 lists of child-level data and the Children’s Services Analysis Tool (ChAT), which provided a summary of key performance indicators. This evidence library also included the Council’s Self-Evaluation, which formed the basis of the Council’s annual conversation with Ofsted in October 2018. This suite of documents enabled the Ofsted inspection team to generate key lines of enquiry for review during the inspection and to inform the timetable for the two weeks on site. During this week, the lead inspector also spoke to key leadership figures in the local authority and across multi-agency partners.
- 3.3 Over the course of the inspection, inspectors reviewed the following service areas:
- Early Help
 - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
 - Atlas
 - Emergency Duty Team
 - Referral and Assessment (RAS)
 - Safeguarding and Care Planning – East and West Teams
 - Services for electively home educated children and children missing education
 - Court Team
 - Children in care
 - Virtual school (educational services for children in care)
 - Care leavers
 - Quality assurance
- 3.4 In accordance with the ILACS inspection methodology, the focus of the inspection was case-based, with inspectors predominantly discussing cases with frontline social workers and practitioners, including practice observation and attending professional meetings. Inspectors also met with children and young people, foster carers and adoptive families.
- 3.5 Regular ‘keeping in touch’ (KIT) meetings were held with the senior management team to provide feedback, raise queries for further information or to update the daily timetable.
- 3.6 On 17th November, the Inspectors gave their final feedback presentation. Bromley were formally awarded the following judgments in the published inspection report on 12th January 2024:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children in care	Outstanding

The experiences and progress of care leavers	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding

3.7 The report highlighted that children receive “exceptionally strong services” and the Council has “continued to strengthen and further enhance practice since the previous inspection”. This has been driven by a highly experienced senior leadership team and strong corporate support from members. The report notes that ... “Impressive strategic and operational leadership, allied with strong corporate and political commitment, has led to a shared vision and momentum for Children’s Services.”

3.8 Children who need help and protection receive high-quality help and support. Early help and family support services are highly effective. Workers are skilled and effective, ensuring that children are at the heart of assessments and plans. This leads to dynamic and proportionate plans, and interventions that improve outcomes.

3.9 There was only one area that Ofsted identified for improvement:

- The continued strengthening of practice for children experiencing increasing risks that may lead to the pre-proceedings stage of the public law outline.

3.10 Key findings in each judgment area

For each judgment, Ofsted provided detailed findings that are summarised as below:

3.11 **The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection are Outstanding**

- Services were described as “Impressive” and that services were provided at the right time with experienced and skilful practitioners.
- There is a good level of inter-agency working with good levels of integration.
- Managers have “meticulous” oversight of work and provide detailed, specific directions.
- Social Workers undertake high-quality, analytical and thoughtful assessments. Social workers in the Disabled Children’s Service respond effectively to children’s complex needs and vulnerabilities. Direct work is creative.

3.12 **The experiences and progress of children in care are Outstanding**

- Children in the care of Bromley receive excellent support and make good progress in their lives. Social Workers have caseloads that enable them to spend time with children and build trusting relationships.
- Decisions for children to come into care are appropriate and based on an accurate assessment of the risks they face. Extensive efforts are made to keep children safely within their families.
- Senior leaders, team managers and frontline workers fully understand children’s need for permanence.
- Children care plans are comprehensive.
- Bromley’s Living in Care Council many opportunities to represent their views and they feel their views are heard.

3.13 The Experiences and Progress of Care Leavers is Outstanding

- Care leavers benefit from compassionate and sensitive staff, who are thoughtful and help them achieve their potential. They celebrate care leavers achievements big and small and build their confidence.
- Staff have manageable caseloads that enable them to undertake meaningful work with care-leavers. They advocate strongly on their behalf.
- Bromley's "Our House" provides opportunities for care leavers to meet with their peers, YPA's and partner agencies who offer advice about finances and housing options
- Bromley's local offer for care leavers is a strength. Children's services have a very strong relationship with housing services.
- Comprehensive pathway plans are co-produced with care-leavers

3.14 The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families is Outstanding.

- The report states that.... "Children in Bromley benefit from effective, high-quality services secured by a stable leadership team with a shared and ambitious vision for their future. From a strong starting position at the inspection in 2018, the quality and impact of practice have been maintained and built upon. Reaching this level of consistency across children's services is an impressive achievement. "
- Partners view the Local Authority as child-centred and responsive.
- Children's services benefit from strong political support and a commitment that is evident in the council's financial investment and growth in services for vulnerable children.
- Innovative and creative services are helping children make progress and to achieve a greater level of wellbeing.
- Management oversight of children's progress is exceptionally strong and highly consistent across the service. This is supplemented by regular, high quality supervision and practice reflection sessions.
- Social workers light up when talking about their children.
- Staff enjoy working for Bromley. They speak of highly visible and responsive leadership team and praise their operational managers, heads of practice, assistant directors and other leaders. They know their leaders, they appreciate their leaders and they feel appreciated in return. Bromley's chosen relational model is echoed in internal relationships. It is important to note the sense of care and kindness that inspectors found exists for staff.

3.15 IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

The publication of the Ofsted inspection report has demonstrated at a local and national level that the Council is able to effectively safeguard children and young people in the borough, acting as a committed corporate parent and striving to improve their outcomes.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The achievement of the Ofsted inspection outcome is in line with the key strategic priorities and values of Building a Better Bromley

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council remains committed to maintaining a stable and skilled workforce with the capacity to deliver effective social work practice and sustain the Ofsted inspection outcome. The 'Bromley Promise' will remain as a crucial element of the Council's workforce recruitment and retention strategy.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal and Procurement implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Appendix 1 – London Borough of Bromley Inspection of Children's Social Care Services November 2023

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Inspection of Bromley local authority children's services

Inspection dates: 13 to 17 November 2023

Lead inspector: Claire Beckingham, His Majesty's Inspector

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children in care	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of care leavers	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding

Children in the London Borough of Bromley receive exceptionally strong services. Leaders have continued to strengthen and further enhance practice since the previous inspection in 2018. Impressive strategic and operational leadership, allied with strong corporate and political commitment, has led to a shared vision and momentum for children's services. This has gained the confidence and commitment of key partners, and there is a real appetite for shared solutions in the delivery of services.

Senior leaders regularly and meaningfully engage with children, families and partners. Participation and feedback, a strong performance information infrastructure and a well-established and extensive audit programme underpin service delivery and enable leaders to maintain a clear line of sight over children's experiences. Leaders have an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses. They have fully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection, turning these now into areas of strength. They know where to focus their attention and have plans already in place to continue to improve practice.

What needs to improve?

- The continued strengthening of practice for children experiencing increasing risks that may lead to the pre-proceedings stage of the public law outline.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: outstanding

1. Impressive family help services intervene at the right time to improve children's circumstances. Experienced and skilful early help practitioners confidently assess need and empower families to improve their relationships and lives. Excellent early help services are carefully targeted to help families with a wide range of needs. Parental consent and the thresholds for intervention are well understood by practitioners and partners. Help is offered at the least intrusive level.
2. The children and families hub is highly effective. Working as an integrated multi-agency team, professionals share information appropriately and accurately assess the help that families need. Managers have meticulous oversight of work coming into the hub and provide detailed, specific directions. Responses are child-centred and prompt and focus on what needs to happen to reduce risks. The quality of referrals from education, police and healthcare professionals is strong, reflecting the quality of joint working in the borough.
3. The emergency duty service provides an effective and timely response and communicates well with day services.
4. When there are contacts about domestic abuse, practitioners incorporate current and historical information into their assessments. Independent domestic abuse advisers provide an impressive amount of information about previous support offered to families. Their expertise, and their understanding of the severity, frequency and impact of domestic abuse, enable the provision of timely, effective support to families in order to safeguard children.
5. Social workers undertake very high-quality, analytical and thoughtful assessments. They thoroughly address family functioning and clearly articulate risks, vulnerabilities and strengths. Children do not have to wait for assessments to be completed to receive the services they need. Social workers undertake safety planning at the earliest opportunity to enable children to be protected from harm. Interim arrangements are agreed with partner agencies, parents, and, where appropriate, children themselves, empowering families to participate in plans about their lives. Issues relating to diversity and culture are well understood. Social workers demonstrate great curiosity about families' worlds and use the knowledge they gain to inform the next steps.
6. Social workers are successful in helping children and are compassionate in their work with parents. Children are seen regularly and alone, and their views are captured through skilled and sensitive direct work. Children phone, text and

email their social workers. They are encouraged to participate actively in plans for their well-being and safety. Sensitive intervention aids positive working relationships between professional and family networks, helping to safeguard children.

7. Professionals take appropriate action when risks to children increase. Strategy meetings are well attended by relevant partners, whose thoroughly recorded contributions inform risk assessment and the next steps. In most cases, strategy meetings are timely, and actions are prompt and decisive to keep children safer. When children become subject to child protection plans, regular core group meetings are well attended by multi-agency professionals, who share information about children's circumstances and provide comprehensive support to children and their families. This reduces risk and improves children's welfare in most cases. Child-in-need and child protection plans are comprehensive and consistently provide for contingency planning.
8. Targeted early intervention and edge-of-care work are successfully diverting children from the need for care, pre-proceedings and court proceedings, helping children to remain with their families. Decisions to escalate children's cases to pre-proceedings when their experiences are not improving are appropriate. However, the language in letters before proceedings is not easy enough for all parents they are written for to understand the concerns. For a small number of children, assessments are completed at child-in-need and child protection stages but are repeated through pre-proceedings. This slows intervention and makes it more difficult to divert these children from proceedings.
9. Social workers in the disabled children's service respond effectively to children's complex needs and vulnerabilities. Direct work is creative. Workers use toys and games, entering the child's world to engage with them in play. This helps them to understand the child's lived experience and their interaction with parents. When disabled children are nonverbal, observations of their relationships and interactions with their parents, sisters and brothers and professionals are used to inform assessments, plans, support and intervention.
10. Children who are missing, experiencing exploitation or at risk of extra-familial harm receive targeted and highly individualised support. High-quality return home interviews lead to robust and appropriate plans that contain recommendations to improve children's safety. A broad range of community, healthcare and police activities are brokered into the support that is offered to children and their families, helping to reduce risk. Social workers make appropriate referrals to the National Referral Mechanism. Senior leaders are well sighted on the most vulnerable children through the regular and effective Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) panel and the Missing, Exploitation and Gang Affiliation (MEGA) panel, where tightly managed multi-agency plans help ensure that risks to children are reduced and their lives improve.

11. Arrangements to support and safeguard privately fostered children in Bromley are robust. Children are seen alone by social workers, who take time to get to know them, take account of their diverse needs and provide good support to carers. The local authority has taken extensive action internally and externally to raise awareness about private fostering. This has led to an increase in referrals, enquiries and children identified as living in private fostering arrangements.
12. All children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless receive an excellent service. Their needs are quickly assessed through a clear homelessness pathway assessment. Children are central to decision-making and are fully informed of their rights and entitlements. Children are accommodated when necessary, and this is proactively sought for children where there are safeguarding concerns. Semi-independent accommodation is commissioned by the council's housing service when children do not wish to be accommodated, and these children are supported by social workers as children in need. They are helped to access education and work and, at 18 years old, they are awarded priority status for housing.
13. Local authority designated officer arrangements in Bromley are effective. Decisions on consultation and referral thresholds are timely, with well-recorded rationales. Delays in respect of criminal matters are escalated to senior leaders.
14. Effective multi-agency working ensures that there is a timely response when risks are identified for children who are electively home educated. Children who are missing education are identified, reviewed and followed up appropriately. Strong partnership working and individualised approaches enable children who have complex backgrounds and education histories to access and sustain suitable education placements. Professionals are mindful of children's social and emotional needs, as well as their academic needs. They persist when it seems that education placements are either full or not suitable, appropriately challenging the decisions of others in the best interests of children. Keeping the most vulnerable children in education is helping to protect them from harm.

The experiences and progress of children in care: outstanding

15. Children in Bromley's care receive excellent support and make good progress in their lives. Social workers have caseloads that enable them to spend time with children, building trusting relationships. Most children benefit from having consistent social workers over time. Workers know that the quality of relationships that children have is key to good outcomes. They invest time, energy and enjoyment in the children they support. They work effectively with children's families, carers and partners to establish a caring network around each child. A foundation of trust and respect for parents helps to safeguard children. Social workers help parents to rebuild relationships with their children.
16. Decisions for children to come into care are appropriate and based on an accurate assessment of the risks that they face. Extensive efforts are made to

keep children safely within their families, but the right decisions are made when the need for alternative care arises. Entry to care is properly planned for most children, enabling them to settle with suitable, well-prepared carers. For a small number of children exposed to neglectful parenting, the decision for them to come into care could have been taken sooner.

17. Once children are in care, effective plans and services are mobilised quickly to establish clear placement plans for them, provide initial health assessments for them and ensure that independent reviewing officers (IROs) are appointed to oversee their progress.
18. Senior leaders, team managers and frontline workers fully understand children's need for permanence. Permanence planning is timely, which swiftly secures stability for children. Senior oversight of children's permanence plans is impressive. There is appropriate consideration of adoption at early permanence discussions. Adoption is considered for all children where this might best meet their needs.
19. Children live in safe, stable, good-quality placements that meet their needs. When children experience instability, the local authority uses a range of resources to prevent breakdowns. When a change of placement is appropriate, social workers plan well and help children understand what is happening and where they are going. Workers undertake sensitive and skilled work, helping children to understand their experiences and journey in care. A commissioned app, available to carers, children and social work staff, is helping children to build memories about important people and events in their lives.
20. Children's voices, views and wishes are clearly captured in records of visits and through creative direct work, helping the family and professional network to understand what children want in their lives. Direct work, child engagement and life-story work are strengths, and children's achievements are celebrated.
21. Children's care plans are comprehensive. They capture children's needs and set out how these will be met. They identify the range of support that is needed to help them do their best in education, pursue their interests and spend time with friends and family. Children's time with their families is skilfully promoted. The recently strengthened IRO service carries out statutory reviews of children's plans within the required timescale, making revisions where appropriate. Leaders have recognised that the return to in-person reviews following the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions has taken too long. Robust, recent action has now appropriately re-established in-person meetings with IROs.
22. Children's individual identities are recognised as being central to their experiences. Workers' understanding of individual needs is evident in children's plans. Independent visitors are an important additional source of support for children.

23. Decisions for children to return to their families are based on thorough assessments that incorporate children's views and the input of other agencies. Transitions are carefully planned in consultation with children and parents, helping children return successfully to their families. Transitions are carefully monitored. Care orders are revoked in a timely manner.
24. Disabled children are supported by social workers who are knowledgeable and passionate and know them well. Their care plans progress at pace and they live in stable and well-matched placements where their individual needs are understood and met by their foster carers. Children are visited in accordance with their needs. Social workers use their skills and tools to engage with children and understand their communication.
25. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are supported in suitable accommodation where they have ready access to their cultural communities.
26. Practitioners are aware of emerging risks and concerns that children face. They take action to support children who are experiencing difficulties at home, at school or in their communities. When there are significant concerns about children's safety, for example a risk of criminal exploitation, or if disabilities mean that they need safety restrictions, deprivation of liberty orders are sometimes used for short periods to ensure that children receive sufficient supervision and care to protect them.
27. A dedicated healthcare team for children in care ensures that health assessments and strengths and difficulties questionnaires are completed on time and used well. Children's healthcare needs are identified, and appropriate services are arranged. The in-house THRIVE service provides effective therapeutic support for children and their carers, helping to offset long waiting times to access specialist child and adolescent mental health services.
28. The dynamic virtual school provides strong support to children and practitioners. Personal education plans (PEPs) place the child at the centre of support, and an increasing number of children chair their own PEP meetings. Additional and valuable support for education is provided, for example through holiday tuition provided online to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and in the provision of laptops. Children in care in Bromley achieve well in school, and their attendance is good and improving.
29. Bromley has had to place a very small number of children in unregistered children's homes. Where the authority has determined that these children's needs are largely being met, it is supporting the provider to register with Ofsted. Detailed risk assessments are completed by children's social workers and signed off by an assistant director. More frequent visits take place to oversee the care that these children receive. Senior leaders know Bromley needs more carers for parent and child placements and specialist placements, and more carers with the skills to meet the needs of vulnerable adolescents and children with challenging behaviour. The authority is making progress on a

recruitment strategy that is aimed at achieving sufficient placement provision and increasing the diversity and skills of carers.

30. Effective recruitment, assessment, training and support of foster carers, adopters and kinship carers are helping children settle in their homes, where they are well cared for. Workers consider children's wide-ranging needs well when matching them with carers.
31. Adoption is thoughtfully and carefully considered. Effective collaboration and communication with the regional adoption agency (Coram Ambitious for Adoption) at the earliest opportunity help to ensure that the right decisions are made within children's timeframes. Robust scrutiny and oversight are applied by the adoption panel, keeping children's best interests at the forefront of key decision-making. Careful consideration is given to post-adoption support, and staff ensure that families understand their entitlement to access support when needed.
32. Bromley's Living in Care Council helps children and care leavers to be confident about their rights. It provides good opportunities for children to speak to leaders and partners at the corporate parenting board, where they influence decisions and help shape services. Children in care and care leavers feel heard. When inspectors asked whether children had any messages they wanted relayed to leaders, they confidently told inspectors: 'We'll tell them ourselves.'

The experiences and progress of care leavers: outstanding

33. Children in care in Bromley start their transition to the leaving care service early so that they have sufficient time to develop trusting relationships with their young person's adviser (YPA), Bromley's personal advisers, before they leave care. This helps care leavers understand what help and support will be available to them as they become adults.
34. Care leavers benefit from compassionate and sensitive YPAs, who are thoughtful and who support them to achieve their potential. They celebrate care leavers' achievements, big and small, and build their confidence. YPAs are ambitious for young people. They advocate strongly on their behalf and help them secure support and services in line with their needs and best interests.
35. YPAs have manageable caseloads that enable them to undertake meaningful work with care leavers. They have frequent contact with care leavers, sending warm messages between visits that demonstrate the strength of the relationships they build with care leavers. These messages cover everything from sharing resources to celebrating important occasions or simply chatting about television programmes. Tenacious and persistent work by YPAs to build relationships with them encourages care leavers to stay in touch.
36. Bromley's Our House provides opportunities for care leavers to meet with their peers, YPAs and partner agencies, who offer advice and support about finances

and housing options. The house is a creative hub that promotes a collaborative environment in which young people feel cared for and safe.

37. Care leavers are widely consulted through the Living in Care Council and they regularly attend the corporate parenting board to present their priorities for members to progress with senior leaders. Care leavers have a meaningful voice and impact on the work of the local authority. Their experiences, opinions and feedback directly influence service delivery. YPAs listen to young people. Their views inform practice. Confident YPAs and care leavers are vocal in sharing their insights with leaders.
38. Care leavers' healthcare needs are well considered, and actions to improve their health are recorded in their pathway plans. Care leavers have access to their health histories. Gym memberships, if required, are fully funded by the local authority to promote good physical and mental health.
39. YPAs have a good understanding of care leavers' vulnerabilities and the impact of trauma and adverse life experiences on their health and well-being. A tenacious mental health practitioner provides persistent advocacy to help young people access appropriate mental health services and psychiatric care. Young people can access specialist mental health support, including through group therapy. This support creates an environment for more stable mental health, helping care leavers to develop coping strategies, regulate their emotions, retain employment and attend college.
40. Bromley's local offer for care leavers is a strength. A well-developed website illustrates the broad range of practical and emotional support available to assist young people in their transition to adulthood. Care leavers know their entitlements, which are captured well in their pathway plans. Support funds, bursaries, financial literacy skills training, and a financial adviser and well-being adviser in the team all help care leavers to manage their money and accommodation.
41. Children's social care has a very strong relationship with housing services. Care leavers have priority status for housing, which they often choose themselves, going on to manage their tenancies successfully. Priority housing remains available to care leavers who are leaving custody, including those aged over 25 years. YPAs are knowledgeable about the range of services and support available, whether locally or out of the area. Joint visits are carried out with housing providers. In addition, Bromley 'young inspectors' are paid to provide feedback to leaders on the quality and suitability of housing provision. Care leavers told inspectors that they felt safe where they live.
42. Care leavers benefit from an independence training programme that is delivered jointly with other agencies. Input from housing professionals, Department for Work and Pensions staff and mental health professionals helps inform young people about the longer term support available. This supports them to make informed choices about accommodation and training, and to

access emotional and mental health support when they need it. YPAs help care leavers access legal advice to challenge housing providers on repairs to their properties.

43. Comprehensive pathway plans are co-produced with care leavers, providing information about their needs and entitlements, and practical information about their finances. Plans include contributions from young people. These plans are reviewed regularly and amended to reflect new and emerging needs.
44. YPAs provide effective support for vulnerable care leavers who are at risk of exploitation. They know young people well, maintain up-to-date case summaries that outline risks and put support in place to increase their safety. The MEGA panel also reviews young people up to the age of 25, bringing together multi-agency partners to explore and analyse risks and vulnerabilities associated with contextual safeguarding.
45. Care leavers in custody receive ongoing visits, contact and good support from YPAs, who offer encouragement, advocacy and emotional support.
46. Reducing the risk of care leavers not engaging in education, employment and training is a key priority. Some care leavers repeatedly enter education, employment and training provision that subsequently breaks down. YPAs help young people to develop their skills and confidence and so sustain their engagement. The leaving care panel brings together a broad range of professional advice, guidance and support to enable care leavers to gain and sustain meaningful progress in education, employment and training. Care leavers are supported to attend their panel meetings to ensure that their voice is heard and their aspirations are taken fully into account. Leaders demonstrate their commitment through providing employment, paid work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers in the local authority.
47. Care leavers who are parents receive excellent support. A dedicated care leavers parent group helps develop parenting skills and provides an important support network. Young people can access additional early help services through local community centres. Care leavers' records include information about the development and well-being of their children, reflecting the authority's family-first approach.
48. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people experience the same high quality of services as other Bromley care leavers. Their identity needs are well considered. They benefit from suitable accommodation and are supported to reach their goals.
49. Most care leavers transfer to the leaving care team with their important identification documents. This helps to empower care leavers and gives them more control and independence as they move into adulthood.
50. Decisions about any support needed beyond age 21 are made in consultation with young people. Those who need or want ongoing help receive it. The

service maintains written contact with care leavers who are no longer receiving services. They are welcomed back if they return for support.

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: outstanding

51. Children in Bromley benefit from effective, high-quality services secured by a stable leadership team with a shared and ambitious vision for their future. From a strong starting point at the inspection in 2018, the quality and impact of practice have been maintained and built on. Reaching this level of consistency across children's services is an impressive achievement.
52. The lead member and the chief executive receive regular, high-quality, detailed data and practice reports that aid their understanding of the quality of social work practice. This understanding is strengthened through regular meetings with children and young people. There is effective communication between the chief executive and the director of children's services (DCS). The chief executive understands the role and challenges facing a DCS very well. He holds the DCS to account while providing support and remaining a strong advocate for children and for children's services. An environment of high support and high challenge is echoed at every level, from YPAs, social workers and operational managers, through the senior leadership team, and outwards to families and partners and, like a golden thread, back again.
53. Leaders have high aspirations for children and have gained the confidence of staff and partners. They have developed strong and mature relationships with key partners. There is a well-embedded understanding at all levels of the leadership team about the importance of these relationships, especially in the context of complexity and pressure in public services. Partners view the local authority as child-centred and responsive. Trust in the quality of services promotes a collective will to continually improve support for children. This has allowed the local authority to develop a coherent, multi-agency response to emerging needs and rising demand. Leaders have successfully strengthened early help services. They have developed a well-coordinated, multi-agency response that safeguards children who are at risk of extra-familial harm. Bromley is considered by the judiciary to be a trail-blazing borough and a strong participant in the local family justice board, where leaders contribute to solutions and input resources.
54. Senior leaders are champions for children, both in the local area and in the wider context of London. Children's services benefit from strong political support and a commitment that is evident in the council's financial investment and growth in services for vulnerable children. Innovative and creative services are helping children to make progress and to achieve a greater level of well-being. Investment in analytics and quality assurance tools has enabled Bromley to develop a sophisticated and accurate suite of data that informs its strategic priorities.

55. Bromley invites external scrutiny and shares its practice with others. There is a strong performance culture throughout the service. Accurate performance information, assurance reviews and extensive audit activity provide operational managers and leaders with a clear understanding of quality across the organisation. The authority's self-evaluation is strikingly accurate. Leaders know their services well and are confident in identifying where they can further strengthen practice.
56. Management oversight of children's progress is exceptionally strong and highly consistent across the service. This is supplemented by regular, high-quality supervision and practice reflection sessions, which practitioners greatly value. Managers know children well and understand their experiences. This means their support and direction for practitioners are all the more effective. The shared ownership of risks empowers social workers to be bold in their practice.
57. Practitioners have good access to training and development opportunities and are able to describe easily how these have improved their practice. Leaders are developing new career pathways, including the use of flexible working to support training, such as for practice teaching. Social workers describe helpful managers who support their individual career ambitions. Managers develop professional development plans with practitioners that increase their knowledge and skills.
58. Leaders have focused on building a stable workforce despite challenging recruitment conditions in Outer London. Services are staffed by a solid proportion of permanent social workers and managers. Most children benefit from consistency of social worker. Agency staff in the workforce have been in Bromley for a sustained period of time. Some are persuaded to become permanent employees. Leaders have created an environment where outstanding practice is flourishing and celebrated. Their commitment to proportionate caseloads, Bromley's 'caseload promise', means that social workers have time to develop meaningful relationships with children and families and carry out high-quality work of which they are rightly proud. Social workers light up when talking about their children.
59. Finally, staff enjoy working in Bromley. They speak of a highly visible and responsive leadership team and praise their operational managers, heads of practice, assistant directors and other leaders. They know their leaders, they appreciate their leaders and they feel appreciated in return. Bromley's chosen relational practice model is echoed in internal relationships. It is important to note the sense of care and kindness that inspectors found exists for staff.

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Report No.
CEF23067

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES**

Date: **For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Schools' Forum on the 18 January 2024 and the Children, Education and Families Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee on 1 February 2024**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **2024/25 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG)**

Contact Officer: David Bradshaw, Head of Finance, Children, Education and Families
Tel: 020 8313 4807 E-mail: David.Bradshaw@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Finance

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1. This report provides an outline of the final DSG allocation for 2024/25 and an overview of how this will be spent.
-

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 **The Children, Education and Families Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:**

- i) **Note the DSG Allocation for 2024/25; and,**
- ii) **Provide any comments for consideration to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families.**

2.2 **The Schools Forum is requested to:**

- i) **Review the DSG income and forecast expenditure for 2024/25.**

2.3 **Subject to the views of the Children, Education and Families Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee and those of the Schools Forum, the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families is asked to approve the Dedicated Schools Grant allocation for 2024/25 and the methodology of its distribution.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Children, Education and Families Portfolio budget setting supports the provision of services to vulnerable young people
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Children, Education and Families portfolio budgets
 4. Total current budget for this head: £385,741k (DSG 2024/25)
 5. Source of funding: Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Full details will be available with the Council's 2024/25 Financial Control Budget to be published in March 2024
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement: The statutory duties relating to financial reporting are covered within the Local Government Act 1972; the Local Government Finance Act 1998; the Local Government Act 2000; the Local Government Act 2002 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Not Applicable.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

3.1. The final Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for 2024/25 has now been provided to all LAs to reflect the October 2023 census data.

3.2. The final DSG for 2024/25 is divided into four blocks – High Needs, Early Years, Schools and Schools Central. The expected income is detailed below

2024/25 Dedicated Schools Grant					
	High Needs Block	Early Years Block	Schools Block	Schools Central Block	Total
Gross Grant Funding	£76,856,935	£38,034,418	£268,835,709	£2,013,547	£385,740,607
Recoupment adjustment	-£11,588,001		-£1,948,222		-£13,536,223
Net Grant Allocation	£65,268,934	£38,034,418	£266,887,487	£2,013,547	£372,204,386

3.3. The LA has looked at each of these blocks and has forecast the related expenditure for 2024/25 based on information that is currently available at this time. Full details of the projected grant income and expenditure can be seen at Appendix 1 with detailed information regarding each block provided below.

3.4. Appendix 2 shows the allocation from DfE

Schools Central Block

Grant 2024/25	£2,013,547
Expenditure 2024/25	£2,573,547
Contribution from Council	-£560,000
Expected (Over)/ Underspend	(£0)

3.5. The Central Block has decreased by £32k. The per pupil rate fell by 1.25% (the equivalent of a loss of £25k). There was also a £7k reduction of grant received due to a decrease in pupil numbers. There continues to be pressures in the Central Schools DSG due to funding shortfalls. Last year the Council used £510k of core LBB funding to underpin this expenditure. A further £50k is being proposed for 2024/25 bringing the total Council core funding to £560k.

Early Years Block

Grant 2024/25	£38,034,418
Expenditure 2024/25	£38,034,418
Expected (Over)/ Underspend	(£0)

- 3.6.** Early Years funding has increased substantially by £14.7m in 2024/25. Following a government review and consultation on funding and supply the government have introduced the following changes as follows:-
- a) Introduced new funding for under twos of £12.83 per part time equivalent (PTE) hour.
 - b) Introduced new funding for two year old working parents at £9.44 per PTE hour.
 - c) Increased the PTE rate for disadvantaged two year olds from £6.63 per PTE to £9.44.
 - d) Increased the PTE rate for 3 and 4 year olds from £5.51 per PTE to £6.40.
 - e) Increased Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) rates and number of hours across the new funding streams.
 - f) Increased the Disability Access Fund (DAF) rates and numbers of hours across the new funding streams.
- 3.7.** During 2023/24 DfE announced a supplementary grant which increased the 2023/24 rates in year but was dealt with outside the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). These have been reflected in the new 2024/25 rates.
- 3.8.** The assumption for volumes of hours (PTE's) remains the same for 2024/25 as the latest volumes for the 2023/24 DSG as DfE use January 2024 data. However this will change once the January 2024 census is published which will affect the figures.
- 3.9.** The Council are allowed to top slice this funding to support staffing and other early years support, although the 'pass through' rate (the amount that is being spent on settings) needs to be at least 95%. Government may increase this to 97% in future years but this is still being debated. The top slice is carried out by reducing the hourly rate offered to settings.
- 3.10.** Some modelling has been carried out using the rates and take up of hours assumed by DfE. Two scenarios have been suggested, one with an additional contingency and one scenario without it. This is summarised in the table below.

Scenario 1 - with a contingency					
	<u>3&4 yr olds</u>	<u>2 yr olds</u> <u>Vuln</u>	<u>2 yr olds</u> <u>Working</u>	<u>under 2's</u>	<u>Total</u>
DfE Rates	£6.40	£9.44	£9.44	£12.83	
LBB Rates	£5.96	£9.00	£8.85	£11.95	
<u>Part of Pass through rate</u>					
Assumed hours	3,897,455	238,260	649,846	329,249	5,114,810
DfE Grant	24,943,711	2,249,174	6,134,542	4,224,266	37,551,694
Assumed LBB spend £	23,228,831	2,144,340	5,751,134	3,934,527	35,058,831
Additional supplements	500,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	650,000
Contingency	150,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	300,000
SENIF	388,602	23,754	64,786	32,858	510,000
Pass through rate	97.3%	100.8%	96.4%	96.3%	
<u>Not part of pass through rate</u>					
Centrally retained funding					1,032,863
EYPP					310,731
DAF					171,990

Scenario 2 - without a contingency					
	<u>3&4 yr olds</u>	<u>2 yr olds</u> <u>Vuln</u>	<u>2 yr olds</u> <u>Working</u>	<u>under 2's</u>	<u>Total</u>
DfE Rates	£6.40	£9.44	£9.44	£12.83	
LBB Rates	£6.01	£9.10	£8.90	£12.10	
<u>Part of Pass through rate</u>					
Assumed hours	3,897,455	238,260	649,846	329,249	5,114,810
DfE Grant	24,943,711	2,249,174	6,134,542	4,224,266	37,551,694
Assumed LBB spend £	23,423,703	2,168,166	5,783,626	3,983,914	35,359,409
Additional supplements	500,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	650,000
Contingency	0	0	0	0	0
SENIF	388,602	23,754	64,786	32,858	510,000
Pass through rate	97.5%	99.7%	96.2%	96.3%	
<u>Not part of pass through rate</u>					
Centrally retained funding					1,032,284
EYPP					310,731
DAF					171,990

3.11. It can be seen that for both scenarios the pass through rate is easily met. The preferred model is scenario 2 without the contingency as this directs the maximum funding to settings. The rates, budget, impact, etc will be reviewed at least annually to adjust for any impact. As this is the first year for some of the funding streams there is an element of risk with this and the aim is to utilise the spend with the Early Years block as far as possible without creating any excessive

under/overspends. This prudent approach will help to prevent a deficit being incurred from future volatility in the Early Years sector.

3.12. The funding calculation also allows for supplements paid to eligible providers of £650k, £510k for the Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) and funding to be held centrally of £1m, mainly to support staffing costs. There is also £310k of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and £172k of Disability Access Fund which is assumed to be ‘in and out’ and will have a cost neutral effect overall.

3.13.

Schools Block

Grant 2024/25 – Pupil Led	£266,097,622
Premises related funding	£2,054,720
Growth Funding	£683,367
Recoupment	-£1,948,222
Expenditure 2024/25	£266,835,487
Expected (Over)/ Underspend	(£0)

3.14. The Schools Block funding has been calculated using the October 2023 Census pupil numbers and the per pupil units of funding which have been calculated for 2024/25.

3.15. The Schools Block has risen by £11.7m. This is due to an increase in the per pupil unit of funding and increases in the population figures. This includes the previous year Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) of £8.7m which was paid as a separate grant in 2023/24. Allowing for the £8.7m grant the funding increase is £3.0m. The majority of this funding will be top sliced and returned to DfE to fund Academy Schools.

3.16. Using a like for like comparison, and including both years DSG and taking the supplementary grant into consideration the schools block has risen by 1.2% in cash terms, 1.5% per pupil.

3.17. Based on the published figures the Primary unit of funding (PUF) has increased from £4,846 to £5,064 which is an increase of around 4.5% and the Secondary unit of funding (SUF) has increased from £6,410 to £6,757 which is an increase of around 5.4%. These published rates do not include the MSAG being added into the baseline, so the figures are more in line with paragraph 3.16 above.

3.18. The funding that the LA is allocated for the Schools Block is calculated by running the Local Authority Level National Funding Formula (NFF) for every school to give a total figure, which is then divided by the number of pupils in each sector to give a per pupil figure. Additional funding is added for premises (i.e. rates) and growth funding. The final growth funding has been calculated at £683k. which is based on pupil numbers in middle layer super output areas (MSOAs). This year there was the introduction of Falling rolls funding via the DSG. Bromley did not qualify for any of this funding.

3.19. In terms of the NFF funding streams that drive schools funding, the main changes to the NFF for 2024/25 are as follows-

- a) rolling the 2023 to 2024 mainstream schools additional grant (MSAG) into the NFF
- b) increasing NFF factor values (on top of the amounts we have added for the MSAG) by:
 - 1.4% to basic entitlement, low prior attainment (LPA), FSM6, income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI), English as an additional language (EAL), mobility, sparsity and the lump sum.
 - 1.4% to the minimum per pupil levels (MPPL)
 - 0.5% to the funding floor
 - 1.6% to the free school meals (FSM) factor value
- c) introducing, for the first time, a methodology for calculating and allocating funding for falling rolls.
- d) Minimum per pupil funding levels have been set at £4,610 for primary schools and £5,995 for secondary schools.
- e) The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) level is required to be between 0.0% and 0.5%

3.20. Local Authorities are required to follow the National Funding Formula more closely than in previous years and guidelines have been put in place by DfE to limit the amount of flexibility with the funding arrangements for 2024/25. Local authorities must move their local formula factor values at least a further 10% closer to the NFF (building on the movement towards the NFF made in 2023 to 2024), except where local formulae are already mirroring the NFF.

3.21. This will not create too much turbulence as Bromley has been broadly following the NFF guidelines for a number of years now and this new arrangement will have a minor impact.

3.22. Four scenarios have been modelled following the NFF guidance and then making adjustments to the Basic rates, Deprivation factors and the contingency to balance. These scenarios are detailed in Appendix 3. It is recommended that option 4 is used as it follows the NFF more closely (All DfE factors kept to exactly apart from the AWPU factor which is increased by 0.25%).

3.23. This scenario gives the maximum MFG protection, more funding going to schools, and as Bromley are following the DfE NFF levels exactly (apart from one area), there is less future turbulence.

3.24. For 2024/25 the Schools Forum agreed to remove the Falling rolls funding, thus enabling more funding to go directly to schools. This will be revisited next year to gauge any impact. The Schools Forum had agreed stringent guidelines as to its allocation and very few schools have qualified for this funding over the past few years. Moreover, no funding for falling rolls was forthcoming under the new DfE funding arrangements.

3.25. A contingency figure is also set aside to cover bulge classes, rates increases and other eventualities such as APT amendments from DfE. This has decreased for last year's allocation.

3.26. The MFG protection across all schools is £834k. There are 19 schools that are in receipt of MFG protection, most of which are primary schools. The lowest MFG is £2,977, the highest £137,049 with an average of £43,878.

3.27. The MFG level that has been used by Bromley is 0.5% which sits at the top of the government's parameters. One scenario assumes 0.0% but it is not proposed to use this option.

- 3.28.** There are a number of schools that become eligible for minimum per pupil funding protection as follows:
- a) 9 Primary schools to receive around £465k collectively.
 - b) 0 Secondary schools.
- 3.29.** DfE will publish school level allocations in May 2024. Academy schools will receive the funding direct from DfE. The remaining Maintained Schools will have the funding passported to them once received by the Local Authority
- 3.30.** The Schools Block funding allocations go through a validation check with the ESFA so they are subject to review and possible amendment.

High Needs Block

Grant 2024/25	£76,856,933
Recoupment	-£11,588,001
LA Expenditure 2024/25	£70,899,932
Expected (Over)/ Underspend	(£5,631,000)

- 3.31.** The High Needs Block continues to be impacted by significant pressures arising from increased volume and complexity of needs. Nationally the Government has seen some authorities building up high levels of deficit reserves.
- 3.32.** The DSG allocation has resulted in an increase in high needs block funding of £2.5m for Bromley. Bromley received £2.8m of additional supplementary grant in 2023/24 that was rolled into the baseline for 2024/25, so the increase would be £5.3m if this were excluded.
- 3.33.** The £2.5m increase is due to increases in per pupil funding and the increase in pupils themselves.
- 3.34.** For 2024/25 DfE have introduced a 0% MFG for Maintained Special Schools and Special Academies. Last year this was 3%. This has been factored into the funding figures for the Special schools. The 2023/24 supplementary grant that was paid to settings will continue to be paid as per DfE guidance.
- 3.35.** Although there are increases in funding, predictions for expenditure are rising at a faster rate. This is due to growth in pupil numbers in this area, Government extending the scope of the High Needs Block from ages 5 to 19 to 0 to 25 and historical baseline funding adjustments. It is predicted that without further management intervention, there will be a deficit of c£5m per annum over the next four years.
- 3.36.** There is an estimated DSG deficit at the end of the 2023/24 financial year of £16,149k.
- 3.37.** Although additional grant been given by DfE, demand continues to outstrip funding. Bromley was one of the last authorities in London to fall into a deficit position regarding its DSG. The overspends are in the main in the high needs block area and are related to the cost of placements in all types of education settings.
- 3.38.** The unsustainability of the SEN system is a national issue and there are high expectations being set for the DfE's SEND Review. Nevertheless, officers are seeking to further reduce costs, within

the tight constraints of the legal framework. Officers are working with DfE and are in discussion with them regarding recovery plans and actions that can be taken to reduce the deficit position.

- 3.39.** Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the budget calculations and adequacy of reserves. The 151 Officer within that commentary is now required to consider the Councils DSG deficit position, despite the statutory override being in place.
- 3.40.** The statutory override effectively means that any DSG deficits are not included in the Councils main revenue budgets. However, funding will ultimately need to be identified
- 3.41.** In effect the Council has to still set aside resources to meet the DSG deficit and where no ongoing funding is identified such funding will need to come from the Councils reserves. On that basis the budget monitoring report identifies a deficit of £4,043k which has to ultimately be funded from the Councils reserve.
- 3.42.** Although DSG is effectively ring fenced the ongoing increase through funding by reserves (general and earmarked) creates a financially unsustainable position in the medium to longer term.
- 3.43.** The External Auditor as part of the annual accounts, are required to comment on the Councils Value for money arrangements and will be required to consider any DSG deficit and the impact on the Councils finances.
- 3.44.** In terms of presentation of the estimated DSG deficit of £16,149k up to 31/3/2024, there will need to be adequate funding from the Councils reserves unless alternative savings can be found. The use of reserves have been assumed in this report, although the specific reserves to use have not been identified at this stage.
- 3.45.** To mitigate against the predicted growth, mitigations have also been assumed as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. These are predicated on slowing the rate of increase in EHCPs and to incrementally placing more children in local schools. This carries significant risks because provision for children is determined by their presenting needs according to the legal tests set out within the SEND Code of Practice. With increasing numbers of cases being overturned by SEND Tribunals, this will remain a challenge across the MTFS period.
- 3.46.** There continues to be significant pressures on the High Needs Block. The expenditure is based on the pattern of new EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans) seen over recent years and on the average cost of a placement. The demand for placements of children and young people with SEN continues to increase, exacerbated by a lack of local specialist provision. Increased numbers of children and young people have been placed at mainstream schools, special schools and resourced provisions. Nevertheless, the sustained increase in demand results in the continued reliance on independent settings, which are generally more expensive than in borough placements.

4. SCHOOL FORUM COMMENTS

- 4.1** The Schools Forum will meet on the 18th January 2024. Any comments from the Forum will be fed back to the Committee after the meeting so that a decision on the funding can be made.

5. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 5.1 The draft 2024/25 Budget reflects the Council's key priorities which includes, for example, supporting vulnerable adults with children and being ambitious for all our children and young people.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The DSG 2024/25 Budget enables the Council to continue to deliver on its key priorities and the financial forecast enables medium term financial planning allowing for early decisions to be made which impact on the medium term financial plan. The Council continues to deliver key services and lives within its means.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Financial implications are contained within the overall body of the report.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Procurement/Personnel/Legal Implications, Legal
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Held within the Finance Section

2024/2025 DSG Provisional

High Needs Block	2023/24	2024/25 Provisional
Income		
Baseline	62,915,446	68,089,264
HN Pupil numbers		
Baseline £ Per Pupil	5,693,262	5,889,840
import/export	1,794,000	1,794,000
Hospital & TPG/TPECG	1,049,775	1,077,830
Additional funding for Special Free Schools	24,000	6,000
Supplementary allocation	2,888,666	0
High Needs Block Restated	74,365,148	76,856,933
Academy Units@£6k	-2,033,500	-2,016,000
Academy Units@£10k	-52,500	-90,000
Academy Post-16 Units	-354,000	-372,000
PRU Places Recoupment	-1,155,834	-1,160,000
BBA & Glebe	-3,855,834	-3,910,000
Special post 16	-566,667	-600,000
Hospital	-140,001	-140,001
Post 16 Transfer	-3,200,000	-3,300,000
Total recoupment	-11,358,336	-11,588,001
DSG Grant Amount	63,006,812	65,268,932
Expenditure		
Delegated budgets		
Maintained Special Schools	4,130,000	4,290,000
Maintained Special Schools top up	6,355,418	6,860,095
Academy Special School top up	5,654,130	5,826,956
AP Top Up	2,051,981	1,252,761
Units - Maintained Places	120,000	120,000
- LA Funded Academy Places (vacant)	40,000	60,000
- LA Funded Academy Places	150,000	89,667
- Maintained Top Up	86,660	89,188
- Academy Top Up	1,774,580	1,832,548
Hospital	89,079	89,079
TPG/TPECG	960,696	713,240
Supplementary Grant to settings 2023/24	861,655	849,154
Free School	18,000	6,000
LA Centrally Managed		
Darrick Wood HIU	1,126,920	1,169,710
Darrick wood Deaf centre	1,235,170	1,276,660
AP Recoupment	-105,770	-109,470
Progression Courses	474,270	732,070
Home and Alternative Provision	1,293,460	1,324,860
SEN Support in Mainstream	403,690	417,490
SEN funding in Schools	5,693,410	5,892,690
Outreach and Inclusion	1,113,550	1,193,650
Specialist Support and Disability	256,030	264,990
Complex Needs Team	755,060	794,430
Phoenix Pre School Service	792,390	823,030
SEN Transport	230,000	230,000
Special Central	1,073,460	1,286,294
Other Statemented	1,176,290	1,215,760
SEN Out of Borough Fees	24,022,048	25,085,930
SEN in Further Education Colleges	6,043,200	6,699,610

Special Capital	10,600	10,600
Alternative Programme (AP) non delegated	0	1,012,940
Funded by EY Block	-500,000	-500,000
Funded by CSS Block	-200,000	0
Total	67,185,977	70,899,932
In year deficit estimate	-4,179,165	-5,631,000
Variance	0	-0

2024/2025 DSG Provisional

Early Years Block	2023/24	2024/25 Provisional
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EY Pupil numbers	4,971	4,971
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Baseline £ Per Pupil hours (15 x 38)	5.51 570	6.40 570
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3 & 4 Years Old Funding	15,611,855	18,133,551
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EY Pupil numbers	1,867	1,867
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Baseline £ Per Pupil hours (15 x 38)	5.51 570	6.40 570
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3 & 4 Years Old Additional 15 Hrs	5,863,122	6,810,160
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EY Pupil numbers	418	418
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Baseline £ Per Pupil hours (15 x 38)	6.63 570	9.44 570
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2 Year Old Funding Disadvantaged	1,579,664	2,249,175
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EY Pupil numbers		1,140
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Baseline £ Per Pupil hours (15 x 38)		9.44 570
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2 Year Old Funding Working Parents		6,134,543
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EY Pupil numbers		578
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Baseline £ Per Pupil hours (15 x 38)		12.83 570
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Under 2 Year Olds		4,224,266
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EY Pupil Premium	177,556	310,731
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EY Disability Access Fund	96,048	171,990
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	23,328,245	38,034,418
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Universal	14,218,642	17,028,538
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Additional 3 & 4 Year Old Hours	5,299,460	6,395,165
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2 Year Old Cost	1,709,539	2,168,166
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2 year old working cost		5,783,626
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Under 2 Year Olds cost		3,983,914
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Supplements	547,000	650,000
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EY Pupil Premium	177,556	310,731
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Central Costs

EY Central costs	370,000	532,288
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SENIF	410,000	510,000
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Additional HN exp	500,000	500,000
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EY Disability Access Fund 96,048 171,990

<u>23,328,245</u>	<u>38,034,418</u>
<u><u>-0</u></u>	<u><u>-0</u></u>

2024/2025 DSG Provisional

Schools Block	2023/24	2024/25 Provisional
Primary Pupil Numbers	27,212	27,011
Baseline £ Per Pupil	4,846	5,064
Total Primary Funding	131,877,270	136,777,762
Secondary pupil numbers	19,090	19,140
Baseline £ Per Pupil	6,410	6,757
	122,370,377	129,319,861
Premises	1,757,846	2,054,720
Growth	1,146,694	683,367
	257,152,187	268,835,709
NNDR recoupment (academies)	-1,948,221	-1,948,222
	255,203,966	266,887,487
Academy SBS (ex NNDR)	244,099,710	255,751,175
Primary SBS (ex NNDR)	6,187,028	6,536,141
Secondary SBS (Ex NNDR)	3,819,013	3,981,517
Primary NNDR		31,709
Secondary NNDR		62,500
Bulge Class funding	0	255,241
Contingency	848,215	269,204
Falling rolls	250,000	0
	255,203,966	266,887,487
	-0	0

2024/2025 DSG Provisional

Central Schools Services Block	2023/24	2024/25 Provisional
Pupil Numbers	46,301	46,151
Baseline £ Per Pupil	44.18	43.63
Central Schools Services Funding	<u>2,045,579</u>	<u>2,013,547</u>
	<u>2,045,579</u>	<u>2,013,547</u>
Access and Admissions	527,820	548,540
Licences	284,590	294,550
Capital	67,920	67,920
Schools Forum	1,100	1,000
Pupil Support Advisory Team	224,200	231,860
Support to Schools	51,410	53,210
Business Support	140,930	140,930
Workforce Development	22,400	22,400
Schools standard	134,350	134,350
Access to Education Management	50,000	77,177
Education Welfare Service	545,690	563,100
Asset Management	89,520	121,680
Statutory/Regulatory Duties	215,649	316,830
To High Needs re centrally employed teachers	200,000	0
Council Statutory duties	-510,000	-560,000
	<u>2,045,579</u>	<u>2,013,547</u>
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Dedicated schools grant (DSG): 2024 to 2025 allocations local authority summary		2024 to 2025 DSG allocations, before recoupment and deductions for national non-domestic rates, and for direct funding of high needs places by Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)				
		Schools block (£s)	Central school services block (£s)	High needs block (£s)	Early years block (£s)	Total DSG allocation (£s)
		[A]	[B]	[C]	[D]	[E]
		= [A] + [B] + [C] + [D]				
305	Bromley	268,835,709	2,013,547	76,856,935	38,034,418	385,740,609

Dedicated schools grant (DSG): 2024 to 2025 allocations local authority summary		2024 to 2025 DSG allocations, after deductions for national non-domestic rates, and direct funding of high needs places by ESFA				
		Schools block (£s)	Central school services block allocation (£s)	High needs block allocation (£s)	Early years block (£s)	Total DSG allocation (£s)
		[F]	[G]	[H]	[I]	[J]
		= [F] + [G] + [H] + [I]				
305	Bromley	266,887,487	2,013,547	65,268,934	38,034,418	372,204,386

National funding Formula Options

Option 1 - Following the NFF rates exactly, balance going into the contingency. +0.5% MFG

Option 2 - All rates inflated by 0.25% MFG 0%

Option 3 - Inflating all NFF rates across the board by +0.2%. MFG +0.5%

Option 4 - Inflating AWPU by +0.25%. MFG +0.5%

Schools in MFG

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	OPTION 4	MFG
Southborough Primary School	2,148,460	2,138,540	2,148,450	2,148,460	25,957
Edgebury Primary School	2,053,091	2,050,873	2,053,087	2,053,091	3,298
Poverest Primary School	2,362,166	2,368,039	2,366,865	2,366,299	0
St Olave's and St Saviour's Grammar School	4,044,017	4,031,703	4,044,015	4,044,017	13,124
Alexandra Junior School	1,189,178	1,192,130	1,191,540	1,191,382	0
Alexandra Infant School	1,078,553	1,081,238	1,080,701	1,080,434	0
Balgowan Primary School	2,856,506	2,856,506	2,856,506	2,856,506	0
Harris Primary Academy Beckenham Green	1,125,574	1,120,718	1,125,568	1,125,574	76,011
Churchfields Primary School	2,240,464	2,230,104	2,240,462	2,240,464	76,491
Hawes Down Primary School	2,100,918	2,091,272	2,100,925	2,100,918	53,245
Marian Vian Primary School	2,914,775	2,922,017	2,920,568	2,920,494	0
Gray's Farm Primary Academy	2,242,260	2,247,836	2,246,721	2,246,070	0
Oak Lodge Primary School	2,567,745	2,574,124	2,572,849	2,572,923	0
Stewart Fleming Primary School	2,588,457	2,594,894	2,593,606	2,593,511	0
Wickham Common Primary School	1,937,401	1,942,206	1,941,245	1,941,324	0
Burnt Ash Primary School	2,306,807	2,296,105	2,306,807	2,306,807	19,931
Harris Primary Academy Kent House	2,170,221	2,160,206	2,170,211	2,170,221	137,049
Pickhurst Infant Academy	1,638,367	1,642,440	1,641,626	1,641,645	0
Pickhurst Academy	2,356,418	2,356,418	2,356,418	2,356,418	0
Harris Primary Academy Crystal Palace	2,034,693	2,029,783	2,034,685	2,034,693	6,440
Valley Primary School	2,229,075	2,218,767	2,229,070	2,229,075	66,042
Red Hill Primary School	3,240,122	3,248,179	3,246,568	3,246,468	0
St John's Church of England Primary School	992,319	994,781	994,288	993,810	0
Ravensworth Primary School	1,682,292	1,686,468	1,685,633	1,685,056	0
Elmstead Wood Primary School	1,647,607	1,651,700	1,650,881	1,650,372	0
Harris Primary Academy Beckenham	1,917,709	1,922,460	1,921,510	1,921,595	0
Chelsfield Primary School	606,772	608,284	607,982	607,674	0
Harris Primary Academy Shortlands	1,748,575	1,752,923	1,752,054	1,751,891	0
La Fontaine Academy	1,882,397	1,887,066	1,886,133	1,886,083	0
Crofton Infant School	2,576,400	2,576,400	2,576,400	2,576,400	0
Darrick Wood Junior School	1,808,034	1,812,530	1,811,631	1,811,635	0
Darrick Wood Infant & Nursery School	1,298,417	1,301,644	1,300,999	1,300,839	0
Downe Primary School	467,833	468,998	468,765	468,431	0
Farnborough Primary School	1,066,877	1,069,528	1,068,998	1,068,872	0
Pratts Bottom Primary School	468,729	467,154	468,747	468,729	12,045
The Highway Primary School	1,157,211	1,160,077	1,159,504	1,159,225	0
Warren Road Primary School	3,882,972	3,882,972	3,882,972	3,882,972	0
St. Mary Cray Primary Academy	1,369,968	1,363,915	1,369,969	1,369,968	83,221
Trinity Church of England Primary School	1,892,983	1,897,670	1,896,733	1,896,127	0
James Dixon Primary School	2,193,553	2,199,007	2,197,917	2,197,249	0
Leasons Primary School	1,930,338	1,935,128	1,934,170	1,933,397	0
Mead Road Infant School	523,445	521,603	523,459	523,445	47,836
Midfield Primary School	2,290,272	2,279,656	2,290,276	2,290,272	56,595
Worsley Bridge Primary School	2,013,847	2,018,852	2,017,852	2,017,457	0
Langley Park Primary School	1,858,545	1,863,147	1,862,227	1,862,278	0
Harris Primary Academy Orpington	1,732,636	1,736,942	1,736,081	1,735,495	0
Scotts Park Primary School	1,920,190	1,924,961	1,924,007	1,923,867	0
Oaklands Primary Academy	2,289,855	2,295,551	2,294,412	2,294,168	0
Clare House Primary School	1,941,191	1,941,191	1,941,191	1,941,191	0
Green Street Green Primary School	1,999,874	2,004,843	2,003,850	2,003,750	0
Perry Hall Primary School	2,053,339	2,058,445	2,057,424	2,057,395	0
Bickley Primary School	1,965,661	1,970,538	1,969,563	1,969,613	0
Manor Oak Primary School	1,145,730	1,148,572	1,148,004	1,147,402	0
Keston Church of England Primary School	943,059	945,395	944,928	944,703	0
Parish Church of England Primary School	2,868,978	2,876,120	2,874,692	2,874,640	0
St George's, Bickley, Church of England Primary School	1,937,602	1,928,739	1,937,599	1,937,602	83,515
Unicorn Primary School	1,993,785	1,993,785	1,993,785	1,993,785	0
Cudham Church of England Primary School	404,703	405,706	405,505	405,216	0
St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School	1,279,439	1,282,614	1,281,979	1,281,329	0
St Mark's Church of England Primary School	1,938,168	1,942,989	1,942,025	1,941,844	0

St Nicholas Church of England Primary	1,027,282	1,024,347	1,027,282	1,027,282	3,466
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	973,297	975,717	975,233	975,026	0
St Vincent's Catholic Primary School	1,073,848	1,071,651	1,073,867	1,073,848	2,977
St Philomena's Primary School	1,123,595	1,125,721	1,125,163	1,124,922	0
St Anthony's Roman Catholic Primary School	882,127	883,049	882,612	882,211	0
St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School	1,153,654	1,156,524	1,155,950	1,155,620	0
St James' Roman Catholic Primary School	1,058,317	1,060,946	1,060,420	1,060,388	0
Blenheim Primary School	1,145,090	1,147,936	1,147,367	1,146,914	0
Biggin Hill Primary School	2,001,892	2,006,865	2,005,870	2,005,825	0
Crofton Junior School	3,372,150	3,372,150	3,372,150	3,372,150	0
Holy Innocents Catholic Primary School	1,252,650	1,255,114	1,254,531	1,254,304	0
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	1,983,937	1,988,719	1,987,762	1,987,804	0
Highfield Infants' School	1,326,692	1,329,944	1,329,294	1,329,257	0
Highfield Junior School	1,697,190	1,697,190	1,697,190	1,697,190	0
Hayes Primary School	2,876,933	2,876,933	2,876,933	2,876,933	0
Raglan Primary School	2,072,524	2,077,663	2,076,636	2,076,638	0
Tubbenden Primary School	3,098,907	3,100,993	3,099,449	3,099,648	0
Harris Academy Beckenham	6,904,233	6,921,460	6,918,012	6,918,545	0
Harris Girls Academy Bromley	6,655,318	6,671,935	6,668,609	6,668,563	0
Harris Academy Orpington	3,786,869	3,796,315	3,794,424	3,793,467	0
Eden Park High School	8,283,158	8,303,815	8,299,680	8,299,981	0
Bullers Wood School for Boys	6,103,146	6,073,547	6,103,144	6,103,146	46,197
Bishop Justus CofE School	8,407,161	8,428,128	8,423,931	8,423,449	0
Bullers Wood School	7,485,242	7,503,800	7,500,085	7,501,592	0
Coopers School	8,108,102	8,128,183	8,124,163	8,124,500	0
Langley Park School for Boys	7,285,839	7,303,779	7,300,188	7,302,026	0
Ravens Wood School	7,492,057	7,510,614	7,506,900	7,508,386	0
Newstead Wood School	5,128,445	5,141,094	5,138,563	5,140,111	0
Kemnal Technology College	4,603,610	4,614,978	4,612,702	4,611,546	0
Hayes School	7,990,510	8,010,328	8,006,361	8,008,404	0
Chislehurst School for Girls	6,575,009	6,557,752	6,575,001	6,575,009	20,234
Charles Darwin School	7,768,274	7,787,529	7,783,674	7,783,923	0
Langley Park School for Girls	7,767,463	7,786,722	7,782,867	7,784,864	0
The Ravensbourne School	7,816,162	7,835,520	7,831,645	7,831,478	0
Darrick Wood School	8,525,347	8,546,448	8,542,224	8,543,845	0
	267,922,602	268,245,860	268,312,512	268,311,364	
Plus contingency held centrally	913,106	589,848	523,196	524,344	
Total DSG allocated	268,835,708	268,835,708	268,835,708	268,835,708	833,676
MFG £	920,008	644,885	832,385	833,676	
MFG number	22	13	19	19	

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Report No.
CEF23068

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 1 February 2024

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO DRAFT
BUDGET 2024/25

Contact Officer: David Bradshaw, Head of Finance, Children, Education and Families
Tel: 020 8313 4807 E-mail: David.Bradshaw@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Finance

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1. The prime purpose of this report is to consider the Portfolio Holder's Draft 2024/25 Budget which incorporates future cost pressures and initial draft budget saving options which have been reported to Executive on 17th January 2024. Members are requested to consider the initial draft budget being proposed and also identify any further action that might be taken to reduce cost pressures facing the Council over the next four years.
 - 1.2. Executive are requesting that each PDS Committee consider the proposed initial draft budget savings and cost pressures for their Portfolio and the views of each PDS Committee be reported back to the next meeting of the Executive, prior to the Executive making recommendations to Council on 2024/25 Council Tax levels.
 - 1.3. There are still outstanding issues and areas of uncertainty remaining. Any further updates will be included in the 2024/25 Council Tax report to the next meeting of the Executive.
-

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **The Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:**
 - i) **Consider the update on the financial forecast for 2024/25 to 2027/28;**
 - ii) **Consider the initial draft 2024/25 budget as a basis for setting the 2024/25 budget; and,**
 - iii) **Provide comments on the initial draft 2024/25 budget for the February meeting of the Council's Executive.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Children, Education and Families Portfolio budget setting supports the provision of services to vulnerable young people
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Children, Education and Families portfolio budgets
 4. Total current budget for this head: £81,587k (draft 2024/25 budget)
 5. Source of funding: Draft revenue budget for 2024/25
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Full details will be available with the Council's 2024/25 Financial Control Budget to be published in March 2024
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement: The statutory duties relating to financial reporting are covered within the Local Government Act 1972; the Local Government Finance Act 1998; the Local Government Act 2000; the Local Government Act 2002 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The 2024/25 budget reflects the financial impact of the Council's strategies, service plans etc. which impact on all of the Council's customers (including council tax payers) and users of the services.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

3.1. APPROACH TO BUDGETING, FINANCIAL CONTEXT AND ECONOMIC SITUATION WHICH CAN IMPACT ON PUBLIC FINANCES

- 3.1.1. The Draft 2024/25 Budget enables the Council to continue to deliver on its key priorities and the financial forecast enables medium term financial planning. Early decisions should be considered which impact on the medium-term financial plan within the context of meeting 'Making Bromley Even Better' priorities.
- 3.1.2. The Council continues to deliver key services and 'live within its means'. Forward financial planning and financial management is a key strength at Bromley. This report continues to forecast the financial prospects for the next four years and includes the outcome of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25. It is important to note that some caution is required in considering any projections for 2025/26 to 2027/28 as this depends on the outcome of the Government's next Spending Review as well as the impact of the Fair Funding Review (likely to be from 2026/27, at the earliest).
- 3.1.3. A strong economy with growth increases revenues which supports the Government's ability to reduce public sector debt as the gap between finances raised and spend on public services is reduced. The slowing down of the global economy and many sources of uncertainty had previously resulted in a downgrading of the level of economic growth in the UK economy. It is important to consider the key national issues that could impact on public finances over the next four years. The Covid situation had a dramatic impact on public finances. Not since the second world war has a national emergency affected every business and household in the UK. The economic shock has had no comparisons for over 300 years. As part of the Office for Budget Responsibility report, published with the Autumn Statement, government overall debt rises from 84.9% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2022/23 and is expected to continue to increase and peak at 93.2% in 2026/27 and fall to 92.8% by 2028/29, maintaining a level not seen since the early 1960s. The next few years remain uncertain economically and fiscally. GDP is expected to be 0.6% in 2023/24 rising to 2% in 2026/27 and 1.9% in 2027/28. These economic factors could impact on the funding available for local government. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25 provides a one-year settlement only which leaves considerable uncertainties over future years. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) forecast that the latest plans (Autumn Statement) provides real term cuts for unprotected budgets (mainly local government) of 3.4% for period 2024/25 to 2028/29 – additional funding of £20bn would be required to avoid cuts by 2028/29.
- 3.1.4. Local Government has borne the brunt of austerity and savings compared with other areas of Government expenditure from 2009/10 to 2019/20 (10 years) and had a 'rollover plus' one-year financial settlement for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. For 2023/24 and 2024/25 the Council has received a more generous settlement which includes additional funding for social care relating to the repurpose of Adult Social Care Reform monies. However, this needs to be considered in the context of the 'new normal' (post Covid), significant increases in inflation since 2022/23 and the considerable cost pressures across service areas facing local government. The risk of austerity measures for future years, from 2025/26, will be a consideration but this will depend on the need for a sustainable economic recovery. Therefore 'flat' real terms funding for councils may be the best-case scenario from 2025/26. The Government will need to address the impact of the public finances from the Covid situation. Even if funding levels are maintained, the ongoing demographic and other costs pressures are unlikely to be matched by corresponding increases in government funding.
- 3.1.5. The Budget Strategy has to be set within the context of ongoing cost and demographic pressures not being matched by Government or other external funding with potential Government funding reductions in the medium and longer term. There is an on-going need to

transform the size and shape of the organisation to secure priority outcomes within the resources available. There is also a need to build in flexibility in identifying options to bridge the medium-term budget gap as the gap could increase further.

- 3.1.6. Bromley has the second lowest settlement funding per head of population in 2024/25 for the whole of London, giving us £123 per head of population compared with the average in London of £330 – the highest is £556. Despite this, Bromley has retained the fourth lowest council tax in outer London (other low grant funded authorities tend to have higher council tax levels). Using 2024/25 funding information, if Bromley's received the average grant funding for London, its annual income would increase by £53.7m. If the council tax was the average of the four other low grant funded boroughs, our income would increase by £31.9m. The lower council tax level has been achieved by having a below average cost per head of population in outer London. The Council continues to express concerns with the current and previous governments about the fairness of the funding system and to lobby for a fairer deal for our residents. Despite being a low-cost authority, Bromley has achieved general savings of over £130m since 2011/12 but it becomes more challenging to achieve further savings with a low-cost base.

3.2. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL FORECAST

- 3.2.1. Details of the financial forecast are provided in the Draft 2024/25 Budget and Update on the Council's Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2027/28 report to the Executive on 17th January 2024.
- 3.2.2. Even though the draft budget would be broadly balanced next year, the future year's budget gap is projected to increase to £38.7m per annum by 2027/28. Without any action to address the budget gap in future years additional reserves will need to be used with the risk of the budget gap increasing in future years and becoming unsustainable.
- 3.2.3. In the financial forecast, after allowing for inflation, council tax income and other changes there is an unfunded budget gap from 2025/26 partly due to net service growth/cost pressures. This highlights the importance of scrutinising growth and recognition that corresponding savings will need to be found to achieve a statutory balanced budget. It is timely as we all have to consider what level of growth the Council can afford and the need for significant mitigation or alternative transformation options.

3.3. CHANGES SINCE THE 2023/24 BUDGET THAT IMPACT ON THE DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET AND FINANCIAL FORECAST

- 3.3.1. The 2023/24 Council Tax report reported to Executive in February 2023 identified a significant "budget gap" over the four-year financial planning period. Some key changes are summarised below.
- 3.3.2. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25, includes an increase in core funding to reflect inflation (CPI annual increase at Sept '23). The additional social care grant, which was originally planned as indicated by the Local Government Finance Settlement 2023/24, of £2.65m reflects the impact of the Council's ability to raise funding through the Adult Social Care precept – the more that can be raised the lower level of funding provided. Additional new homes bonus of £0.4m is available and the core spending power overall increase of 6.2% assumes council tax and ASC precept increase of 4.99%. The settlement includes a reduction in Services Grant from £1.5m to £0.2m (reduction of £1.3m) which is disappointing. Although the settlement broadly recognises the impact of inflation it does not reflect the scale of cost/growth pressures facing the Council for 2024/25. Uncertainty remains on the level of funding from 2025/26. The forecast assumes that the level of core grant funding will not reduce, in real terms, from 2025/26.

- 3.3.3. This is the sixth one-year settlement in a row for councils, despite requests for multi-year settlement to assist in financial planning and to aid the delivery of financial sustainability.
- 3.3.4. Historically, the main measure of inflation for annual price increases for the Council's contracted out services was Retail Price Index (excluding mortgage interest rates) i.e., RPIX. However, more recent contracts use Consumer Price Index (CPI). The RPIX is normally at least 1% above the Consumer Price Index (CPI) level. The Draft 2024/25 Budget assumes overall price increases, including a cash limit, of 3.5% in 2024/25 reducing to 2.5% in 2025/26 and 2% per annum from 2026/27, which compares with the existing CPI of 3.9% (4.1% for RPIX). Although inflation is expected to reduce further some volatility remains. It is important to note that the rate of 3.5% in 2024/25 is consistent to an approach taken by many other local authorities but it creates a challenge during a period of cost pressures across services - the alternative is more savings to address the alternative increased budget gap.
- 3.3.5. The Draft 2024/25 Budget and financial forecast includes significant growth/cost pressures with mitigation savings reducing the overall impact. The mitigation savings identified are £33.2m in 2024/25 rising to £58.4m per annum from 2027/28. Any reduction in the delivery of the mitigation savings could have a significant detrimental impact on the Council's budget gap and the contingency sum provides some limited funding support towards delivering a balanced budget in the medium term. Given the scale of savings identified and any inherent risks, the need for longer term financial planning, the uncertainty on future year cost pressures, significant changes that may follow relating to future new burdens, effect of ongoing population changes and the potential impact of other public agencies identifying savings or new cost burdens which impact on the Council's costs it is essential to retain an adequate sum to partly mitigate such cost risks, without relying on the drawdown of one off reserves.
- 3.3.6. Transforming Bromley is being refreshed as the primary conduit to develop and deliver savings, efficiency and transformation change programmes. We are reframing our programme to ensure it remains fit for purpose over the next four years, 2024-28, allowing us to proactively consider our future challenges and opportunities. In performance terms Bromley Council is one of the top performing boroughs in the country across most service areas.
- 3.3.7. The Council has set out an ambitious range of priorities in its corporate plan 'Making Bromley Even Better'. Transformational change is required to sustain our progress in achieving some of the Council's longer-term priorities. The ongoing financial sustainability of the Council depends on finding significant opportunities for demand management and reduction, cost-reduction, service efficiencies and income generation to meet projected budget shortfalls. It may be necessary to invest to save to unlock these opportunities at scale, and to protect critical services and resident experience significantly from the impact of budget reductions.
- 3.3.8. The current Children, Education and Families Portfolio Draft 2024/25 Budget includes the full year effect from previous years and the current Transformation savings, totalling £336k in 2024/25 increasing to £651k per annum from 2025/26. A summary of the savings is provided below with more details within Appendix 1.

Transformation Savings

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000
Full year effect of previous years transformation				
Emergency Foster Placements	-79	-79	-79	-79
0-25 Transitions Service	-100	-200	-200	-200
Youth Services review	0	-125	-125	-125
Maintained Nurseries to work under a commercial model	0	-65	-65	-65
Adult Education income generation	3	3	3	3
New Transformation for 2024/25				
Commissioning/joint working with health	-10	-10	-10	-10
Restructure of Permanency Service	-150	-150	-150	-150
Early Help reduction	0	-25	-25	-25
Total	-336	-651	-651	-651

3.3.9. This key work continues, and further proposals will be reported to Members in the future as part of addressing the four-year financial forecast and meeting the 'budget gap' whilst ensuring key priorities are met.

3.3.10. There remain significant cost/growth pressures impacting on education, high needs transport, housing, adults and children's social care as well as opportunities for the mitigation of costs. For this Portfolio, there are additional costs relating to SEN Transport, placements and children social care staffing. The financial forecast elements for CEF are summarised below.

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Growth/cost pressures	34,314	44,827	54,842	64,685
Mitigation	-311	-658	-758	-858
Offset by DSG grant/deficit reserve	-25,003	-33,634	-41,769	-49,730
Net additional costs	9,000	10,535	12,315	14,097

3.3.11. There has been significant growth across the Portfolio. The main areas of growth are:-

- Children's social care placements – There has been a slight increase in the numbers of Children Looked After (CLA), although our numbers remain considerably lower than statistical neighbours. Although it is estimated that numbers will rise still further in future years, the increase will be gradual. However, increased complexity of placements being made and increases in costs due to lack of supply, etc has meant that the costs of placements will remain the main pressure with regard to placements.
- Costs of Agency staff – Agency staff costs outstrip the budget available for permanent staff. Bromley has a high level of permanency but high costs of agency staff and keeping to the caseload promise means additional costs are incurred. Over the past year we have recruited 20 permanent social workers from overseas, and will look to do this again in 2024 in order to reduce our reliance on agency workers.

- SEN Transport – There has been increases in clients above and beyond expected levels in 2023/24 which will have an impact on future years. It is expected that client numbers will continue to increase in the coming years at broadly the same numbers. Moreover, additional costs due to the lack of supply of suitable transport, availability of drivers, workforce moving to alternative occupations, London living wage, the introduction of ULEZ and a general increase in costs across the board in the transport sector has seen contract costs rise significantly.
- High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) costs, in particular placements, continue to increase in terms of numbers and costs. Although there has been increases in the DSG grant, costs continue to outstrip the grant and there continues to be an overall in year deficit in the DSG. More detail of the DSG is contained in paragraph 3.6.

3.3.12. It remains essential that there is the ongoing scrutiny and review of growth/cost pressures, which are mainly unfunded beyond 2025/26 with options to help achieve a balanced budget, including any mitigation over the financial forecast period.

3.4. DETAILED DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET

3.4.1. Detailed draft 2024/25 Budgets are attached in Appendix 1 and will form the basis for the overall final Portfolio/Departmental budgets after any further adjustments to deal with service pressures and any other additional spending. Under the budget process previously agreed, these initial detailed budgets have been forwarded to PDS Committees for scrutiny and comment prior to the next Executive meeting in February.

3.4.2. Appendix 1 sets out:

- A summary of the Draft 2024/25 Revenue Budget for the Portfolio showing actual 2022/23 expenditure, 2023/24 budget, 2024/25 budget and overall variations in planned spending between 2023/24 and 2024/25;
- A summary of the main reasons for variations per Portfolio in planned spending between 2023/24 and 2024/25 together with supporting notes;
- A high level subjective summary for the Portfolio showing expenditure on employees, premises etc.

3.5. REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

3.5.1. There will need to be an ongoing review identifying opportunities as the medium term 'budget gap' remains significant. The 2024/25 Budget includes significant additional income from the review of fees and charges and Chief Officers will continue to review fees and charges for 2025/26 and beyond to identify opportunities to reduce the future years 'budget gap'.

3.6. SCHOOLS BUDGET

3.6.1. Since 2003/04, the Council has received funding for the 'Schools Budget' element of Education services through a ring fenced grant, more recently through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

3.6.2. The implementation of the National Funding Formula (NFF) began in 2018/19. Funding has been split into four blocks, Schools, High Needs, Early Years and Central Spend DSG. The funding splits are detailed in the table below:-

PROVISIONAL DSG FUNDING					
	Schools	High Needs	Early Years	Central	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
2023/24	257,152	74,365	23,328	2,046	356,891
2024/25 (provisional)	268,836	76,857	38,034	2,014	385,741
Variation	11,684	2,492	14,706	-32	28,850

- 3.6.3. The figures in the table above are provisional and subject to change once DfE issue any updates in due course.
- 3.6.4. The Schools Block has risen by £11.7m. This is due to an increase in the per pupil unit of funding and increases in the population figures. This includes the previous year Mainstream Schools Additional Grant of £8.7m which was paid as a separate grant in 2023/24. Allowing for the £8.7m grant the funding increase is £3.0m. The majority of this funding will be top sliced and returned to DfE to fund Academy Schools.
- 3.6.5. The High Needs Block is continuing to see pressures coming through the system. Nationally, some authorities are building up high levels of deficit reserves.
- 3.6.6. The DSG allocation has resulted in an increase in high needs block funding of £2.5m for Bromley. Bromley received £2.8m of additional supplementary grant in 2023/24 that was rolled into the baseline for 2024/25, so the increase would be £5.3m if this were excluded.
- 3.6.7. The £2.5m increase is due to increases in per pupil funding and the increase in pupils themselves.
- 3.6.8. Although there are increases in funding, predictions for expenditure are rising at a faster rate. This is due to growth in pupil numbers in this area, Government extending the scope of the High Needs Block from ages 5 to 19 to 0 to 25 and historical baseline funding adjustments. It is predicted that without further management intervention, there will be a deficit of c£5m per annum over the next four years.
- 3.6.9. There is an estimated DSG deficit at the end of the 2023/24 financial year of £16,149k.
- 3.6.10. Although additional grant been given by DfE, demand continues to outstrip funding. Bromley was one of the last authorities in London to fall into a deficit position regarding its DSG. The overspends are in the main in the high needs block area and are related to the cost of placements in all types of education settings.
- 3.6.11. The unsustainability of the SEN system is a national issue and there are high expectations being set for the DfE's SEND Review. Nevertheless, officers are seeking to further reduce costs, within the tight constraints of the legal framework. Officers are working with DfE and are in discussion with them regarding recovery plans and actions that can be taken to reduce the deficit position.
- 3.6.12. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the budget calculations and adequacy of reserves. The 151 Officer within that commentary is now required to consider the Councils DSG deficit position, despite the statutory override being in place.

- 3.6.13. The statutory override effectively means that any DSG deficits are not included in the Councils main revenue budgets. However, funding will ultimately need to be identified.
- 3.6.14. In effect the Council has to still set aside resources to meet the DSG deficit and where no ongoing funding is identified such funding will need to come from the Councils reserves – effectively creating a ‘negative reserve’. On that basis the latest in year estimate for 2024/25 indicates a deficit of £5.631m which has to ultimately be funded from the Councils reserves unless further Government funding is made available.
- 3.6.15. Although DSG is effectively ring fenced, the ongoing increase through funding by reserves (general and earmarked) creates a financially unsustainable position in the medium to longer term.
- 3.6.16. The External Auditor as part of the annual accounts, are required to comment on the Councils Value for money arrangements and will be required to consider any DSG deficit and the impact on the Councils finances.
- 3.6.17. In terms of presentation of the estimated DSG deficit of £16,149k up to 31/3/2024, there will need to be adequate funding from the Councils reserves unless alternative savings can be found. The use of reserves have been assumed in this report, although the specific reserves to use have not been identified at this stage.
- 3.6.18. Given the continuation of the scale of the DSG deficit, the Director of Education will be reviewing the DSG recovery plan which will be reported to a future meeting.
- 3.6.19. Early Years funding has increased substantially by £14.7m. DfE have:-
- (a) Introduced new funding for under twos of £12.83 per part time equivalent (PTE) hour.
 - (b) Introduced new funding for two year old working parents at £9.44 per PTE hour.
 - (c) Increased the PTE rate for disadvantaged two year olds from £6.63 per PTE to £9.44.
 - (d) Increased the PTE rate for 3 and 4 year olds from £5.51 per PTE to £6.40.
 - (e) Increased Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) rates and number of hours across the new funding streams.
 - (f) Increased the Disability Access Fund (DAF) rates and numbers of hours across the new funding streams.
- 3.6.20. During 2023/24 DfE announced a supplementary grant which increased the 2023/24 rates in year but was dealt with outside the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). These have been reflected in the new 2024/25 rates.
- 3.6.21. The assumption for volumes of hours (PTE’s) remains the same for 2024/25 as the latest volumes for the 2023/24 DSG as DfE use January 2023 data. However this will change once the January 2024 census is published which will affect the figures.
- 3.6.22. The Central Block has decreased by £32k. The per pupil rate fell by 1.25% (the equivalent of a loss of £25k). There was a £7k reduction of grant received due to a decrease in pupil numbers. There continues to be pressures in the Central Schools DSG due to funding shortfalls. Last year the Council used £510k of core LBB funding to underpin this expenditure. A further £50k is being proposed for 2024/25 bringing the total Council core funding to £560k.

3.7. POSITION BY DEPARTMENT – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CEF - KEY ISSUES/RISKS

Overall Demand Pressures

- 3.7.1. Children, Education and Families Department continue to experience a high level of demand with an increased level of complexity, in particular with regard to the mental health of young people and exploitation. The following report sets out the pressures and the actions being taken to reduce these financial pressures.
- 3.7.2. In particular, we continue to experience considerable pressures with regard to the costs of placements for young people coming to residential care, particularly where there is a complexity of need. Despite maintaining a good record of keeping the number of young people in the care of the Local Authority to a safe minimum the unit cost of these placements continues to rise at a rate considerably higher than any rate of inflation.
- 3.7.3. Whilst there are a number of financial pressures that impact upon CEF, the costs of residential placements accounts for a significant proportion of these pressures.

Key Areas of Pressure;

- 3.7.4. **SEN Transport;** We continue to see particular pressures in relation to costs which are driven by continued fuel costs for taxi's, and driver recruitment and wages. The measures which were agreed in summer 2022 that enabled changes to routes through route optimisation, increased travel training and introduction of personalised budgets have been effective in reducing overall costs and moving more young people onto less expensive modes of transport. Proportionally more children have been moved away from taxi transport and the overall number of routes have reduced to ensure more efficient route optimisation.
- 3.7.5. We will continue to work to move greater numbers of young people onto public transport or family provided transport. These initiatives will also be undertaken alongside a number of other initiatives to shift demand such as creating more in Borough placements through the creation of new special schools and increasing local school places. We are also continuing to work towards reducing the rate of new EHCP plans through providing viable different options for children with emerging special needs in order to then reduce future demand for transport.
- 3.7.6. **DSG;** Whilst this continues to be a significant area of pressure, it is important to highlight that this pressure remains a real issue for every Local Authority and requires national responses and changes. The key driver to reducing the overspend for the DSG will be the continued work to find alternative supports to families that means that we can offer alternatives to assessing for an EHCP. We continue to develop initiatives that contribute to the overall reduction of EHCP's and the associated support packages that impact the High needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). These initiatives include the restructure of the Education Division to ensure increased capacity to front-line teams that undertake the assessments. The initial signs of impact show that we are reducing the rate of plans being agreed and also reducing the numbers of EHCP applications by diverting requests towards other types of early support. Although the demand for plans across the course of the year show an increase in overall numbers, these new pathways are beginning to show that the rate of increase is beginning to reduce. Over the course of the next year we will need to maintain this focus to further reduce the rate of increase despite demand being forecast to grow.
- 3.7.7. **Residential Placements;** As highlighted in the initial paragraphs of this document, this area continues to be the main area of financial pressure for the department, due primarily to the continued rise in the unit cost of these placements. Nationally there is a shortage of placements for the more complex children that come into care. This means that at any one time there are a large number of Local Authorities chasing a finite number of placements, leading to higher prices for beds and often "bidding wars" between Local Authorities to secure placements. The price of

residential care is estimated to have risen by 15-17% over the past year alone. In comparison, the overall numbers of children coming into care has remained broadly static over the past 4 years and we have managed to prevent the rise in numbers seen by other Local Authorities in the post Covid period. Our comparative numbers remain considerably lower than statistical neighbours and the national average. During the recent Ofsted inspection, inspectors were also satisfied that our thresholds were safe and appropriate.

3.7.8. **CSC Staffing;** The financial pressures in relation to staffing relate to the use of agency staffing. At present we have approx. 20% of staff within Children's Social Care as agency, against a budget tolerance of 10%. Like many professions, post pandemic we have seen a number of experienced staff leave the profession, which has hampered progress to reduce the reliance on agency staff. Across all London Authorities the average for use of agency staffing is 22%, therefore we are slightly below the London average. We continue to look to innovative ways of reducing this reliance and over the past two years have considerably increased the numbers of trainee Social Workers we have taken on through both the "Front-line" and "Step-Up" recruitment initiatives. In addition, we have also looked to recruit Social Workers from overseas. This has proved successful and in the past 15 months we have recruited 20 social workers from Zimbabwe and South Africa. We will look to recruit another 20 SW's in 2024/25.

3.7.9. **Actions to Mitigate Pressures;** In addition to the existing initiatives that are outlined above we are also already developing a number of further initiatives to reduce expenditure through delivering services differently and seeking to find innovative ways of addressing the continuing cost pressures throughout the Department. These will be vital in seeking to remain within the target of a 3.5% cash limit envelope, particularly in light of the continued inflation of placement costs which remain at a rate considerably above 3.5% figure. These mitigation actions include the following;

- Exploration of developing and running our own children's home as a way of reducing some placement costs.
- "Professionalising" a group of our foster carers with increased levels of support so that they can care for some of our more complex young people rather than going into residential care.
- Reviewing the use of some buildings used across the Department to see where we might be able to amalgamate delivery services out of one building rather than a range of different buildings.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

4.1 The draft 2024/25 Budget reflects the Council's key priorities which includes, for example, supporting vulnerable adults with children and being ambitious for all our children and young people.

5. TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Draft 2024/25 Budget enables the Council to continue to deliver on its 'Making Bromley Even Better' key priorities and the financial forecast enables medium term financial planning allowing for early decisions to be made which impact on the medium term financial plan. The Council continues to deliver key services and lives within its means. This report identifies the implications of transformation and the next steps.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial implications are contained within the overall body of the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Staff, departmental and trade union representatives will be consulted individually and collectively on any adverse staffing implications arising from the Draft 2024/25 Budget. Managers have also been asked to encourage and facilitate staff involvement in budget and service planning.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The adoption of the budget and the setting of the council tax are matters reserved for the Council upon recommendation from the Executive. In coming to decisions in relation to the revenue budget (and the Council Tax), the Council and its officers have various statutory duties. In general terms, the Council is required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to make estimates of gross Revenue expenditure and anticipated income, leading to a calculation of a budget requirement and the setting of an overall budget (and Council Tax). The amount of the budget requirement must be sufficient to meet the Council's legal and financial obligations, ensure the proper discharge of its statutory duties, and lead to a balanced budget.

8.2 Schedule 72 to the Localism Act 2011 inserted a new section IVZA in the Local Government Finance 1992 Act which sets out the duty on billing authorities, and precepting authorities to each determine whether their relevant basic amount of council tax for a financial year is excessive. If an authority's relevant basic amount of council tax is excessive, the provisions in relation to the duty to hold a referendum will apply.

8.3 The Education Act 2005 introduced the concept of a funding period, which allows for the introduction of multiple year budgets rather than the setting of financial year budgets.

8.4 Executive is being requested to delegate the setting of the schools' budget funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant to the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Holder.

8.5 The making of these budget decisions at full Council is a statutory responsibility for all Members. The Council should be satisfied that the proposals put forward are a reasonably prudent use of resources in both the short and long term, and that the interests of both Council Taxpayers and ratepayers on the one hand and the users of Council services on the other are both taken into account. The Council has a number of statutory duties which it must fulfil by law. Although there can be an element of discretion on level of service provision. The Council also discharges a range of discretionary services. The Council is not bound to carry out such activities in the same way as it is for statutory duties, however, it may be bound contractually to do so. A decision to cease or reduce provision of a discretionary service must be taken in accordance with sound public /administrative law decision making principles. The Council must also comply with the Public Sector Equality Duties in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In doing so, the Council must have due regard to elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with persons who share a protected characteristic.

8.6 This report sets the budget for the forthcoming financial year and, in some cases where budgets are recommended to be reduced, further decisions may be required (or have already been taken) to implement the initiative achieving the budget reduction. These decisions will be subject to any applicable consultation requirements and analysis of equalities impacts together with consideration of other specific legal requirements. This will be undertaken as part the decision-making process as required to implement the proposed budget.

- 8.7 Further a significant number of these decisions are by law for the Executive or delegated officers. Such considerations, which will be fully assessed by the decision makers in due course, are therefore not set out in this report. It therefore follows that the outcome of these decisions may lead to further amendments and/or changes to the proposed savings. Members will be aware that decisions on the budget do not amount to detailed decisions on the precise delivery of services, those decisions, in any event, for most services, being by law a matter for the Executive. Decision makers (usually Executive, Portfolio Holders or Chief Officers) are aware and will be reminded of their flexibility for example, around possible budget virements and adjustments and the use of reserves when they consider it appropriate to make alternative decisions, which may not accord with a particular budget line. The overall requirement to balance the budget remains, however.
- 8.8 The Local Government Act 2003 included new requirements to be followed by local authorities, which includes the CIPFA Prudential Code. This includes obligations, which includes ensuring adequacy of future years reserves in making budget decisions and section 25 of that Act requires the Director of Finance to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of calculating the Council Tax and the adequacy of the reserves. Further details to support these obligations will be reflected in the 2024/25 Council Tax report to be reported to the February meeting of the Executive.
- 8.9 Section 106, Local Government Finance Act 1992, applies to Members where:
- They are present at a meeting of the Council, the Executive or a Committee and at the time of the meeting an amount of Council Tax is payable by them and has remained unpaid for at least two months; and
 - any budget or Council Tax calculation, or recommendation or decision which might affect the making of any such calculation, is the subject of consideration at the meeting.
- 8.10 In these circumstances, any such Members shall at the meeting and as soon as practicable after its commencement disclose the fact that Section 106 applies to them and shall not vote on any question concerning the matter. Such Members are not debarred from speaking. Failure to comply with these requirements constitutes a criminal offence, unless any such members can prove they did not know that Section 106 applied to them at the time of the meeting or that the matter in question was the subject of consideration at the meeting.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Draft 2024/25 Budget and Update on the Council's Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2027/28, Executive 17th January 2024. Finance monitoring, Estimate Documents, etc all held in Finance Section

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CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO**DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25 - SUMMARY**

2022/23 Actual	Service Area	2023/24 Budget	Increased costs	Other Changes	2024/25 Draft Budget
£		£	£	£	£
	Education - Core				
(346,607)	Adult Education Centres	(429,980)	0	89,390	(340,590)
576,113	Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	1,113,130	35,150	(146,910)	1,001,370
2,816,368	SEN and Inclusion	3,514,430	122,090	0	3,636,520
99,910	Strategic Place Planning	139,060	12,150	0	151,210
22,864	Workforce Development & Governor Services	(1,970)	1,080	(0)	(890)
7,516,446	Access & Inclusion	7,975,320	366,630	4,580,000	12,921,950
195,839	Other Strategic Functions	733,270	14,780	(36,550)	711,500
(40,225)	Central School Costs	(59,640)	(920)	6,820	(53,740)
10,840,709		12,983,620	550,960	4,492,750	18,027,330
	Children's Social Care				
1,865,022	Bromley Youth Support Programme	1,797,510	66,550	43,920	1,907,980
1,259,594	Early Intervention and Family Support	1,545,270	118,110	(211,540)	1,451,840
9,581,911	CLA and Care Leavers	11,001,730	415,440	867,550	12,284,720
451,792	Vitrual School	482,870	16,600	(0)	499,470
13,247,150	Children's Placement	14,598,310	663,190	6,280,000	21,541,500
9,189,312	Permanency	9,282,080	324,880	(229,000)	9,377,960
5,296,914	0-25 Children Service (Disability Services)	3,714,060	162,730	528,540	4,405,330
4,963,087	Referral and Assessment Service	4,764,940	161,950	(137,760)	4,789,130
4,581,599	Safeguarding and Care Planning East	4,181,220	136,230	(99,150)	4,218,300
2,998,098	Safeguarding and Care Planning West	2,493,100	80,770	(88,470)	2,485,400
(2,351,330)	Safeguarding and Quality Improvement	(6,254,980)	109,270	(436,550)	(6,582,260)
51,083,148		47,606,110	2,255,720	6,517,540	56,379,370
	Education - DSG				
21,690,994	Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	21,189,860	784,900	15,070,650	37,045,410
40,975,544	SEN and Inclusion	40,027,770	1,389,950	1,144,940	42,562,660
21,861	Strategic Place Planning	11,130	390	0	11,520
3,271,963	Access & Inclusion	3,563,370	131,690	(205,970)	3,489,090
(97,312,188)	Schools Budgets	(103,138,880)	(3,480,350)	(16,196,730)	(122,815,960)
129,982	Other Strategic Functions	206,310	4,470	(25,570)	185,210
7,847,498	Primary School	10,023,270	350,810	(185,500)	10,188,580
4,005,454	Secondary School	3,798,050	132,930	31,720	3,962,700
17,840,346	Special Schools & Alternative Provision	18,982,560	685,210	601,210	20,268,980
(1,528,546)		(5,336,560)	0	234,750	(5,101,810)
60,395,311	TOTAL CONTROLLABLE	55,253,170	2,806,680	11,245,040	69,304,890
128,782	TOTAL NON CONTROLLABLE	1,504,550	15,180	(118,360)	1,401,370
11,181,486	TOTAL EXCLUDED RECHARGES	10,880,650	0	0	10,880,650
71,705,579	PORTFOLIO TOTAL	67,638,370	2,821,860	11,126,680	81,586,910

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO**SUMMARY OF BUDGET VARIATIONS 2024/25**

Ref	VARIATION IN 2024/25			ORIGINAL
	£'000	£'000		BUDGET
				2023/24
				£'000
1	2023/24 BUDGET			
				67,638
2	Increased Costs			2,822
	Full Year Effect of Allocation of Central Contingency			
3	Above inflation pressures on Childrens placements			33,487
4	SEND Transport growth			9,005
5	Energy contract inflation			680
6	Removal of drawdown of contingency for additional Social Worker posts in 2023/24			870
	Cr	870	1,687	
	Movements Between Portfolios/Departments			
7	Removal of COVID funding			Cr 2,800
8	Drawdown of contingency for additional Social Worker posts			870
		320		0
9	Transfer of Children's Placement Team from Adults to CSC 2023/24			
		144		0
10	Transfer of LD Care Management staff & funding to Children's 0-25 Years' Service			
11	Energy contract inflation			680
12	Funding from Homes for Ukraine (HFU) carry forward			0
13	Additional Social Care Grant			Cr 2,300
	Cr	1,250	1,038	
	Real Changes			
	<i>Growth</i>			
14	Additional costs and demand across CSC			33,487
15	SEN Transport Full Year Effect (FYE)			9,005
16	Social Worker permanent/agency to meet caseload promise, etc			24,568
17	SEN Transport additional demand			9,005
18	National Living Wage			1,042
19	Decrease in Central DSG allocation			560
		50	9,311	
	<i>Mitigation</i>			
20	Additional Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) contribution			Cr 2,550
21	SEN Transport route optimisation, etc			9,005
	Cr	100	Cr 311	
	Cr	211		
	<i>Transformation Programme Savings</i>			
22	Adult Education			170
23	Commissioning/joint working with Health			33,487
24	Emergency Foster placement			5,626
25	0-25 Transitions Service (Inc. Short Breaks)			4,045
26	Restructure of Permanency service			2,554
	Cr	150	Cr 336	
27	Variations in Capital Charges			0
28	Variations in Recharges			Cr 151
29	Variations in Insurances			Cr 111
30	2024/25 DRAFT BUDGET			81,587

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

Notes on Budget Variations in 2024/25

Ref Comments

Full Year Effect of Allocation of Central Contingency

- 3 Above inflation pressures on Childrens placements (Dr £1,370k)
Additional funding was agreed to cover above inflation cost increases in Childrens Social Care placements in 2023/24. This is the full year effect allocation continuing into 2024/25
- 4 SEND Transport growth (Dr £1,000k)
Growth agreed by the Executive in March 2023 for 2022/23, and drawn down from the Contingency to deal with ongoing budget pressures of demand and cost. This is the full year effect impact moving into 2024/25
- 5 Energy contract inflation (Dr £187k)
To recognise cost pressures arising from the current state of the energy market.
- 6 Removal of drawdown of contingency for additional Social Worker posts in 2023/24 (Cr £870k)
Executive agreed a package of £2.4m to cover additional social workers over a four year period. The amount for 2023/24 was £870k. Future years allocations reduce as the demand lowers. Ref 8 refers to the new allocation in 2024/25

Movements Between Portfolios/Departments

- 7 Removal of COVID funding (Dr £1,500k)
General COVID grant funding was set aside over a three year period to cover costs in CEF. The funding received for 2024/25 has been reduced and therefore has been adjusted to reflect the reduced position.
- 8 Drawdown of contingency for additional Social Worker posts (Dr £580k)
Executive agreed a package of £2.4m to cover additional social workers over a four year period. The amount for 2024/25 is £580k. Future years allocations reduce as the demand lowers. Ref 6 refers to the new previous allocation in 2023/24
- 9 Transfer of Children's Placement Team from Adults to CSC 2023/24 (Dr £320k)
This is the full year effect of the transfer of several staff from the care Placement Team to the Children's Division
- 10 Transfer of LD Care Management staff & funding to Children's 0-25 Years' service (Dr £144k)
This is the fully year effect of the transfer of Learning Disabilities care management staff and funding for a 0.5 fte to the 0-25 years' service within Childrens Social Care.
- 11 Energy contract inflation (Dr £44k)
To recognise cost pressures arising from the current state of the energy market.
- 12 Funding from Homes for Ukraine (HFU) carry forward (Cr £300k)
£300k has been allocated from the carry forward of HFU grant to cover costs of social workers and Early Help
- 13 Additional Social Care Grant (Cr £1,250k)
There has been an increase of £1.25m in the Social Care grant allocated to CSC.

Real Changes*Growth*

- 14 Additional costs and demand across CSC (Dr £5,890k)
This is the full year effect of 2023/24 pressures on Children Social Care across the service, but mainly in placements. This is mainly due to cost pressures emerging in the service. Within this figure are some assumed management actions.
- 15 SEN Transport Full Year Effect (FYE) (Dr £1,725k)
Transport have seen increases in demand and cost spike in 2023/24. This reflects the full year effect position of 2023/24
- 16 Social Worker permanent/agency to meet caseload promise, etc (Dr £1,000k)
Additional funding to cover the cost of using agency staff in Children to cover Social Worker posts and to keep the caseload promise
- 17 SEN Transport additional demand (Dr £566k)
Additional funding agreed in previous years to cover the increase in the numbers of clients using the service.
- 18 National Living Wage (Dr £80k)
the cost of the rise in the National Living Wage will have an impact on costs of social care and in particular direct payments. This funding will offset this.
- 19 Decrease in Central DSG allocation (Dr £50k)
There is an expected reduction in the Central Services Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding. The growth covers the loss of grant and maintains the current service levels.

Mitigation

- 20 Additional Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) contribution (Cr £100k)
Additional funding has been secured above and beyond current budgeted levels.
- 21 SEN Transport route optimisation, etc (Cr £211k)
To help off-set the pressures in SEN Transport Growth, the service has undertaken various reviews to optimise the routes they are being delivered, offering alternative services, etc in order to help alleviate pressures.

Transformation Programme Savings

- 22 Adult Education (Dr £3k)
A continuation of the slight reduction in the transformation savings due to one off savings in previous years.
- 23 Commissioning/joint working with Health (Cr £10k)
Savings assumed in the service by having greater efficiencies with Health partners
- 24 Emergency Foster placement (Cr £79k)
Assuming a steady stream of placements across the financial year being able to be diverted from IFA's and offsetting the costs of retaining three emergency carers.
- 25 0-25 Transitions Service (Inc. Short Breaks) (Cr £100k)
The combined 0-25 service will use a more efficient model of working which will enable savings to be made across the whole service.
- 26 Restructure of Permanency Service (Cr £150k)
Restructure of the team within CSC to enable efficiencies to be made

27 Variations in Capital Charges (Dr £0k)

The variation in capital charges is due to a combination of the following:

(i) Revenue Expenditure Funded by Capital Under Statute (REFCUS) – these are schemes in the capital programme that do not add value to the Council's fixed asset base. It is the nature of the capital programme that the projects covered will change from year to year. The amounts shown are for our current best understanding of the relevant schemes for 2024/25.

(ii) Government grants – mainly due to variations in credits for capital grants receivable in respect of 2024/25 capital programme schemes.

These charges are required to be made to service revenue accounts, but an adjustment is made below the line to avoid a charge on Council Tax.

Although there have been movements in this area, the overall position has netted off to zero.

28 Variations in Recharges (Cr £151k)

Variations in recharges are offset by corresponding variations elsewhere and have no impact on the overall position.

29 Variations in Insurances (Cr £111k)

Insurance recharges to individual portfolios also have changed between years, in some cases significantly, partly due to the changing profile of actual claims in the recent past. Inflation has also had an impact, both on the projected policy costs, and the costs of delivering the service.

**CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO
DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25 - SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY**

Service area	Employees	Premises	Transport	Supplies and Services	Third Party Payments	Transfer Payments	Government Grants	Other Grants Reimbursements and Contributions	Customer and Client Receipts	Controllable Recharges	Net Interest Income	Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	Total Controllable
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£			£
Education - Core													
Adult Education Centres	1,697,590	260,100	1,560	231,470	0	1,270	Cr 1,985,570	0	Cr 558,030	Cr 11,020	0	0	Cr 340,590
Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	1,391,950	66,410	3,470	174,820	0	0	Cr 15,140	0	Cr 579,300	Cr 40,840	0	0	1,001,370
SEN and Inclusion	3,252,280	0	8,180	498,420	87,370	0	0	0	Cr 235,580	0	25,850	0	3,636,520
Strategic Place Planning	326,000	0	0	33,420	0	0	0	0	0	Cr 208,210	0	0	151,210
Workforce Development & Governor Services	37,600	0	180	18,300	21,070	0	0	0	Cr 44,880	Cr 33,160	0	0	Cr 890
Access & Inclusion	457,020	0	12,613,020	131,780	0	0	Cr 32,810	Cr 129,470	Cr 117,590	0	0	0	12,921,950
Other Strategic Functions	184,270	0	0	490,790	791,700	0	Cr 977,790	0	0	222,530	0	0	711,500
Central School Costs	0	29,390	0	0	0	0	0	0	Cr 49,380	Cr 33,750	0	0	Cr 53,740
	7,346,710	355,900	12,626,410	1,579,000	900,140	1,270	Cr 3,011,310	Cr 129,470	Cr 1,584,760	Cr 56,560	0	0	18,027,330
Children's Social Care													
Bromley Youth Support Programme	2,325,820	249,020	35,210	23,010	103,260	0	Cr 348,260	Cr 167,970	Cr 243,760	Cr 68,350	0	0	1,907,980
Early Intervention and Family Support	2,884,190	449,300	28,250	162,170	197,630	0	0	Cr 27,150	Cr 185,240	Cr 1,957,310	0	Cr 100,000	1,451,840
CLA and Care Leavers	3,759,040	0	32,160	1,697,260	1,411,570	7,724,810	Cr 1,623,550	0	Cr 716,570	0	0	0	12,284,720
Vitruval School	665,812	0	8,600	10,250	236,690	470,020	Cr 900,332	0	0	8,430	0	0	499,470
Children's Placement	0	0	190,330	145,810	24,538,500	798,770	Cr 181,910	Cr 2,650,000	0	0	0	Cr 1,300,000	21,541,500
Permanency	2,438,610	0	47,310	1,762,630	5,275,360	770	Cr 146,720	0	0	0	0	0	9,377,960
0-25 Children Service (Disability Services)	1,616,600	0	146,180	4,720	2,529,280	1,131,110	0	Cr 635,450	0	Cr 387,110	0	0	4,405,330
Referral and Assessment Service	4,574,790	0	7,000	14,670	9,130	183,540	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,789,130
Safeguarding and Care Planning East	3,000,560	0	8,880	745,770	523,430	39,660	0	0	0	0	0	Cr 100,000	4,218,300
Safeguarding and Care Planning West	2,625,120	0	6,820	4,180	3,280	38,880	0	0	0	Cr 92,880	0	Cr 100,000	2,485,400
Safeguarding and Quality Improvement	4,151,990	0	11,420	254,870	0	0	Cr 10,254,150	Cr 186,920	0	Cr 559,470	0	0	Cr 6,582,260
	28,042,532	698,320	522,160	4,825,340	34,828,130	10,387,560	Cr 13,454,922	Cr 3,667,490	Cr 1,145,570	Cr 3,056,690	0	Cr 1,600,000	56,379,370
Education - DSG													
Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	174,750	0	3,120	345,760	0	36,533,010	0	0	0	Cr 11,230	0	0	37,045,410
SEN and Inclusion	4,370,450	321,680	255,240	204,240	31,030,960	6,569,420	Cr 70,650	0	Cr 301,230	182,550	0	0	42,562,660
Strategic Place Planning	0	0	0	11,520	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,520
Access & Inclusion	2,635,390	0	7,540	320,760	1,220,780	0	0	0	Cr 308,850	Cr 386,530	0	0	3,489,090
Schools Budgets	0	0	0	295,550	0	0	Cr 117,480,510	0	0	0	0	Cr 5,631,000	Cr 122,815,960
Other Strategic Functions	179,350	110	920	Cr 35,790	0	0	0	0	0	40,620	0	0	185,210
Primary School	0	0	0	0	0	10,753,324	Cr 564,744	0	0	0	0	0	10,188,580
Secondary School	0	0	0	0	0	7,075,820	Cr 3,113,120	0	0	0	0	0	3,962,700
Special Schools & Alternative Provision	0	0	0	0	622,030	19,708,485	Cr 61,535	0	0	0	0	0	20,268,980
	7,359,940	321,790	266,820	1,142,040	32,873,770	80,640,059	Cr 121,290,559	0	Cr 610,080	Cr 174,590	0	Cr 5,631,000	Cr 5,101,810
	42,749,182	1,376,010	13,415,390	7,546,380	68,602,040	91,028,889	Cr 137,756,791	Cr 3,796,960	Cr 3,340,410	Cr 3,287,840	0	Cr 7,231,000	69,304,890

Service area	Premises Related Expenditure	Insurance Charges	Property Rental Income	Investment Property Income	Capital Charges /Financing	Total Non Controllable	Excluded Recharges	Total Net Budget
	£							£
Education - Core								
Adult Education Centres	70,080	16,250	0	0	150,000	236,330	372,510	268,250
Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	19,200	6,160	0	0	0	25,360	214,290	1,241,020
SEN and Inclusion	0	4,450	0	0	0	4,450	Cr 228,580	3,412,390
Strategic Place Planning	0	340	0	0	0	340	Cr 32,650	118,900
Workforce Development & Governor Services	0	90	0	0	0	90	Cr 7,680	Cr 8,480
Access & Inclusion	0	530	0	0	0	530	54,690	12,977,170
Other Strategic Functions	0	12,020	0	0	11,000	23,020	107,070	841,590
Central School Costs	73,830	0	0	0	684,000	757,830	Cr 71,330	632,760
	163,110	39,840	0	0	845,000	1,047,950	408,320	19,483,600
Children's Social Care								
Bromley Youth Support Programme	52,950	13,380	Cr 75,540	0	102,000	92,790	329,610	2,330,380
Early Intervention and Family Support	4,930	15,560	0	0	123,000	143,490	539,350	2,134,680
CLA and Care Leavers	0	7,230	0	0	0	7,230	466,440	12,758,390
Virtual School	0	1,160	0	0	0	1,160	74,860	575,490
Children's Placement	0	6,280	0	0	0	6,280	1,175,430	22,723,210
Permanency	0	3,710	0	0	0	3,710	360,360	9,742,030
0-25 Children Service (Disability Services)	33,230	41,930	Cr 8,220	0	0	66,940	267,750	4,740,020
Referral and Assessment Service	0	8,980	0	0	0	8,980	398,050	5,196,160
Safeguarding and Care Planning East	0	4,810	0	0	0	4,810	359,270	4,582,380
Safeguarding and Care Planning West	0	3,950	0	0	0	3,950	304,900	2,794,250
Safeguarding and Quality Improvement	0	4,400	0	0	0	4,400	1,104,180	Cr 5,473,680
	91,110	111,390	Cr 83,760	0	225,000	343,740	5,380,200	62,103,310
Education - DSG								
Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	8,410	0	0	0	0	8,410	774,460	37,828,280
SEN and Inclusion	1,270	0	0	0	0	1,270	1,889,670	44,453,600
Strategic Place Planning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,520
Access & Inclusion	0	0	0	0	0	0	538,380	4,027,470
Schools Budgets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Cr 122,815,960
Other Strategic Functions	0	0	0	0	0	0	190,820	376,030
Primary School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,188,580
Secondary School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,962,700
Special Schools & Alternative Provision	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,698,800	21,967,780
	9,680	0	0	0	0	9,680	5,092,130	Cr 0
	263,900	151,230	Cr 83,760	0	1,070,000	1,401,370	10,880,650	81,586,910

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Report No.
CEF23070

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 1 February 2024

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES RISK REGISTER –
UPDATE – 2023/2024

Contact Officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate
Transformation

Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director of Children Social Care

Ward: N/A

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 Risk Management is the identification, analysis and overall control of those risks which can impact on the Council's ability to deliver its priorities and objectives. This report enables the Members to scrutinise risks and the actions taken to control them in line with Audit Sub-Committee recommendations.
-

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 The Children, Education and Families PDS Committee is asked to note:

- The current Children, Education and Families Risk Register and the existing controls in place to mitigate the risks.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact:
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council Safe Bromley Supporting Independence Healthy Bromley
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head: £
 5. Source of funding:
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional):
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement Non-Statutory - Government Guidance None:
Further Details
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications:
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 Risk Management is the identification, analysis and overall control of those risks which can impact on the Council's ability to deliver its priorities and objectives. The Children, Education and Families Risk Register feeds into the Corporate Risk Register, via the Corporate Risk Management Group, and comprises the high-level departmental risks which are underpinned by more detailed registers contained within the divisional business plans.
- 3.2 Audit Sub-Committee agreed that the Corporate and Departmental Risk Registers would be reviewed at their meetings twice a year and then subsequently scrutinised by the relevant PDS Committee. Internal processes require that the departmental risk registers be updated and agreed by the departmental Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a quarterly basis and be reviewed by the Corporate Risk Management Group.
- 3.3 The Children, Education and Families Risk Register is attached as Appendix 1. The risks included in the Risk Register are outlined below.

Risk Ref	Risk Description
1	Failure to deliver Children's Services Financial Strategy
2	Failure to deliver effective Children's services
3	Recruitment and Retention
4	Business Interruption / Emergency Planning
5	School Place Planning
6	SEND Transport
7	SEND Reforms
8	Youth Offending
9	Out of Borough Placements (Children and Young People)
10	Speech and Language Therapy
11	School Attendance

- 3.4 The updates around the control of all risks and actions taken to mitigate them are detailed in the register.

4 IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 The controls already in place and the further actions outlined in the Risk Register mitigate the adverse impacts on vulnerable children.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no policy implications arising directly from this report. Any policy implications arising from the existing controls and the further action required to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Any financial implications arising from the existing controls and the further action required to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

7 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications arising directly from this report. Any personal implications arising from the existing controls and further action to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Any legal implications arising from the existing controls and further action to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

9 PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no procurement implications arising directly from this report. Any procurement implications arising from the existing controls and further action to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

Non-Applicable Sections:	[List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]

Children, Education and Families Risk Register

REF	DIVISION	RISK TITLE & DESCRIPTION (a line break - press shift & return - must be entered after the risk title)	RISK CAUSE & EFFECT	RISK CATEGORY	GROSS RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)			EXISTING CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THE RISK	CURRENT RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)			FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	RISK OWNER
					LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	RISK RATING		LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	RISK RATING		
1	Children's Services	Failure to deliver Children's Services Financial Strategy	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continual reduction in Central Government funding - Demographic changes - Increased demand for services - Demand led statutory services (c. 80% of operations) which can be difficult to predict - Increasing cost volatility due to rise of complex, high cost families or placements requiring services. - Specific cost factors impacting transport services <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower than anticipated levels of financial resource - Failure to achieve a balanced budget - Failure to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of use of resources leading to a Qualified Independent Auditors' Report - Objectives of the service not met - Reputation is impacted - Wider goals of the Council are not achieved 	Financial	5	5	25	<p>Growth and mitigation discussions informed by robust demand forecast analysis</p> <p>Medium financial term strategy reviews informed by evidence of demand pressures. Match financial planning to Council priorities</p> <p>Budget monitoring and forecasting</p> <p>Regular reporting to Members via the Committee reporting process</p> <p>Effective contract monitoring to ensure quality of service provision and value for money</p> <p>Internal audit framework to test financial controls</p> <p>Constantly reviewing service operations for potential efficiencies</p> <p>Developed a series of commissioning plans, with mitigating actions, for Children's Social Care and SEND including mitigating actions addressing financial pressures</p>	4	5	20	<p>Transformation work being undertaken on CLA Placements Sufficiency, High Needs spend on SEND and Transport.</p> <p>Further engagement / coproduction sessions with CYP, parents, schools & setting re strengthening the SEND Graduated Approach - website design and graduated approach being received well.</p> <p>Transformation work being undertaken on CYP Integrated Therapies designed to strengthen the borough's graduated approach and more proportionately engage children and young people at the level meeting their need. Increased funding has been required historically and currently to attempt to increase capacity in relation to SLT and OT to meet increased demand - this work, and the development of a Therapies Commissioning Framework aims to reduce the current over reliance and funding of specialist services and to ensure value for money as well as quality and consistency.</p> <p>DSG Deficit Recovery Plan principles agreed by SEND Governance Board and Schools Forum. Detailed Plan in development.</p> <p>Work to ensure equitable funding contributions to placements across E, H & C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health (Community Paediatric) now participating into EHC Needs Assessment Panel (NAP) to ensure earlier and more effective multi-agency working and triaging, more informed decisions regarding which CYP require EHC Needs Assessment and Plan and those that may be offered more appropriate / proportionate resource / service across the levels of the Graduated Approach. - Commissioning Framework document in development to be circulated and used across all therapy providers to ensure increased quality, safety, consistency and pave way for preferred list of providers moving forward - Plans are in place in Children's Social Care for improving CLA placement sufficiency 	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)
2	Children's Services	Failure to deliver effective Children's services The Council is unable to deliver an effective children's service to fulfil its statutory obligations in safeguarding and protect those at risk of significant harm or death, sexual exploitation or missing from care	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local authority response to Bromley Safeguarding Children's Partnership following Wood Review. <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on life chances and outcomes for children 	Legal, Reputational	3	5	15	<p>Scrutiny of Performance Management Framework and Indicators with regular deep live reporting</p> <p>Quality Assurance Framework overseen by independent Practice Improvement Board</p> <p>Engagement and Influence, Bromley relationship Model ensure user feedback informs continuous improvement.</p> <p>Multi Agency Bromley Children's Safeguarding Partnership (BCSP) Training programme in place. - Training plan for qualified social workers and other professionals reviewed and updated quarterly.</p> <p>Dedicated HR programme of support in place to enable recruitment and retention.</p> <p>Effective procurement framework and contract monitoring arrangements ensure acceptable quality of service provision and value for money</p> <p>Continued review of caseloads & within Caseload Promise on average and assurance of manageable caseloads</p>	3	3	9	<p>Phase 3 'to excellence' plan continues with Performance Improvement Board (PIB)</p> <p>Robust audit cycle in place.</p> <p>Demand Management forecasts informing MTFS</p>	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)
3	Children's Services	Recruitment and Retention Failure to recruit and retain key skilled staff with suitable experience/qualifications	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to compete with other organisations to recruit the highest quality candidates to build an agile workforce - Small pool of experienced children's Social Workers and other qualified roles (Nursery Practitioners, Supervised Contact Workers) <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to identify and meet service user needs - Provision of service to ineligible clients - Provision of service prior to/without appropriate authorisation - Lack of skill set results in an inability to deliver effective children's services to fulfil statutory safeguarding obligations, impacting on life chances and outcomes 	Personnel	5	4	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dedicated HR team to support managers in recruiting staff to hard to fill positions in CSC and Education - Joint meetings held between HR and employment agencies to improve the quality and speed of locum assignments - Review of the current Recruitment and Retention package and associated strategies through corporate Recruitment and Retention Board - Recruitment drive to convert locums to permanent staff - Utilisation of bespoke recruitment tools to directly source staff - Commissioning of improvements to the Council's recruitment web site to include a video virtual tour of the Council - Support in effectively managing staff performance - Provision of training measures to include targeted leadership and management training programmes including partners and other stakeholders - Tailored individual career plan for staff - Launch of Social Work Academy in April 2019. - Bespoke training for first line managers on-going - Training and quality assurance of practice - Established Social Work Academy with bespoke training offers to support career progression 	3	4	12	<p>Continued review of caseloads in children social care and assurance of manageable caseloads</p> <p>Caseloads in SEN Statutory Assessment Team above London and statistical neighbour averages. Transformation plan for SEN being developed</p>	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin) Director, Human Resources (Charles Obazuaye)
	Children's Services	Emergency Response (ER) / Business Continuity (BC) ER - Failure to provide to respond effectively to an emergency incident internally or externally BC - Lack of up-to-date, tested and exercised BC arrangements for Children's Social Care	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ER - Ineffective emergency response arrangements in place to respond to an incident. BC - Lack of suitable BC plans at service and Corporate level <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ER - Impact upon financial and reputational matters BC - Failure to deliver statutory services 	Personnel, Reputational	3	4	12	<p>ER – Corporate Major Emergency Response plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of hours on call emergency response capability Trained emergency response volunteer cohort Ongoing training & exercising programme Multi-agency assessment of emergency risks with associated mitigation <p>BC - Full suite of BC plans across CSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overarching Corporate BC plan including prioritisation of all services Continued CLT delivery of the BC management process Continued monitoring and auditing of key suppliers BC arrangements Yearly Directorate and Corporate testing & Exercising programme 	3	3	9	<p>ER - Recruit and train more emergency response volunteers to maintain required levels of trained staff. Yearly training programme, numbers reviewed on a monthly basis</p> <p>BC - Delivery of service and corporate BC testing and exercising programme to further embed BC arrangements – December 2023 to February 2024</p>	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)
5	Education	School Place Planning Failure to meet the statutory requirement to ensure sufficient school places to meet the needs of the population in the area	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to secure sufficient Primary and Secondary school places in the area - Failure to secure sufficient educational placements for children with disabilities and special educational needs - Failure to secure sufficient alternative provision <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disruption to the education of children and impact on their life chances 	Political, Legal, Professional	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic needs analysis (birth rate, dwelling stock and migration) to project demand - Review analysis of demand annually - SEN sufficiency strategy will inform long term planning of specialist provision - Implement Basic Need programmes - Maintain relationships with DfE ESFA to support delivery of Free School and PSBP programmes - Monitor contractor performance in uncertain market 	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following request from Harris Federation the DfE have removed the secondary free school scheme from its free school programme. Council has £3m capital contingency to assist in addressing a shortage in secondary places. - Redwood Academy Special Free School. Further delays have arisen in the DfE-led project that is currently at feasibility. Officers are pressing DfE for movement on project. 	Director, Education (Jared Nehra)

Children, Education and Families Risk Register

REF	DIVISION	RISK TITLE & DESCRIPTION (a line break - press shift & return - must be entered after the risk title)	RISK CAUSE & EFFECT	RISK CATEGORY	GROSS RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)			EXISTING CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THE RISK	CURRENT RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)			FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	RISK OWNER
					LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	RISK RATING		LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	RISK RATING		
6	Education	SEND Transport Failure to provide appropriate home to school transport assistance for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fluctuating demand year on year - Rising numbers of children meeting criteria for transport provision and associated increase in costs - Cost pressures from market place and rising fuel prices <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disruption to education - Impact on life chances and outcomes for children and young people 	Legal, Financial	5	3	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget monitoring and forecasting - Effective contract monitoring arrangements to ensure acceptable quality of service provision and value for money - Tender exercise completed and framework contract awarded - Monitoring of market place fluctuations - Purchase of route optimisation software 'QRoutes' - Introduction of Independent Travel Training offer 	3	4	12	SEND transport review undertaken. Proposed initiatives have passed through PDS Committee and Executive. Once complete and following consultation, revised transport policies will seek to be adopted which will create greater opportunities and flexibilities in the transport offer including opportunities for independent travel training, and access to personal transport budgets. Significant work has been undertaken to optimise the routes into schools to ensure vehicles operate at greater capacity and vehicle numbers reduced as a result. The tendering exercise based on the optimised routes has been successfully delivered reducing the numbers of vehicles operating and reducing the average daily costs of routes. Numbers continue to come through (as they will throughout the year) and these introduce new challenges. At this point in the year there is limited spare capacity which in turn demands a premium price. Formal consultation has been completed and final approval decision taken. Full implementation now underway.	Director, Education (Jared Nehra)
7	Education	SEND Reforms Failure to meet expectation of SEND reforms	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ineffective and inaccurate identification of SEND - Failure of schools to make reasonable adjustments to meet needs of individual children and young people - Failure to provide appropriate and effective support for children with identified needs and their schools - Pattern of provision which does not meet the needs of the local population resulting in placements in independent schools <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Costs associated with the Legal process - Escalating cost of provision - Impact on education and life chances of children and young people 	Financial, Legal, Professional	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEN service realigned to improve decision making and management oversight - Service Level Agreements being established with mainstream settings with additionally resourced provisions to provide clarity across both parties - Legal advice to be drawn in to support complex tribunal cases - Local Area Autism Partnership established with Autism strategy developed - Annual review programme, with additional resource identified - Covid-19 programmes established - data reporting, collaborative risk assessments, vulnerable CYP programme and CFA Modifications - Special Free School tendering process underway, Specialist placement planning model commissioned - Engagement framework finalised, CYP participation officer in place - Additional capacity in the Statutory assessment team agreed, recruitment in train with specific focus on vulnerable groups including CLA/LC cohort, CME/CMoE, NEET and EHE - increased resource identified to support schools in confidence to deliver education for CYP who have Dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties (SpLD) - investment in two new posts (SEN Placements Manager and SEN Annual Reviews Manager) to focus support in these two key areas 	3	3	9	<p>Revised SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities has been agreed by SEND Governance Board, with a greater focus on driving outcomes and ensuring the sustainability of High Needs funding</p> <p>Transformation work is ongoing, linked closely with the DSG deficit recovery management plan</p> <p>Bromley Teaching Schools leading SEN training collaborative to support school improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual review project reviewed and re-established and broadened with multi-agency task and finish group - Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework revised and changes currently being embedded - Explore commissioning options for therapy capacity - Special Free School approved and in pre-opening status - Increase resource for Educational Psychology agreed, challenge with shortage of EP nationally – blended model of delivery developed - PRA approach revised - SEND / AP green paper published - partnership response and consideration of existing activities aligned with direction of travel - HNF Banding Review programme in train to develop equitable funding system, with a focus on sustainability 	Director, Education (Jared Nehra)
8	Children's Social Care	Youth Offending Failure to deliver effective youth offending services to protect children and young people and reduce their vulnerability	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in youth offending <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on life chances and outcomes for children - Failure to protect the public and actual or potential victims (assessment of risk to others and planning to manage the risk and protect the public) 	Professional, Reputational	3	4	12	<p>Youth Justice Strategy 2020-2023 in place, annual reports submitted in a timely way.</p> <p>Quality Assurance and auditing programme established.</p> <p>YOS performance monitoring reviews KPIs, act upon trends and drive improvement plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Triage support to divert low level offenders from YJS - Packages of support to manage young people's risk appropriately in the community for those who are sent to custody. - YJS Strategic Board chaired by the CEO 	2	4	8	Ongoing preparedness for Youth Offending Service inspection, self evaluation established. Continued focus on early intervention and disproportionality work.	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)
9	Children's Social Care	Out of Borough Placements (Children and Young People) Inability to reduce reliance on out of borough placements Financial implications	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to provide/commission sufficient local placements for children with disabilities and children in care <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost implications of out of borough placements (Cross refer Budget risk) - Impact for children's welfare and development 	Professional, Financial	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close monitoring of placements and eligibility criteria at multi agency resource panel - Budget monitoring and forecasting - Effective contract monitoring arrangements to ensure acceptable quality of service provision and value for money - Review of children's residential, IFA and semi-supported 16+ market in borough and discussions with Bromley providers to increase our ability to place with them. - Step down from residential to foster care programme in place. - Work with housing to support Young People moving to own tenancy when ready and reduce risk of homelessness 	3	3	9	<p>CLA Sufficiency Strategy, annual updated and agreed at PDS</p> <p>In-house foster care recruitment stretch target remains in place, additional funding agreed to enable recruitment strategy.</p> <p>Successful ongoing engagement with local residential providers discussing, quality and commissioning, strengthening relationship and joint working.</p> <p>Visits undertaken by commissioning, CSC and Central Placements Team to ensure a joint and integrated approach</p> <p>Compliance Officer in place to ensure quality, safety and effectiveness of placement and experience for our CLA</p> <p>New Horizons project established to enable step down placements to foster care</p> <p>Review of Commissioning alliance allowing for greater access to local placements, review of alternative block arrangements</p>	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)
10	Education	Speech and Language Therapy Failure to provide appropriate SaLT services to children and young people	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current service provision not meeting needs of children and young people in a timely way <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to meet the need of children and young people including those with SEN/D and other vulnerabilities 	Legal, Reputational, Professional	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multi-agency review of SaLT provision - Work with core provider (BHC) regarding SLT provision capacity undertaken given current levels of demand and pressures/demand on the system - Engagement Working Groups undertaken with children, young people, parents and schools & settings in February and March 2022 to coproduce this strengthened SLT offer. 	4	3	12	<p>Occupational Therapy - urgent actions being taken to identify support for EHCP Needs Assessments professional advice - sourcing urgent specialist</p> <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit embedded in schools.</p> <p>Project Manager has been working on a plan for SLT (and OT and Physio) to restructure the service offer in a way that mirrors and reflects the borough's wider piece of transformation work to strengthen the Graduated Approach - meaning earlier support, signposting and multi-agency collaborative working to better enable a more appropriate and proportionate offer in line with the specific and individual needs of CYP in the borough</p> <p>-Publication of the B-hive website is the first step in establishing a whole system approach to supporting SaLT needs, led by Integrated Commissioning</p>	Director of Education (Jared Nehra)
11	Education	School Attendance Ensuring return of children to school	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children not returning to school following Covid-19 lockdown - Increased EHE declarations - Lack of real time data from schools <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children may not be in receipt of satisfactory education 	Legal, Reputational	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EWOs support schools with improving attendance - EHE officers monitor and follow up on new EHE cases & CSC involvement checked - Mental health and wellbeing initiatives being prioritised 	2	4	8	<p>Monitoring of EHE and non-attendance is ongoing</p> <p>Work closely with schools through their Single Points of Contact (SPOC)</p> <p>Attendance and Inclusion Taskforce has introduction of 'Studybugs' a specialist data provider to capture and report on live data from schools. Most schools are now signed up. This will inform targeted support and assistance from the Education Welfare Service.</p> <p>Attendance of vulnerable groups remain a key priority, with the new data analysis functionality enabling greater targeting of resource.</p> <p>The Service plans to publish Local Inclusion Dashboards by September 2023.</p>	Director of Education (Jared Nehra)

Report No.
CEF23069A

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 1 February 2024

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: PERFORMANCE REPORTING – CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY DATASET PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT

Contact Officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation

Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director Children’s Services

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children. The performance index provided in appendix one is as at the end of November 2023.
-

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 The Children, Education and Families PDS Committee note and comment on the November 2023 outturns of key performance indicators and associated management commentary.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children.
-

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy: The monitoring of key performance measures is part of the performance management framework developed to ensure that there is strong leadership and management oversight of children's services in Bromley.
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate):
 - (1) For children and young People to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.
 - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive decision
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
-

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
-

Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): Not Applicable
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 A Children's Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2023, stipulates that the Children's PDS Committee should receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children's services. Reports should enable Members to *'ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive'*.
- 3.2 This specific 'Children's Scrutiny Dataset' is over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – e.g., Corporate Parenting reports; annual Education Outcomes reports – already received by the Committee. It is worth noting that the committee will also be in receipt of the regular Finance, Contracts Register and Risk Register updates, these will provide some reassurance under the broader performance management framework.
- 3.3 The 'Children's Scrutiny Dataset' is selected from a much wider set of data collected and reported both internally and externally in respect of children's services, it acts as a regular 'health check' on key areas of service delivery to enable scrutiny and enquiry from elected members.
- 3.4 The Committee initially agreed a proposed suite of indicators in March 2018, these indicators are reviewed and updated annually. A narrative on "why this indicator is important" has been provided to ensure that scrutiny is well informed and effective.
- 3.5 Directors have attributed either a target or a range of acceptable performance/outturns alongside trend and benchmarking data, these allow Members to be alerted to issues where they need further exploration only. Quarterly reports provide management commentary against those indicators that are performing below expectation. Directors have also committed to reporting on any other indicators not in the index, by exception, should they have concerns or if they wished to report particularly good performance.
- 3.6 Directors have provided number and percentage outturns in order to allow the Scrutiny Committee to gain a sense of scale and relativity.
- 3.7 **MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY ON EXCEPTION – Index indicators performing below expectation.**
- 3.8 Some data in this Part 1 public committee report has been suppressed in order to minimise the risk of sensitive personal information being identified and to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation. The publication of data should not result in the identification of a person when it is reviewed with other publicly available data or when combined with information provided through FOI requests. Performance for this reason is presented in the Part 2 report.
- 3.9 As at the end of November 2023, the following Children's Scrutiny Dataset key performance indicator(s) were performing below expectation.

Indicator 20: Stability of placements for Children looked after – Length of placement – Amber

This indicator is based on young people who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years, are under 16 years old and have been in the same placement for at least 2 years. Long term placement stability has gradually decreased over this financial year and now below target. There are several reasons for this, the cohort is relatively small at 91, 2 young people were adopted in October and 3 turned 16, removing them from the denominator. 1 young person who was previously in a stable placement is still within the same

organisation but had to move due to the provision closing down. Three placements ended because the carer had to step down due to a change in circumstances and 2 young people had to move to a residential placement due to escalating safeguarding needs.

Social workers and case managers continue to monitor the placements of each child carefully to ensure that they remain in their best interest and alternative arrangements are made when there are breakdowns of placements, quickly and appropriately.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

4.1 Examination of performance by elected members holding scrutiny roles is part of a broader performance management framework which supports improvement of services delivered to children, including those vulnerable to poorer outcomes.

5. TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The monitoring of key performance measures is part of the performance management framework developed to ensure that there is strong leadership and management oversight of children’s services in Bromley.

6 CUSTOMER IMPACT

6.1 A Children’s Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2023, stipulates that the Children’s PDS Committee should receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children’s services. Reports should enable Members to ‘ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive’.

6.2 This specific ‘Children’s Scrutiny Dataset’ is over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – e.g., Corporate Parenting reports; annual School Standards reports – already received by the Committee. It is worth noting that the committee will also be in receipt of the regular Finance, Contracts Register and Risk Register updates, these will provide some reassurance under the broader performance management framework.

Non-Applicable Headings:	Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Property/Carbon Reduction and Social Value Implications; Ward Councillor Views.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Children’s Scrutiny Dataset, agreement of regular performance monitoring (March 2018) http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=593&MId=6166&Ver=4 Children’s Performance Management Framework (updated January 2023)

Children, Education and Families Scrutiny - Performance Index 2023/24

No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Polarity	Target or Range of acceptable performance	Benchmarking and trend																Year to Date	Notes						
					Bromley 2022/23	Bromley 2021/22	Bromley 2020/21	England 2021/22	London 2021/22	RAG rating	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24			Feb-24	Mar-24				
Early Help																												
1	Total Footfall Children & Family Centres	Data provides an indication of early identified support and help provided.	n/a	95000	52059	28,613	6,668	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	3742	9122	15316	20338	24649	30779	36694	43526				43526						
2	Children supported by the Bromley Children's Project (Children referred)		n/a	1700	1063	1,755	1,869	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	106	161	186	169	105	92	105	95				1019						
3	% outcome of School Ofsted inspections good or outstanding (overall effectiveness)	Schools are subject to regulation and inspection from Ofsted. Our ambition is that LB Bromley schools are at least good or better. This measure, to be considered alongside e.g. Key Stage results, progress measures, attendance and exclusion data.	High	95-90%	96%	97%	97%	89%	93%	GREEN			96%			97%						97%	School year is academic year not financial year					
4	Number of Primary permanent exclusions (Bromley schools) (Number YTD Academic year)	Permanent exclusion can severely disrupt a pupil's education and social networks. It can be extremely challenging to find alternative school/alternative education for pupils excluded in the secondary phase because of the nature of the factors leading to the exclusion. However, the LA has mechanisms in place to both minimise time out of education and to identify alternative provision for pupils who are permanently excluded.	Low	0	0	1	0 (rate:0.00)	Rate: 0.01	Rate: 0.00	GREEN	Data suppressed, see part 2 report																	School year is academic year not financial year
5	Number of Secondary permanent exclusions (Bromley schools) (Number YTD Academic year)		Low	22-36 (rate of 0.10-0.16)	33	Provisional (47)	17 (rate:0.07)	Rate: 0.1	Rate: 0.09	GREEN	3	1	16	3		3	2	7				12	School year is academic year not financial year					
Safeguarding and Child Protection																												
6	Number of 'Referrals' to Children's Social Care	Measure of demand for CSC services and an identification of the effectiveness of early help, as well as if thresholds are understood by partners.	n/a	Not a target measure	4513	4032	3,827	650,270	113,320	This is not a target measure	268	412	525	408	263	396	423	527				3222						
7	% of statutory Assessments authorised within 45 days (Year to Date)	Assessments are undertaken in order to identify whether or not statutory thresholds for children's social care have been met and statutory services are required. There is a 45 day statutory timescale for completion - this is a measure of efficiency and effective management oversight. It is also a reflective of manageable caseloads.	High	95 - 83%	93%	96%	85%	84%	86%	GREEN	98%	96%	93%	94%	94%	85%	91%	97%				97%						
8	Number of Children in Need (Statutory threshold Section 17)	This is not a performance measure but indicates prevalence of need for intensive social care intervention. Also volume of intensive casework and social worker capacity required to fulfil statutory duties.	n/a	Not a target measure	920	890	615	104,940	17,860	This is not a target measure	895	849	850	832	860	873	846	847						including DCT				
9	Number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan		n/a	Not a target measure	315	345	283	50,920	7,670	This is not a target measure	315	282	288	300	337	344	351	363										
10	% of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan with an allocated Social Worker	It is a statutory requirement that all Child Protection Plan casework is allocated to qualified social workers. This is a proxy for high quality interventions undertaken by qualified practitioners who are subject to national professional standards	High	100%	100%	100%	100%	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%				100%						
11	% of reviews completed within timescale for Children with Child Protection Plans	There is a national framework of expectations around interventions with children requiring safeguarding. This measure is a proxy for appropriate management/IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) oversight of complex casework and decisive social work planning.	High	100 - 95%	86%	90%	100%	92%	96%	GREEN	100%	97%	100%	99%	99%	97%	97%	98%				98%						
12	% of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time (year to date)	If a second child protection plan is required for similar reasons, this could indicate potential lack of impact of earlier Child protection interventions. It can often demonstrate multiple risks/challenges faced by children and families. It prompts enquiry into whether or not other statutory interventions should be/should have been considered. Was the child removed from the plan too early? Was practice too optimistic?	Low	25 - 15%	23%	20%	14%	23%	18%	GREEN	15%	19%	12%	17%	23%	23%	23%	22%				22%						
12b	% of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time within 2 years of their previous plan (year to date)		Low	Not a target measure	9%	9%		Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	0%	5%	2%	11%	15%	14%	14%	13%				13%						
13	Average number of weeks taken to complete Care proceedings against a national target of 26 weeks (CAFCASS definition)	It is imperative to avoid 'drift' in making permanency plans for CLA. Time taken to undertake care proceedings is a proxy for decisive casework and can be looked at alongside timeliness of achieving adoptions. The measure can be affected by issues beyond professional control e.g. court delays.	Low	26 weeks	Provisional (45)	Provisional (44)	49	41	32		49	42	41	47	62	52	41	59				49	Awaiting publication					

No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Polarity	Target or Range of acceptable performance	Benchmarking and trend																Year to Date	Notes	
					Bromley 2022/23	Bromley 2021/22	Bromley 2020/21	England 2021/22	London 2021/22	RAG rating	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24			Feb-24
Children Looked After and Care Leavers																							
14	Children Looked After rate per 10,000	This is a prevalence measure to be looked at alongside others including CIN/CP rates and should also be, broadly, in line with London and statistical neighbours.	n/a	Not a target measure	45	45	45	70	52	This is not a target measure			46			45					45		
15	Number of Children Looked After	Actual numbers of looked after children should be considered alongside demand pressures on social work capacity and placements/budgets required to fulfil statutory responsibilities.	n/a	Not a target measure	342	328	341	82,170	9,960	This is not a target measure	336	340	351	347	353	345	338	351				351	
16	% of Children Looked After with an allocated Social Worker	It is a statutory requirement that all CLA casework is allocated to qualified social workers. This is a proxy for high quality interventions undertaken by qualified practitioners who are subject to national professional standards.	High	100%	100%	100%	100%	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			100%		
17	% of Children Looked After cases which were reviewed within required timescales	There are statutory requirements for reviewing the care plans for CLA within set timescales. This measure is a proxy for appropriate management/IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) oversight of complex casework and decisive social work planning.	High	100- 90%	94%	95%	93%	Not available	Not available	GREEN	100%	96%	95%	94%	91%	92%	96%	91%			91%		
18a	Number of in-house foster households recruited (YTD)	We have set ambitious targets for increasing the number and range of in-house foster carers. Although placements with foster carers are, almost invariably, the first option to be considered for CLA, a shortage of 'in house' carers i.e. recruited and approved by Bromley, can result in placements being commissioned from independent sector providers. Recruitment processes can take 5 to 7 months. Agency foster carers are often profit making organisations, carers are often not local and carers are not supported or managed by Bromley services. Also, placements are typically significantly more expensive thus adding to pressure on placement budgets. Our aim is to reduce dependency on IFA placements. This indicator should be reviewed with the numbers of children in care at any given point, the profile of these children and their likely needs and our progress in recruiting in-house foster carers.	High	15	6	11	10	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	Data suppressed, see part 2 report												
18b	Number of in house fostering households in the assessment process (Stage 1 & Stage 2)		High	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	Data suppressed, see part 2 report												
18c	Number of in house fostering households currently approved and in the assessment process		High	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	Data suppressed, see part 2 report												
19	Stability of placements of Children Looked After - number of placements (3 placements or more in the year)	There are two key measures for placement stability – Placement stability is a foundation stone for improving outcomes for CLA as it enables consistent relationships between young people and their carers; consistent school placements; a settled context in which young people can develop social networks etc. While some placement moves are 'positive' – e.g. move to a permanent home; move to withdraw a young person from a risky environment, others occur due to e.g. breakdown of relationships/behaviour issues etc. and should be minimised.	Low	12-0%	11%	11%	7%	10%	10%	GREEN	9%	9%	8%	8%	8%	9%	8%	8%			8%		
20	Stability of placements of Children Looked After - length of placement	There are two key measures for placement stability –The length of placement indicator refers to children under the age of 16 who have been in care for 2 and half years or more and have been in their current placement for 2 years or more. Placement stability is a foundation stone for improving outcomes for CLA as it enables consistent relationships between young people and their carers; consistent school placements; a settled context in which young people can develop social networks etc. While some placement moves are 'positive' – e.g. move to a permanent home; move to withdraw a young person from a risky environment, others occur due to e.g. breakdown of relationships/behaviour issues etc. and should be minimised.	High	70% (In line with national or above)	79%	73%	69%	71%	70%	AMBER	77%	77%	70%	70%	69%	65%	65%	66%			66%		
21	Number of Children Looked After who achieved permanency after an Adoption Order or Special Guardianship Order was granted	The key aim for looked after children who cannot return to their families of origin is to find alternative permanent families. Numbers of adoptions and special guardianship arrangements are, therefore, closely monitored by managers. More recently, there has been a big push in supporting family members (or adults known to the child) in achieving special guardianship for our children rather than adoption, hence the drop in adoption numbers, as previously the same children would have left care under this arrangement. It is therefore vital to look at this data across, to show the number of children achieving permanency in total.	High	14	22	21	43	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	Data suppressed, see part 2 report												
22	% of Care leavers who are EET (aged 19, 20, 21) (DFE definition)	This indicator provides a guide to the effectiveness of Corporate Parenting in improving life chances for children in care.	High	52-47%	55%	51%	42%	50%	52%	GREEN	N/A	33%	42%	56%	57%	60%	68%	57%			57%		
23	% of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (aged 19, 20, 21)	This indicator provides a guide to the effectiveness of Corporate Parenting in ensure Care Leavers have an appropriate and safe place to live.	High	84-76%	89%	94%	86%	84%	82%	GREEN	N/A	83%	92%	89%	93%	95%	100%	96%			96%		
Children's Social Care Caseload Promise: Average caseloads																							
24	Average Caseloads RAS	Following the 2016 Ofsted inspection Bromley committed to maintaining safe caseload levels. This is a measure of	n/a	12 - 18	21	17.3	18.1	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	16	17	19	17	14	14	16	18					
25	Average Caseloads Safeguarding and Care Planning	manageability of Social worker workloads.	n/a	12 - 15	18	17.1	19.6	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	17	15	16	16	16	15	17	16					

Children and Young People with complex needs																								
26	% of CYP (16 - 17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Non-participation in education, employment or training beyond age 16 is a major predictor of long-term unemployment and low income. This indicator should be reviewed alongside the 'Not Known' outturn.	Low	1.7%-1.9%	1.1% (82/7145)	1.2% (86/7144)	1.5% (104/7042)	2.8%	1.9%	GREEN	1.2% (88/7140)	1.3% (93/7134)	1.4% (97/7135)	1.4% (101/7128)	1.5% (110/7126)		1.2% (90/7436)	1.3% (99/7441)						
27	% of CYP (16 - 17 year olds) education, employment or training status 'not known'	The EET status of young people can be difficult to ascertain e.g. once pupils leave school. The aim is to have a low number of young people whose EET status is 'not known'. This indicator should be reviewed along side the NEET outturn.	Low	0.7%-1.1%	0.4% (31/7145)	0.3% (19/7144)	0.2% (17/7042)	2.8%	2.7%		0.4% (31/7140)	0.6% (46/7134)	0.7% (53/7135)	1.1% (79/7128)	1.6% (113/7126)		DNA	DNA						
28	Number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17	Offending can be linked to factors such as truancy, low attainment, substance misuse, employability etc. and the challenge to the council, schools and partner agencies in a local area is to prevent young people from entering the youth justice system.	Low	Not a target measure	44	31	30	15182	3090	This is not a target measure	Data suppressed, see part 2 report													
29	Proportion of offenders that are proven to re-offending in the youth justice system	This indicator measures the re-offending of specific cohorts of young people following an initial pre-court or court disposal.	Low	42% - 35%	20%	20%	26%	42%	48%	GREEN	14%	16%	17%	17%	17%	17%	17%	17%						
30	Number of children/Young People open to MEGA	This indicator provides a guide as to the awareness of CSE and gang risk.	n/a	Not a target measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	35	35	31	27	44	46	42	40						
The following indicators are measured on a calendar year:																								
No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Polarity	Target or Range of acceptable performance	Benchmarking and trend																Year to Date	Notes		
					Bromley 2022	Bromley 2021	Bromley 2020	England	London	RAG rating														
											Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23		
31	% of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20 week timescale (excluding exception cases)	In line with Children and Families Act 2014 Reform requirements, EHC plans replaced SEN Statements. They result from a multi-dimensional assessment of education, health and care needs.	High	75 - 65%	Data pending	65%	62%	51%	63%	GREEN	53% (9/17)	29% (7/24)	4% (1/28)	18% (5/28)	12% (3/26)	17% (5/29)	16% (10/61)	33% (10/30)	46% (21/46)	52% (27/52)	78% (35/45)		27.2% (120/354)	
32	% of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20 week timescale (including exception cases)	They specify outcomes to be achieved for a child and identify provision to meet those outcomes. There is a 20 week statutory timescale for completion, although there is a balance to be found between quality and timeliness.	High	Not a target measure	Data pending	37%	43%	59%	60%	This is not a target measure	26% (9/35)	14% (7/50)	3% (1/39)	15% (5/34)	10% (3/30)	15% (5/33)	13% (10/77)	27% (10/37)	44% (21/48)	47% (27/58)	44% (35/79)		25.5% (133/522)	

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Report No.
CEF23071

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: CHILDREN EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 1 February 2024

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: DEEP DIVE: YOUTH SUPPORT AND NEET

Contact Officer: Linda King, Youth Support Programme Manager
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Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for decision/report and options

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work of the Youth Support Services, their outcomes and achievements and to outline progress made by the current service review.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the contents of this report and the progress made towards the service review.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

- 2.2 Summary of Impact: Bromley Youth Support Services (BYSS) aim to provide opportunities for vulnerable children and young adults to undertake constructive informal education options as part of their positive activities and improve their life chances via the support of BYSS targeted services.
- 2.3 BYSS is guided in its work by the National Youth Agency (NYA) Quality Mark Framework as well as by the Bromley Corporate Strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan, all of which ensure that BYSS develops the youth offer to the best possible standard and reflects on how children and young people are benefiting from our input and reflect on what can be adapted according to the needs and responses of local children and young people.

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority:
 - (1) For children and young people to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.
 - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost Non-Recurring Cost Not Applicable: Further Details
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Youth Support Programme and Education Business Partnership
 4. Total current budget for this head: £732,220
 5. Source of funding: LBB and external grant funding
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 45 people representing 13.88FTE.
The service is dependent on part time staffing with many staff on 3hr or 6 hr a week contracts, working at local youth provisions. Only 9 of our staff work full time or substantial hours each week.
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive decision.
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
-

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: N/A
-

Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): N/A
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The Youth Support Services comprise Bromley Education Business Partnership and Bromley Youth Support Programme. Both services work alongside the Youth Justice Service to offer support to children and young people in the Borough.

Context

3.2 The statutory responsibilities of the Youth Support Services are set out under Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 and under Sections 10, 12 and 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

3.3 Under Section 507B of the Education Act 1996, Local Authorities have a duty to ensure that young people have access to sufficient educational leisure-time (Positive) activities which are for the improvement of their well-being and personal and social development, and sufficient facilities for such activities; that activities are publicised; and that young people are placed at the heart of decision making regarding the positive activity provision. These duties have recently been updated and defined in September 2023. [Statutory guidance for local authorities on services to improve young people's well-being - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-on-services-to-improve-young-peoples-well-being) The new guidance expects local authorities to secure access to activities which are for the improvement of young people's personal and social development and can:

- connect young people with their communities, enabling them to develop a strong sense of belonging and contribute actively to society.
- champion them to have a voice in decisions which affect their lives.
- take place in local and fit-for-purpose environments in which they can socialise safely with their peers, spend time with people from different backgrounds and develop trusting relationships with adults.
- offer opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities through which young people build skills for life and work and the capabilities they need to make a successful transition to adulthood.
- raise young people's aspirations in education, training, or employment, encouraging them to realise their potential.
- help disadvantaged and vulnerable young people, as well as young people at risk of not realising their full potential, informing their decisions, and thereby reducing risky, anti-social behaviours.

3.4 Under Sections 10, 12 and 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, Local Authorities must make available to young people below the age of 19 support that will:

- encourage, enable, or assist them to participate in education, employment or training.
- track and monitor the destination of all young people in the local authority area offering targeted support when needed to those who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), or at risk of not participating.
- lead on the September Guarantee which underpins the delivery of these duties, ensuring all young people aged 16 and 17 have a suitable offer of a place in education, employment or training and report back to the Department for Education.

- Have a Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) so destination data can be recorded in the key areas set out under National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) statutory guidance.
 - Secure suitable, sufficient education and training for young people between the ages of 16-18 in the area.
- 3.5 This report provides the Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the work of the services, key areas of focus and developments of the coming year, highlighting key achievements during the last year.
- 3.6 BYSS positive activities aim to deliver youth work services and activities that:
- Are delivered via a relationship between youth workers/young people that is voluntary. A young person has no statutory or legal obligation to engage with youth workers in the way they may with other professionals and this voluntary relationship can achieve a great deal with individuals and groups of young people, as they are often the only non-authoritarian adult in a young person's life and therefore the method by which some young people learn to communicate with adults.
 - Connect young people with their communities, enabling them to belong and contribute to society, including through volunteering, and supporting them to have a voice in decisions which affect their lives.
 - Offer young people opportunities in safe environments to take part in a wide range of sports, arts, music, and other activities, through which they can learn new skills and develop a sense of belonging, socialise safely with their peers, and develop relationships with adults they trust.
 - Support the personal and social development of young people through which they build the capabilities they need for learning, work, and the transition to adulthood – communication, confidence and agency, creativity, managing feelings, planning and problem solving, relationships and leadership, and resilience and determination.
 - Improve young people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing; Building the capacity of young people to consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control and helping young people to develop a 'world view' which widens horizons and invites social commitment.
 - Are closely aligned with our targeted services as they are delivered by the same staff.
- 3.7 The service delivers youth work using a service Curriculum which has been developed using John Huskins work on relational development depth with young people and the Young Foundations Outcomes framework. Young people engage voluntarily in our curriculum, often through conversations with peers and/or youth workers, or through involvement in fun and creative activities. This style of working uses experiential learning as its main method. It seeks to encourage individuals to use their personal experiences gained through participation in youth & community activities, to enable them to engage in the reflective process necessary to encourage development. Youth workers record the achievements and outcomes young people are making and plan target work based on the development they perceive the current group of young people require.
- 3.8 We work with the Jack Petchey Foundation, delivering their achievement awards programme to ensure young people's achievements are recognised by their friends and family members and themselves.

3.9 Examples of how BYSS is meeting these aims includes:

- Youth centre-based activity programmes operated at four Youth Support Hubs delivering ten weekly youth work sessions to reach children and young people across the borough.
- The Mobile Youth Support Team currently deliver youth work sessions every four weeks. This provides flexibility, allowing the service to reach young people in a particular area at a given point in time. For example, if concerns are raised related to anti-social behaviour, the Mobile Youth Support Team can plan activities in that area and use their skills to engage young people at risk of involvement.
- A separate youth offer for young people with special educational needs and disabilities currently delivering one weekly youth work session.
- Supporting Bromley Youth Council, an elected and co-opted group of young people. All Borough Schools and Youth Groups are offered the opportunity to undertake elections as part of their citizenship work and identify representatives, and young people are co-opted onto the Youth Council from other services and groups. Young people come together to represent the views of their peers and to bring about positive change for all young people living, working and educated in the borough.

3.10 Bromley Youth Support Programme (BYSP) delivers targeted services focusing on identifying and supporting vulnerable young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET or who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system. The service is run centrally and from Youth Hubs across the borough and through a mobile team. Through these Hubs we provide Information Advice and Guidance (IAG), one to one support and some open access evening youth provision each week for young people to access. Key areas of these services include:

- Tracking young people's participation: BYSP utilises a Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) to support staff to track and collect information about all young people so that those who are not participating, or are NEET, can be identified and given support to engage with Employment, Education or Training opportunities. Robust tracking provides the local authority with information that will help to ensure that suitable education and training provision is available and that resources can be targeted effectively.
- Tracking activities. BYSP undertake a range of tracking activities, via emails, mobile messaging, telephone tracking and as a last resort, visiting young people at home. We aim to ensure that a young person who is NEET has, at a minimum, been spoken to and offered access to IAG. Our ideal is that each young person has had a face-to-face contact with a member of staff, is offered support and we know why they are not currently in Education, Employment, or Training (EET).
- Drop in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). The service provides open access generic Drop in IAG for young people weekly from its central Masons Hill office and by appointment from the youth hubs across the borough. In addition, and where appropriate, BYSP signposts young people to Impartial Careers Information, Advice and Guidance via websites/helplines and local services including National Careers Service website/helplines, School/College Careers Education and Work-Related Learning programmes and IAG offers from local Housing Associations.
- Individual support via direct referrals. The nature of support that we offer young people focuses on supporting them to achieve defined goals in partnership with the referring agency, raising aspirations, maintaining, or supporting EET.

- 3.11 In collaboration with the Youth Justice Service (YJS), all youth support services work to provide a prevention offer for young people who are identified at tier two in the threshold of need and require additional early help support. A panel meets weekly to identify which service would be most appropriate to provide support to a young person. Discussions are underway to consider aligning this panel with the children and family's hub "front door".
- 3.12 Bromley Education Business Partnership (BEBP) has for many years had responsibility for seeking and raising funding to support the delivery of its services. Consequently, their delivery is always tailored to current funding streams. At present they have 3 main elements of their service.
- 3.13 Mentoring & Volunteering: BEBP is part funded by MOPAC and indirectly by the Mayor of London's Propel programme to deliver the Bromley Mentoring Initiative. The programme matches an adult volunteer who can provide a young person with the benefit of their life experience by developing a relationship on a 1:1 basis. Most of the mentoring relationships take place within school settings with the aim of supporting young people's self-esteem, confidence and improving their motivation to learn, raising attainment, and improving life chances. There are currently 80 volunteers from business and the community who are screened, trained, and matched with young people from Primary and Secondary schools, Community Safety and Children's Social Care.
- 3.14 Educational Visits: It is considered good practice for Local Authorities and Schools to have an educational visits management system and a means of providing Health and Safety guidance for pupils/young people on educational visits. BEBP originally offered this service to maintained schools and LBB services prior to the Academy agenda. It is now offered as a sold service package for Bromley primary and secondary schools and LBB services, to provide training and guidance for any educational visits (EV) they undertake. The EV package supports the LBB Educational Visit guidance, provides a helpline for EVCs for any educational visit day to day queries and offers high level support via the services of an experienced external consultant for more complex questions and issues.
- 3.15 LBB Work Experience Programme for school students is coordinated by BEBP. This programme gives young people a chance to undertake their schoolwork experience placements within the Council and see how the London Borough of Bromley supports residents. It provides an opportunity for local young talent to consider a career with us in the future through the Apprenticeship or Graduate programmes. Last year's scheme was a great success with over 60 young people experiencing what it's like to work in the Council. We also give priority for placements to LBB Children Looked after and Care Leavers.
- 3.16 The BEBP's role is to coordinate the direct application process from young people which is open from the autumn term and promote the opportunity on our website and to local schools. We also work hard to encourage Managers across the Council to engage with the process and offer a placement for a student for one week in the summer term. We are there to offer advice and support to those new to hosting to ensure success. Our key role is to carefully match students to placements taking into consideration the timings and the young person's preferred area of choice.
- 3.17 Bromley EBP provides a package of support services to schools running their own 'in-house' work experience (Wex) schemes via the work experience support package. This is a service that schools choose to buy in each year. Schools receive support with network meetings for Wex coordinators pre-placement assessments to placement providers, the opportunity to purchase additional pre-placement assessments at a reduced rate and a helpline for advice on work experience issues.

3.18 Prior to September 2023 the BEBP service also delivered next steps events and additional services which linked local employers giving their voluntary time to work with local schools and pupils to familiarise young people with local employers and opportunities, practice interview situations, understand the priorities of employers and motivate young people. The service is currently looking at alternative solutions to allow this work to continue.

NEET

3.19 Targeted services: The recognised performance marking for NEET and Not Known young people within the academic age 16 and 17 (school years 12 and 13) is via a 3 Month average performance calculation in the months of December, January, and February. For the December 2022/January and February 2023 period Bromley had the following results which placed us third lowest NEET and Not Known young people in the country. The table below indicates the figures within our consortium and the averages for England, London, and the Southeast.

Borough	NEET	Not Known	NEET & Not Known	Quintile	National Ranking
Bromley	1.2%	0.4%	1.6%	Q1	3
Kingston upon Thames	1.2%	0.8%	1.9%	Q1	8
Merton	1.1%	0.7%	1.9%	Q1	5
Richmond upon Thames	1.0%	0.9%	1.9%	Q1	6
Sutton	0.8%	1.4%	2.2%	Q1	11

England	2.9%	1.8%	4.6%
London	1.6%	1.1%	2.7%
Southeast	2.7%	3.1%	5.8%

3.20 The additional performance measure of September Guarantee offers for young people in school years 11 and 12 with us placed 38th in the country, albeit with a 97.5% score which is above the England and London averages. Whilst this is disappointing as it represents a 1% drop from the previous year's achievement, it may be linked with a combination of reasons including issues with personal data collection and timescales by neighbouring boroughs.

		Quintile	National Ranking
England	94.6%		
London	97.2%		
Bromley	97.5%	Q2	38

Cohort of 7,441 people	NEET	NEET %	Not Known	Not Known %	NEET & Not Known Combined %	Quintile	National Ranking
November 2023	99	1.3%	237	3.2%	4.5%	Q1	28
December 2023	102	1.4%	89	1.2%	2.6%		

Below is the 2022 comparison data for information, you will see that our position is not dissimilar to last years:

Cohort of 7,143 people	NEET	NEET %	Not Known	Not Known %	NEET & Not Known Combined %	Quintile	National Ranking
November 2022	79	1.1%	301	4.2%	5.3%	Q1	21
December 2022	92	1.3%	87	1.2%	2.5%		

3.21 At this stage the most recent month we have analysis of is the November 2023 figures. These figures show us that:

- 67% of the NEET cohort is male. Overall, the Male group has a higher rate of young people within in the NEET group than their Female counterparts. At this time the Male sex group is overrepresented within the NEET by 17.2% when compared against the cohort percentage.
- The White ethnic group has a highest rate of young people within the NEET group with 63.6%. The Black ethnic group is overrepresented within the NEET group by 5.9% when compared against the cohort percentage. The ethnicity of 11% of the group is not known.
- 25.3% (25 young people) of the NEET group are not available to the labour market. This includes 23 young people who are NEET Illness. 21 of these people are reporting anxiety and mental health concerns which prevent them accessing education or training.
- 15.2% (15 young people) within the NEET group have an Education, Health, and Care Plan, and 29.3% (29 young people) have SEN support with no plan. This represents 44.5% of the NEET group with some level of SEND requirement.
- 4% (4 young people) are supervised by the Youth Justice Service.
- 1% (1 young person) is a child looked after.
- 10% (10 young people) were not registered in education in school year 11.
- 21.2% (21 young people) of the NEET cohort live in the St Pauls and St Marys Cray wards of the borough.
- 27.3% (27 young people) in the NEET cohort were in 3 secondary schools within the borough for school year 11.
- 17.3% (41 young people) within the Not Known group have SEN support with no plan.
- The White ethnic group has a highest rate of young people within the Not Known group with 58.2%. The Black ethnic group is overrepresented within the Not Known group by 3.8% when compared against the cohort percentage.

Our performance compared with our statistical neighbours is below:

Statistical Neighbours													Statistical Neighbours Benchmarking		
Academic Age 16-17 (School Year 12 & 13)															
		NEET & NK	Quintile	Rank	NEET	Quintile	Rank	Not Known	Quintile	Rank	Participation E&T	Quintile	Rank		
Bromley	Closeness	4.5%	Q1	28	1.3%	Q1	26	3.2%	Q3	76	94.8%	Q1	8		
Trafford	Very Close	7.7%	Q3	90	1.6%	Q1	30	6.1%	Q4	106	91.0%	Q3	65		
Hertfordshire	Very Close	3.8%	Q1	17	2.7%	Q3	76	1.1%	Q2	34	93.7%	Q1	19		
Bracknell Forest	Very Close	5.1%	Q2	37	3.3%	Q4	95	1.7%	Q2	48	91.3%	Q2	60		
Sutton	Close	6.5%	Q3	70	1.0%	Q1	12	5.5%	Q4	103	93.0%	Q1	29		
Stockport	Close	5.6%	Q2	49	4.3%	Q5	121	1.3%	Q2	36	92.6%	Q2	37		
Bedford	Close	15.6%	Q5	141	1.2%	Q1	19	14.4%	Q5	141	83.8%	Q5	141		
Oxfordshire	Close	7.3%	Q3	84	2.3%	Q2	57	5.0%	Q4	95	91.0%	Q3	66		
Solihull	Close	5.7%	Q2	56	3.5%	Q4	99	2.3%	Q3	61	93.4%	Q1	22		
Hampshire	Close	11.9%	Q5	128	2.1%	Q2	52	9.8%	Q5	125	86.0%	Q5	132		
Central Bedfordshire	Close	4.0%	Q1	19	3.1%	Q3	86	0.9%	Q1	25	93.1%	Q1	25		

3.22 To address some of the concerns that arise from this analysis the service has:

- Prioritised an offer of early school year 11 support to those schools who have produced the highest rate of year 12 NEET young people in an effort to reduce the numbers from those schools.
- Developed a list of free online course options for young people who are struggling to leave their homes or feel their mental health and anxiety issues are preventing them from engaging in education or training. This has included a remote support offer, for those who are unable to attend our buildings for meetings.
- We request access to young people’s ECH plans when offering them support to identify forward options that will meet their needs. In addition, we work with London Southeast College and Mencap to ensure young people receive the most appropriate support.
- Drop-in support is available to young people in the Crays to encourage young people’s engagement with the service.

3.23 Targeted referrals and prevention work: our targeted staff supported 37 direct referrals during the year in addition to offering NEET support to 79 young people. The average number of weeks a young person received support during this time is 11 weeks. The nature of the prevention work, different to the NEET support work means youth workers spend more time off site, reaching young people where they are at, with school, home visits or on Youth hubs sites, engaging them in activities and supporting them to work through and address their needs.

3.24 Youth work: our youth work sessions have seen engagement with 1,495 young people in the six months April – September 2023. We recorded 6678 attendances and an average attendance of 21 young people per session.

Youth Hubs, challenges and transformation

3.25 In line with the council’s transformation agenda, Bromley Youth Support Service have been targeted with finding £125k savings in the budget now and a further £125k in 2025/26, so £250k in total.

- 3.26 To work towards achieving this, we are looking to evaluate and move forward the challenges and changes within the youth services and identify any gaps in service deliver. We are currently aware that our offer around targeted youth work needs to be more impactful around our harder to reach young people. Nationally and locally the demands are changing for our young people, and we need to change with them, transforming and moving forward with the needs of our young people particularly around targeted exploitation, and our vulnerable adolescent is essential. We are not looking at reducing our offer but working smarter around what we can deliver and ensure we are targeting the right young people at the right time.
- 3.27 Challenges this year have included the relocation of our youth work offer in the west of the borough, following several challenges with the premises we were renting. Our attendance numbers in the west had already been impacted by a few short-term closures, due to recurring health and safety concerns and then a temporary premises move, and since the permanent move of our services we have been gradually rebuilding our relationships with young people and our service. We have seen success with numbers increasing and this term are attending local Schools to build numbers further.
- 3.28 In other areas of the borough, we continue to see increased attendance, over in the east of the borough where we regularly have 50/60 young people attending each night, we are open.
- 3.29 Our youth work building delivery continues to base itself on an open-door model, where we open to all young people in a particular age group on a given evening. As part of the youth service review which consisted of a number of focus groups with young people from 'You think' and the youth council, along with visits to our youth hubs, we have taken on board ideas shared and look at implementing them across the youth hubs going forward, We have also considered trialling an offer of short-term project work that young people register a place for, rather than or alongside our generic work. Initial ideas for this offer following some research with young people have included six-week short programmes for entrepreneurial skills, independent living, cooking on a budget, drama, fitness, and yoga as examples. Our programmes that have taken place this year within the open-door provision have included cooking (including cooking from different cultures), circuit training for fitness, t-shirt printing, computer design for craft products, street art board making and music production.
- 3.30 Mobile and detached work takes youth work to young people where they are, often in parks and street corners. This is undertaken both on foot and by our transit van converted buses. However, our mobile buses are now not ULEZ compliant, and we are currently trying to secure a new bus to replace them, having secured funding. The teamwork in identified priority areas, trying to educate young people about anti-social behaviour and encouraging them to access local available youth work options. This year the mobile staff have been working in Bromley Town centre, supporting young people particularly during the after school peak times, this has been an externally funded Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) funded project. We have also undertaken some work with Access sport to support young people in the Crays at the recent BMX track site and some work with Clarion Housing Association.
- 3.31 45 young people from Bromley Youth Council have been working on their campaigns identified at this year's young people's manifesto event, they were drugs misuse and young people's stress and anxiety. Key achievements will be a film that has been produced for the drugs misuse campaign and a digital magazine produced for the stress and anxiety campaign, both are currently in final editing and approval stages. The stress and anxiety digital magazine will be launched by the Youth Council at a 10th February event in the glades for children's mental health week.
- 3.32 BYSP has delivered a Holiday Activity and Food Fund offer at all 4 venues for the spring, summer and winter holidays. Taking part in this programme enables us to have contact with new local young people and familiarise them with our services.

- 3.33 Mentoring has 81 current active matches between volunteer mentors and mentees. These nearly all take place within local schools and colleges. In total during the year 133 matches have been made and we currently have 19 referrals that are being worked on for young people. Our main pressure this year is the availability of volunteer mentors. We are undertaking a recruitment drive to encourage more residents to become involved and support this initiative. We are also exploring how other services could support the identification of new mentors, including highlighting the opportunity at the time of staff retiring or leaving the authority, via the loneliness agenda and the volunteering time offer.
- 3.34 72 application forms were received for work experience requests within the Borough, with 50 students placed (22 young people refused their offer). This was made possible by the 23 host departments that took students this year. The paid for work experience network package supported 16 schools in the summer, which represented 24 cohorts of students undertaking work experience at employers across London and the Southeast.
- 3.35 This year, signed up to the sold service education visit management system (EVOLVE) we have 63 primary schools, 10 secondary schools, 3 special schools and youth support services, Children Looked After and Leaving Care, the Virtual School, Youth Justice Service and Home and Hospital tuition.
- 3.36 We continue to seek additional funding for our work. We are currently working with Local London and are part of their bid to the Greater London Authority UK Shared Prosperity Fund Universal NEET project which we hope will bring in additional resources to support young people.

Special Educational Needs (SEND) NEET:

- 3.37 In Bromley we are ambitious for our young people with SEND, wanting them to achieve the best lives possible, allowing them to make a meaningful contribution to their community now and in the future.
- 3.38 Priority 5 of the SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities states that the SEND Partnership will *Enable all our children and young people to transfer successfully to the next stage of their education or into employment, and to transfer to an independent adult life in their local community.*
- 3.39 While attaining employment is a key outcome for many people with SEND it is recognised that nationally only 5.1% of young people with SEND will go on to gain permanent paid employment in the UK, compared to 80% of their peers.
- 3.40 Bromley schools, colleges, businesses, and partnerships offer a range of pathways to employment which include Apprenticeships, Traineeships (Pre-apprenticeships) Internships and volunteering opportunities.
- 3.41 Young people with higher level of need and/or complexity who are further away from the workplace are often unable to access these opportunities as they need a higher level of bespoke support from a Supported Internship and job coaching program.
- 3.42 Supported Internship models in Bromley are mature and include individual bespoke programmes delivered by London Southeast Colleges, Bromley Mencap, and DFN Project Search in collaboration with the Kings College Hospital Trust.
- 3.43 The table below sets out the providers and SI programmes that are currently available in Bromley which support opportunities for 2% of the current number of young people (Year 9 and above) with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Provider	Programme	Profile	Annual Number YP
LSEC Bromley Campus	SIP	Learners with LD and mild/moderate support needs	16
LSEC Bromley Campus	HNSIP	Learners with LD and higher level or complex needs – supported in collaboration with Bromley Mencap	9
Kings College Hospital Trust / LSEC / Project Search	NHSSIP	A bespoke program at the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH)	8-10

3.44 In Bromley, the number of young people (18-25) is projected to increase by 88% by 2035. CYP are now more likely to have an EHCP well into young adulthood, therefore, building capacity in the Further Education sector needs to be considered.

3.45 In November 2022, LB Bromley were successful in applying for a 3 year grant from the Department of Education as part of the national [\(NDTI\) Internships Work Project](#). The project is funded by the Department for Education and will double the current supported internship provision in England. It is designed to support more young people with additional needs to have greater choice and control over their future, opening opportunities that prepare them for adult life and independent living. This project will support us to:

- Strengthen and increase the number and value of our Supported Internship placements.
- Build our relationship with local employers to open more opportunities and drive up the quality of Supported Internships.
- Build resilience and confidence in our young people through the support they receive when realising their employment aspirations and improving their life Outcomes.
- Create a sustainable model where young people go on to thrive as individuals as independently as possible.

3.46 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF): Children, Education and Families Directorate has been allocated £200k from the People and Skills allocations of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to increase the number of young people (18-25) with SEND who are supported to engage in job searching and who gain employment following support.

The programme runs until 31 March 2025.

UKSPF people and skills funding will be used to:

- Extend the work of the Internships Work programme to strengthen other employment pathways and opportunities for young adults with SEND who are economically inactive.
- Develop a key working model to support young adults into employment.
- Develop, deliver, and monitor an evidence-based employment brokerage service for all young adults with SEND.
- Work with the Council to become a disability confident employer and develop a Supported Internship programme within the Council.
- Develop a local employer engagement strategy, and good relationships with local large employers as well as SMEs providing a wide range of opportunities for young adults with SEND including work visits, tasters, placements, and paid work.

3.47 The UKSPF SEND programme will build upon the Internships Work programme and will seek to deliver a universal, targeted and specialist employment support offer to over 50 young people with a range of special educational needs and disabilities.

Youth Support Service review outcomes

- 3.48 The September changes to the Statutory guidance for local authorities on services to improve young people's well-being has meant that the prolonged review and its progress needs to be considered in the light of such changes alongside the continued financial pressures that exist. We are currently working with the National Youth Agency toolkit and a London Councils regional youth work group to consider how we may best meet the guidance requirements.
- 3.49 Further to this, recent changes in available funding and the length of contract of funding, is going to impact on which aspects of the service we can continue within our current budget. Officers are in the process of considering the best way forward for different aspects of the service.
- 3.50 Early research work has been undertaken with young people to identify the programmes they would be interested to have delivered within our youth clubs and the improvements that need to be made to our clubs and our youth work. This research has been undertaken directly with young people from across the borough and has included those who use our youth service and those who have not used them. This work has included young people from Bromley Youth Council and some generic input from 'You think', who are commissioned to support young people who use our Youth Justice Service. Key findings from this work have included:
- Improvements that are needed to our buildings such as more welcoming exteriors and signage, better facilities for young people to use for physical activities and for working in small groups and some concern was raised about the cleanliness of buildings that were shared use with other groups prior to young people's arrival.
 - Youth work staff were not always appropriately knowledgeable or experienced to deliver some of the activities on offer, for instance, gym spaces were not open due to a lack of trained staff or young people's access to music production opportunities was limited due to staff knowledge of the equipment.
 - Programme ideas young people wanted to see progressed or developed included digital media creation/filming, music production, mental wellbeing support, self-defence/staying safe, entrepreneurial skills and a virtual youth group.
 - Cooking and food being available was a strong request from young people.
- 3.51 We are working to develop a pilot programme which will explore trialling short term workshop programmes for young people in different areas and we are working with our technology staff to consider the virtual group option. We have addressed the cleanliness issues caused by shared use of buildings and we are exploring how we can address the staff skills deficit. This issue is complicated by the costs of training staff and their available time to attend training (many staff only work for the service for 3 hours a week.) we have previously spent a significant amount to train staff, only to have them leave the service, so we are looking at a model that brings in trained people as tutors rather than youth workers being trained to manage and deliver gym spaces and music production.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

4.1 During the past year the services have supported 1,964 young people in some capacity. Many of these young people are vulnerable and needed additional support. Some examples of positive quotes we have received from young people and parents/carers:

“Mentoring has made me more confident as a person. I have more trust. She gives me really good advice.”

“I didn’t look people in the eye or talk to people and now I have the confidence to do that, your support has made me think I can have the job I want if I work at it.”

“He is a changed person! We used to argue all the time and I never knew who he was with or what he was doing and now we talk to each other!”

“Thank you, I had no qualifications and nothing to say to employers and now I am doing courses and volunteering and making a difference.”

List of Acronyms:

- BEBP – Bromley Education Business Partnership
- BYSS - Bromley Youth Support Services (BYSP and BEBP combined)
- BYSP – Bromley Youth Support Programme
- CCIS - Client Caseload Information System
- EHCP – Education Health and Care Plan
- EET – education, employment or training
- EV – Educational Visits
- IAG - Information Advice and Guidance
- MOPAC – Mayors Office for Policing and Crime
- NCCIS - National Client Caseload Information System
- NEET - Not in education, employment, or training
- NYA – National Youth Agency
- SEN – special educational needs
- ULEZ – ultra low emission zone
- WEX – work experience
- YJS – Youth Justice Service

5. PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All changes to properties will be considered and approved by the Operational Property group.

Non-Applicable Headings:	Transformation and Policy/Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Carbon Reduction and Social Value Implications, Customer Impact, Ward Councillor Views.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]

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