

Agenda

Cabinet

Date: Monday 24 April 2017
Time: 10.30 am
Venue: Mezzanine Rooms 1 & 2, County Hall,
Aylesbury

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2 Declarations of Interest	
3 Minutes Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 27 March to be agreed by Cabinet and signed by the Chairman.	3 - 10
4 Hot Topics	
5 Question Time	

This provides an opportunity for Members to ask questions to Cabinet Members

6	Forward Plan for Cabinet and Cabinet Members For Cabinet to consider the Forward Plan	11 - 26
7	Cabinet Member Decisions To note progress with Cabinet Member Decisions	27 - 30
8	Select Committee Work Programme & Inquiry Work Programme For Cabinet to consider the Select Committee Work Programme	31 - 40
9	Children's Home - Local Provision For Cabinet to consider the report	41 - 60
10	Children's Improvement Programme Update For Cabinet to consider and discuss the issues raised in the report.	61 - 110
11	Hospital Discharge Inquiry report For Cabinet to consider the Select Committee Inquiry report.	111 - 152
12	Sustainable School Travel in Buckinghamshire For Cabinet to consider the Select Committee inquiry report.	153 - 196
13	Exclusion of the Press and Public To resolve to exclude the press and public as the following item is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information	
14	Confidential Minutes Of the meeting held on 27 March to be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman	197 - 198
15	Date of the Next Meeting 05 June 2017.	

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Nichola Beagle on 01296 382343

Members:	Martin Tett (Leader)	
	Mike Appleyard	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing
	Margaret Aston	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Public Health
	John Chilver	Cabinet Member for Resources
	Lin Hazell	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
	Zahir Mohammed	Cabinet Member for Education & Skills
	Mark Shaw	Cabinet Member for Transportation
	Warren Whyte	Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment

Minutes

Cabinet

Date: 27 March 2017

Venue: Large Dining Room, Judges Lodgings, Aylesbury

Time: 10.30 am to 12.00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr M Tett (in the Chair).

Mr M Appleyard, Mrs M Aston, Mr J Chilver, Lin Hazell, Mr Z Mohammed, Mr M Shaw and Mr W Whyte

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr R Stuchbury

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms N Beagle, Mr R Ambrose, Ms S Ashmead, Ms R Shimmin and Mrs C Marriott

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Ms R Shimmin. Mr N Gibson attended as substitute.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that Purdah would be in effect 27 March to 04 May 2017.

3 MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 06 February 2017 were agreed to be an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4 HOT TOPICS

Cabinet's attention was brought to the following:



- Work place hero's awards ceremony took place last week, which recognised staff contributions and celebrated outstanding performance.
- Thames Valley Police were hosting an event 28 March focusing on Cyber and Digital Crime.
- Olio, the free food sharing app, was now live across Buckinghamshire and could be downloaded on Android and Apple devices via www.olioex.com/bucks
- A new food sharing app was now live and could be downloaded through Android and Apple app websites.
- Road resurfacing would shortly start up again. There was a planned spend of £16m on road repairs for the coming year.

5 QUESTION TIME

Mr R Stuchbury asked the Cabinet Member Health and Wellbeing whether a report on Bucks Care would be going to full Council following the election.

Mr M Appleyard advised that he was not aware of any outstanding questions regarding Bucks Care which needed to be answered although was happy to address any. It was advised that there were some issues still to be addressed however these related to the personnel field and therefore were not suitable for public consultation. Mr Appleyard advised that he would be happy to provide a written response to any detailed questions.

Ms S Ashmead advised that as agreed as part of the Budget Scrutiny recommendations a review of lessons learned on the various Alternative Delivery Vehicles, including Bucks Care, was underway and due to be reported to Cabinet in June.

Mr Stuchbury asked the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills whether a written statement regarding the planned education funding for Buckinghamshire and the net impact of any changes would be circulated to all Members for information. It was noted that an update was provided at a recent Select Committee meeting.

Mr Mohammed advised that it was not possible to provide clarification on the net change of the funding to be provided to Buckinghamshire as there were two separate funding streams where changes were to occur;

- National Funding formula: provided directly to schools to help with day to day running.
- Education Services Grant: provided to the County Council to assist those schools in difficulty.

It was confirmed that the National Funding Formula consultation had recently closed and that the Secretary of State would now be required to make a decision. A statement, if any, would be made once the Secretary of State had reached a decision.

6 FORWARD PLAN FOR CABINET AND CABINET MEMBERS

Cabinet noted the report.

7 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

Cabinet noted the report.

8 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME & INQUIRY WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet noted the report.

9 Q3 2016/17 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Mr J Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources and Mr R Ambrose, Director of Assurance, presented the report. During the discussion performance indicators were discussed and updates were provided as follows:

Leader's Portfolio

Mr M Tett advised Cabinet that there was a slight overspend forecast.

- Performance indicators; 33% Green, 44% Amber and 22% Red
- Two Red risks:
 - Claim account in Bucks - the County Council were performing well nationally although falling short of target set internally due to skills issues.
 - Business Deaths - defined by the office of national statistics; this was slightly inflated compared to other areas, although Buckinghamshire had a higher number of businesses.

Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

Mr M Appleyard advised Cabinet that the portfolio budget was on target, which was an improvement from 2015/16 which had resulted in a £2m overspend.

- Performance indicators; 68% Green and 20% Red
- Red area's related to:
 - The County Council's Contact Centre, issues were being addressed.
 - NHS health checks.
 - Trading standards

Cabinet Member for Childrens Services

Lin Hazell provided an overview to Cabinet highlighting the following:

- 108 cases were going through the courts which resulted in higher costs for legal fees.
- Green indicators; 3 related to timings of assessment's which were being closely monitored.
- Performance was above that of Buckinghamshire's statistical neighbours on the 45 day indicator, reporting at 96% compared to 77%as the south east average.
- **Contracts and Referrals (indicators 2,6 and 11):**

- Timings of decision making had improved.
- Repeat referrals remained a key concern, as targets were not being met and performance did not compare well to Buckinghamshire's statistical neighbours.
- There had been a significant rise in referrals for domestic abuse and substance misuse. In response process improvements had been identified as well as development and training with workers and managers. This would be closely monitored over the coming months.
- **Children in Need (indicators 3 and 5):**
- Performance had dipped during December 2016, as a result of the number of Children in Need increasing as well as the pressures on recruiting to social worker posts.
- Challenging targets had been set compared to the national indicator and the team was focusing on recruitment.
- **Child protection (indicators 4, 9 and 10):**
- The majority of children were being seen regularly with reviews being completed on time.
- An increase in the number of children at risk had impacted performance, this would continue to be monitored.
- **Looked after children (indicators 7, 8 and 9):**
- 100% of looked after children had their reviews on time.
- Availability of placements continued to be a struggle resulting in children being placed further from home.

Following discussion it was agreed that a more detailed report would be brought to a future Cabinet meeting, regarding the progress of the improvement journey within Children's Services.

ACTION: Ms Lin Hazell

Cabinet Member for Education & Skills

Mr Z Mohammed provided an overview to Cabinet highlighting the following:

- Performance indicators; 91% were Amber or Green
- The year 1 phonics gap was moving in the right direction
- Attainment gap at Key Stage 4 continued to remain wider than the national average. This was a priority and would be closely monitored going forward to make improvements.
- A forecast overspend was a concern, although this had been known for some time. Pressure areas included:
 - Home to school transport for SEN
 - Capital budget for emergency work for schools

Cabinet Member for Resources

Mr J Chilver provided an overview to Cabinet highlighting the following:

- There were no performance indicators showing as red.
- The forecast underspend of nearly £1m which related to new investment properties.

- Income from Investment projects had provided the budget to cover the overspend of £500k within the Mezzanine refurbishment project, third lift and Green Park improvements.
- The Mezzanine floor and 2nd floor refurbishment works were on target.

Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment

Mr W Whyte provided an overview to Cabinet highlighting the following:

- Slight underperformance in response to planning applications due to more applications being received than anticipated and staff shortages. This trend was improving.
- Recycling; was performing well above target and would continue to be monitored.
- The Energy for Waste plant is on target to have produced in excess of 134,000 MWh of energy by year end.

Cabinet Member for Transportation

Mr M Shaw provided an overview to Cabinet highlighting the following:

- Forecast overspend of £52k and steps were being taken to reduce this.
- Highways continued to be an area of challenge, although all vacancies had been filled with staff being mentored and provided with extra training which was extremely positive.

Cabinet noted the report.

10 SAFER BUCKS PLAN 2017-2020

Mrs C Marriott, Communities and Safety Manager was welcomed to the meeting. Mrs M Aston, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health introduced the report. During discussions key points were raised as follows:

- The report reflected the positive working relationship with partners.
- Following public consultation a query was raised around why burglary and anti-social behaviour were not consulted on. It was noted that this was because these areas were deemed business as usual as and the Police had confirmed that they would continue to respond to this. The consultation had requested views on other emerging, high harm issues such as exploitation.
- A Cyber Crime event was being held in the coming week, led by Buckinghamshire, which would be attended by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the National Crime Agency as well as partners across the Thames Valley.
- A three year plan had been drafted instead of a one year plan as it was likely the issues highlighted would continue to be on the radar in year two and three.
- Partnership working provided better resilience so that the work and financial pressure did not rest on one agency alone.

Recommendation

Cabinet is requested to:

- **Endorse the Safer Bucks Plan, 2017-20, the County Community Safety Agreement**
- **Note performance highlights against last year's Safer Bucks Plan**

RESOLVED

Cabinet AGREED to endorse the plan and noted the report.

11 PROPERTY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DREAMS KNAVES BEECH INDUSTRIAL ESTATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Mr R Ambrose, Director of Assurance was welcomed to the meeting. Mr J Chilver, Cabinet Member provided an introduction to the report. During discussion points were highlighted as follows:

- To replace the loss of government funding the County Council was commercially focused on investment to generate significant income.
- All property acquisitions were subject to a strict yield criteria and thorough due diligence.
- A large number of other local authorities were now adopting Investment programmes in order to continue to provide statutory services.

Recommendation

That Cabinet:

- 1. Approve further formal due diligence and negotiations with the Standard Life Investments' agent.**

Subject to agreement by the Cabinet Member for Resources and Director of Assurance, in consultation with the Leader, that Cabinet:

- 2. Authorise to finance the proposal for the Council to include the purchase of the Property following a successful outcome from the process of due diligence and negotiations.**
- 3. Allows the Council to enter into agreements to facilitate the purchase.**

RESOLVED

Cabinet AGREED with the above recommendation.

12 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded for the following item which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

**13 PROPERTY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DREAMS KNAVES BEECH
INDUSTRIAL ESTATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY**

Cabinet discussed and noted the Confidential Appendix.

14 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

24 April 2017.

**MARTIN TETT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

CABINET/CABINET MEMBER FORWARD PLAN

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Cabinet 24 April 2017				
Children's Home - Local Provision	Business case for the development of children's home provision in Buckinghamshire		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Anthony Decrop	First notified 24/3/17 Likely to contain confidential appendices
Children's Improvement Programme Update	6-monthly update		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / David Johnston	First notified 1/3/17
Children's Services Update	Update on Children's Services for April's Cabinet.		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Hannah Dell, David Johnston	First notified 13/3/17
Hospital Discharge Inquiry report	For Cabinet to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Hospital Discharge Inquiry. For the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing to respond to the recommendations.		Brian Roberts / Liz Wheaton	First notified 24/1/17
Sustainable School Travel in Buckinghamshire	Inquiry Report and Recommendations to Cabinet		David Carroll / Kama Wager	First notified 18/1/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Cabinet 5 June 2017				
Acquisition of Investment Properties	Potential acquisition of Investment Property - if required		Cabinet Member for Resources / Oster Milambo	First notified 20/3/17 Likely to include confidential appendices
Better Care Fund 2017-19	Cabinet will receive the plans for the Better Care Fund and will be asked to approve the funding.		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Rajni Cairns	First notified 4/11/16
Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-19	To agree the Corporate Parenting Strategy		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Anthony Decrop	First notified 22/3/17
Director of Public Health Annual Report	Annual report		Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health / Jane O'Grady	First notified 14/3/17
Early Help Review	The Early Help Review is one of the 4 priorities of the Change 4 Children Transformation Programme; this was established to identify where improvements could be made across Early Help services.		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Carol Douch	First notified 3/4/17 Likely to include confidential appendices
Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2017/18	Statutory plan for the Youth Offending Service Partnership which has to be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for approval.		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Pauline Camilleri	First notified 29/12/16

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Cabinet 26 June 2017				
Adults Services Update	6-monthly update		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Sheila Norris	First notified 1/3/17
Q4 / Year-End 2016/17 Performance Review	Review of County Council performance measures for quarter 4 (year-end) 2016/17		Cabinet Member for Resources / Sarah Ashmead	First notified 15/9/16
Cabinet 17 July 2017				
Q1 2017/18 Finance Monitoring Report	Quarterly report		Cabinet Member for Resources / Richard Ambrose	First notified 27/3/17
Cabinet 11 September 2017				
Cabinet 2 October 2017				
Children's Services Update	6-monthly update		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / David Johnston	First notified 1/3/17
Cabinet 23 October 2017				
Cabinet 13 November 2017				
Q2 2017/18 Finance Monitoring Report	Quarterly report		Cabinet Member for Resources / Richard Ambrose	First notified 27/3/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Cabinet 11 December 2017				
Adults Services Update	6-monthly update		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Sheila Norris	First notified 1/3/17
Cabinet 8 January 2018				
Cabinet 12 February 2018				
Q3 2017/18 Finance Monitoring Report	Quarterly report		Cabinet Member for Resources / Richard Ambrose	First notified 27/3/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
April 2017 Cabinet Member Decisions				
<u>Cabinet Member for Children's Services</u>				
Financial support to carers of children leaving care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangements orders Policy & Procedures			Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Anthony Decrop	First notified 8/12/14
Placement Sufficiency Strategy - Looked After Children	This sufficiency strategy describes how we plan to put the right mix of services in place to meet the needs of Looked After Children.		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Anthony Decrop	First notified 30/3/17
Care Leavers Staying Put Policy	This policy aims to provide a framework for making decisions to enable looked after young people to remain with their current foster carer, or regular relief carer, after the age of 18 years and sets out the arrangements necessary to support this. This policy covers all care leavers, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASCs).		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Anthony Decrop	First notified 30/3/17
<u>Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cabinet Member for Education and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</u>				
Agreement of legal framework S75 for integrated commissioning for adult social care	Sign off of the Statutory framework which underpins the Health and Social care commissioning arrangements across children and adults		Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Susie Yapp	First notified 9/5/16

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
<u>Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health</u>				
Integrated Substance Misuse Service Contract Award	<p>This contract award is for the Adult Substance Misuse Service which will provide assessment and end-to-end treatment in the community for those with substance misuse issues.</p> <p>Linked to previous decision 'Structured Treatment and Recovery Service (Substance Misuse)' taken on 09/02/2016 at Business Case Stage</p>		Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health / Helen Wake	First notified 11/1/17 May contain confidential appendices
Sustainability & Transformation Plan (STP)	STPs are an opportunity to develop a local route map to an improved, more sustainable health and care system. The Health & Wellbeing Board is overseeing the footprint for the local STP which Bucks Healthy Leaders are developing.		Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health / Jane O'Grady	First notified 19/4/16
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</u>				
Adult Learning - future delivery options	Adult Learning - future delivery options		Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Zena Sutcliffe	First notified 17/2/16
East Claydon CE School	A proposal by the governing body of the school that they extend their age range from 1 September 2017. Currently they admit children from 2-7 years of age and if the proposal is agreed they would admit children from 2-11 years of age.	Grendon Underwood	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Andrew Tusting	First notified 3/1/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and Cabinet Member for Children's Services</u>				
Looked After Children Strategy			Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Anthony Decrop	First notified 29/7/15
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Cabinet Member for Resources and Cabinet Member for Transportation</u>				
Budget Adjustments to the Approved Capital Programme	To approve budget amendments to the Council's Approved Capital Programme in 2016/17 to 2019/20.		Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Cabinet Member for Resources, Cabinet Member for Transportation / Richard Schmidt	First notified 12/5/16
<u>Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment</u>				
Adoption of updated enforcement policy for Fly-tipping and ancillary offences	Adoption of updated enforcement policy for Fly-tipping and ancillary offences		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / David Sutherland	First notified 27/11/15
Approval of Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)	Approval of Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / David Sutherland	First notified 22/2/17
Land Drainage Enforcement Policy	Approval of Land Drainage Enforcement Policy as part of BCC's role as Lead Local Flood Authority		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / David Sutherland	First notified 22/2/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	Adoption of Local Flood Risk Management Strategy		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / Martin Dickman	First notified 11/1/16
Proposed Pre application charging schedule - Planning	Proposed Pre application charge schedule - Agreement of fee schedule for pre Planning application advice service.		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / David Sutherland	First notified 7/12/16
Cabinet Member for Resources				
Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy	A review of the Council's Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy.		Cabinet Member for Resources / Maggie Gibb	First notified 5/12/16
Anti Money Laundering Policy	A review of the Council's Anti Money Laundering Policy		Cabinet Member for Resources / Maggie Gibb	First notified 5/12/16
People Strategy	This strategy incorporates the revised People Strategy and the wider Workforce Plan for Council employees and aims to capture all Business Units and the HQ Functions. The People Strategy will be supported by a number of key work streams most of which are already underway. An action plan has been developed to help review and report on the impact/delivery of the Strategy.		Cabinet Member for Resources / Gillian Quinton	First notified 18/8/16

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
<u>Cabinet Member for Resources, Cabinet Member for Transport, Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment</u>				
Section 106 Agreement Monitoring Charges	Imposition of new charging protocol for transport and education		Cabinet Member for Transportation, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, Cabinet Member for Resources / John Rippon	First notified 10/2/17
<u>Cabinet Member for Transportation</u>				
30mph speed limit extension, East Claydon Road, East Claydon	The existing 30mph speed limit needs to be extended away from the village a short distance to accommodate a new small housing development at New Farm	Grendon Underwood	Cabinet Member for Transportation / David Cairney	First notified 15/2/17
Aylesbury South East Link Road - Project Progression	Report seeking formal approval to progress the Aylesbury South East Link Road project (A413-B4443) following successful award of £13.5m Local Growth Funding in Autumn 2016.	Aylesbury South East; Wendover, Halton & Stoke Mandeville	Cabinet Member for Transportation / John Rippon	First notified 16/3/17
Aylesbury Vale Parkway	A report to seek a decision on completing a suite of legal documents.	Stone and Waddesdon	Cabinet Member for Transportation / Ian McGowan	First notified 11/4/16
Beaconsfield cycleway	Proposed shared cycleway. Upgraded of existing footway, between Grenfell Road and Ledborough Lane. 3 week Consultation to commence 03 March 2017.	Beaconsfield	Cabinet Member for Transportation / Adrian Lane	First notified 28/2/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
County-wide Pay & Display project (phase 2) - Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe	Proposed introduction of pay and display machines and waiting restrictions in Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe	Abbey	Cabinet Member for Transportation / Alistair Turk	First notified 28/7/16
Developer Funding Programme (TEE): Financial Year 2017/18	Update on 2016/17 programme and seeking approval for a proposed programme of 2017/18 schemes funded through developer contributions.		Cabinet Member for Transportation / John Rippon	First notified 10/2/17
High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan – Alternative Route Phase 3 & 4 Consultation	<p>Buckinghamshire County Council and Wycombe District Council together with Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership with funding secured from the Local Growth Fund have been working closely to progress elements of the High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan (TCMP) in recent times.</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to seek authority to approve the detailed design of the Alternative Route Phases 3 & 4 from Desborough Road via a new link road to Suffield Road and Queen Alexandra Road, together with approval to approve construction following recent public consultation.</p>	Abbey	Cabinet Member for Transportation / Ian McGowan	First notified 18/1/17 May contain confidential appendices
Highways Development Management - Service Charging	Setting fees for pre-application advice and planning performance agreements in line with Buckinghamshire County Council's Corporate Charging Policy.		Cabinet Member for Transportation / Martin Dickman, Christine Urry	First notified 4/1/16

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Proposed 40 mph Speed Limit – Framewood Road, Wexham	Proposal to reduce the current national speed limit (60mph) to 40mph on Framewood Road, commencing at the current termination point, south of the junction with Fulmer Common Road, to the existing 30mph speed limit terminal sign, north of the junction with Rowley Lane.	Stoke Poges & Wexham	Cabinet Member for Transportation / Vaishali Shah	First notified 1/3/17
Sustainable Travel South (A4 Taplow: Maidenhead to Slough) Cycleway Scheme		Cliveden; Farnham Common & Burnham Beeches; Stoke Poges & Wexham	Cabinet Member for Transportation / Ian McGowan	First notified 8/10/15
<u>Cabinet Member for Transportation and Cabinet Member for Resources</u>				
Aylesbury Link Roads Programme - Land Acquisition	Report laying out land acquisition strategy for Aylesbury Link Road Schemes - including delegation of resolution to make Compulsory Purchase Order powers to the appropriate Service Director.	Aston Clinton & Bierton; Aylesbury North West; Aylesbury South East; Aylesbury West; Stone and Waddesdon; Wendover, Halton & Stoke Mandeville; Wing	Cabinet Member for Transportation, Cabinet Member for Resources / John Rippon	First notified 27/3/17 May contain confidential appendices
<u>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</u>				
Award of contract for provision of statutory advocacy services in Buckinghamshire	Award of contract following tender		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Anne Cooney	First notified 14/12/16 May contain confidential appendices
Annual Fee uplift	To set out the recommended fee uplifts across care and support contract for 2017/18 and payments rewarding high quality provision of care in regulated services.		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Graeme Finch	First notified 22/3/17 May contain confidential appendices

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Seeleys Consultation Report 2017	End of Consultation Report for Seeleys House in regards to the Respite and Day Services		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Kelly Taylor	First notified 7/11/16 May contain confidential appendices
<u>Leader of the Council</u>				
Recycled Strategic Infrastructure Feasibility Budget Re-Profiling	Report recommending approval of a re-profiled allocation of the Strategic Infrastructure Feasibility Budget, also known as Leader Capital.		Leader of the Council / John Rippon	First notified 9/3/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
May 2017 Cabinet Member Decisions				
<u>Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Cabinet Member for Resources</u>				
Acquisition of Investment Properties	Potential use of residential property to be used as a children's home		Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cabinet Member for Resources / Anthony Decrop	First notified 6/4/17 Likely to include confidential appendices
<u>Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health</u>				
Falls Service	A review of the Falls Service		Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health / Angie Blackmore, Liz Wheaton	First notified 23/3/17 May contain confidential appendices
<u>Cabinet Member for Resources</u>				
Transfer of Land at Spade Oak, Marlow	The transfer of land held by Buckinghamshire County Council as Trustee of the Thameside Preservation Trust to new Trustees. The land was purchased with monies raised by public subscription and is to be preserved for the benefit and recreation of the public.	Marlow	Cabinet Member for Resources / Linda Forsythe	First notified 6/4/17
<u>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</u>				
Appointments to Outside Bodies 2017/18	The Deputy Leader will be asked to approve the list of appointments to outside bodies for the year 2017/18.		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Kristi Bhanja, Clare Capjon	First notified 8/3/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Direct Payment Policy	Cabinet Member to agree the Direct Payment Policy		Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Marcia Smith	First notified 29/3/17
August 2017 Cabinet Member Decisions				
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</u>				
Millbrook School	A proposal that the school expands by one form of entry (i.e. 30 children) from September 2018. The governing body and school are holding a public consultation with parents, the local community and other interested parties on the proposed increase. If after the end of the public consultation the decision is to proceed with the proposal then a statutory notice will be published in a local newspaper, followed by a four week representation period for people to comment on, support or object to the proposal.	West Wycombe	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Andrew Tusting	First notified 3/4/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
November 2017 Cabinet Member Decisions				
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</u>				
Dagnall Church of England School	A proposal that from 1 September 2018 Dagnall Church of England School increases its age range to admit children up to year 6 (11 years of age). If implemented the change would be phased in, starting with the admission of year 3 children from September 2018 and then to build up over a number of years.	Ivinghoe	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Andrew Tusting	First notified 28/2/17
Great Kimble Church of England School	A proposal that the school expands from September 2018 from being an infant school to become a combined primary school admitting children from 4 to 11 years of age. The school currently admits children from 4 to 7 years of age.	Ridgeway East	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Andrew Tusting	First notified 22/2/17
Proposed St Michael's Catholic School satellite school on former Quarrendon School site in Aylesbury	A proposal that St Michael's Catholic School in High Wycombe opens a secondary satellite school on the former Quarrendon School site in Aylesbury. If approved the satellite school would open in September 2018 with an initial intake of four forms of entry (120 students) and would over time build up to six forms of entry (180 students).	Stone and Waddesdon	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Andrew Tusting	First notified 22/2/17

Item	Description	Local Members Affected	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
February 2018 Cabinet Member Decisions				
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</u>				
2019 Determined Admission Rules	Annually determined admissions policy for voluntary controlled and community schools plus the admissions scheme		Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Debbie Munday	First notified 2/3/17

Please note the following information since the report included in the previous Cabinet agenda:-

- 3 decisions have been published but not yet taken
- 7 decisions have been taken
- 30 decisions on the forward plan are pending for April

DECISIONS TAKEN

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

24 Mar 2017

CS01.17 - Contract Extension - Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

AGREED an Extension of Contract until 30/09/17 and a further six months to 31/03/18 if required

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

29 Mar 2017

ED05.17 - Sub-contracting of delivery by Adult Learning (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

1. **AGREED** to the continuation of the tendering exercise as outlined in the report.
2. **DELEGATED** authority to the Head of Service to approve the award of the contracts in line with the funding limits set out in the report once funding from the SFA has been approved and the outcome of BAL's application to be on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoAPT) is known.

29 Mar 2017

ED06.17 - Increased charges for the Paid For Home to School Transport (Decision taken)



The Cabinet Member AGREED:

That the paid for (discretionary) home to school transport scheme continues to operate in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy and Guidance.

That all prices in the banding structure for Buckinghamshire resident pupils aged 16 years old and over and Out-of-County pupils of all ages using home to school transport will increase by 5% for the 2017/18 academic year as set out in Appendix 1.

That the prices for paid-for (discretionary) home to school transport for the 2018-19 academic year will be reviewed in 2017/18 to ensure as far as possible that the full costs of providing the paid for services are retrieved.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

5 Apr 2017

PE02.17 - Implementation of a new Statement of Priorities for the Definitive Map function (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member AGREED:

- a) That the Statement of Priorities is updated and is adopted for the management of Definitive Map Applications and Common Land and Town and/or Village Green Applications.**
- b) That the Statement of Priorities is reviewed by the Service Director on an annual basis.**

Cabinet Member for Transportation

7 Apr 2017

T07.17 - Proposed 40mph Speed Limit, A4155 Henley Road (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member for Transportation AGREED:-

- 1. The making and introduction of the Traffic Regulation Order comprising of a 40mph speed limit restriction as advertised.**
- 2. That Legal Services can then be instructed to make the Traffic Regulation Order and bring it into operation.**
- 3. That all consultees are informed of the decision.**

13 Apr 2017

T08.17 - Proposed 40 mph Speed Limit – Framewood Road, Wexham (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member for Transportation:-

1. **APPROVED** the Making and introduction of the Traffic Regulation Order comprising speed limit reduction as advertised.
2. **AGREED** that Legal Services can then be instructed to make the Traffic Regulation Order and bring it into operation.
3. **AGREED** that all consultees are informed of the decision

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

22 Mar 2017

DLHW02.17 - Missenden Garden Centre end of Consultation Report (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

1. **APPROVED** the decision to decommission the Great Missenden Garden Centre and end ongoing liabilities.
2. **APPROVED** the gifting of all equipment and non-fixed assets (approximately £7,000 in value) to the new charitable organisation.

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

6 Apr 2017

PE03.17 - Proposed Pre application charging schedule - Planning (Decision to be taken)

Recommendation

To **ENDORSE** the proposed Pre-Planning Application Advice Service and to **ADOPT** the Cost Recovery Schedule set out in paragraph 3.4 with a commencement date of on or after 1st April 2017.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, Cabinet Member for Resources and Cabinet Member for Transportation

7 Apr 2017

PE04.17 - Section 106 Agreement Monitoring Charges (Decision to be taken)

Recommendations

- 1) That the Cabinet Members approve the introduction of an updated fee charging schedule for monitoring of Section 106 agreements. (As set out in Appendix 1)
- 2) That the Cabinet Members approve the introduction of a new fee charge for the responding to S106 queries regarding clause compliance. (As set out in Appendix 1)

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

18 Apr 2017

DLHW03.17 - Award of contract for provision of statutory advocacy services in Buckinghamshire (Decision to be taken)

Recommendation

| **To award the contract for statutory advocacy services to Provider A**

For further information please contact: Nichola Beagle on 01296 382662

Select Committee Combined Work Programme

About our Select Committees

This work programme sets out all formal meetings of the Council's Select Committees.

The purpose of Select Committees is to carry out the Council's overview and scrutiny function. Their role is to support public accountability and improve outcomes for residents through scrutinising the work of decision-makers.

Select Committees can carry out this function either through an in-depth Inquiry or one-off item at Committee meetings.

A scrutiny Inquiry is an investigation on a topic that will lead to a report and evidence-based recommendations for change to decision-makers. The key difference between one-off committee items that are not part of an inquiry and scrutiny inquiries is that Select Committees normally only make recommendations to Cabinet as a result of an in-depth Inquiry.

Evidence for scrutiny Inquiries may be gathered in different ways depending on the topic, this includes taking evidence at formal Select Committee meetings and/or informal meetings, visits or external research. Prior to any work commencing the Select Committee will agree an Inquiry scoping document which will outline the terms of reference, the methodology and inquiry timeline.

For more details about Select Committee Inquiries and guidance please see <http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/scrutiny/>

[Finance, Performance & Resources Select Committee](#)

[Children's Social Care & Learning Select Committee](#)

[Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee](#)

[Transport, Environment & Communities Select Committee](#)

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Finance, Performance & Resources Select Committee				
4 Jul 2017	Growth in Buckinghamshire	For the Committee to hear about the Council's planning, including the financial implications of such plans, around the Growth agenda.	Kelly Sutherland, Committee and Governance Adviser	
26 Sep 2017	Budget Scrutiny 2017 - 6 month progress report	The Committee will review the progress of the implementation of the recommendations of the 2017 Budget Scrutiny Inquiry.	Richard Ambrose, Director of Assurance and Chief Finance Officer	Cabinet Member for Resources, Richard Ambrose, Director of Assurance
26 Sep 2017	Quality Assurance and Performance Management	The Committee will be briefed on the Council's approach to Quality Assurance and Performance Management and how the Committee can contribute to this.	Joanna Sage, Head Of Insight And Business Improvement	Cabinet Member for Resources, Jo Sage, Head of Insight and Business Intelligence
14 Nov 2017	Income Generation - 12 month progress report	The Committee will receive a 12 month progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Income Generation Inquiry report.	Jonathon Noble, Commercial Director	Cabinet Member for Resources, Jonathan Noble, Commercial Director, Business Services Plus

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Children's Social Care & Learning Select Committee				
18 Jul 2017	Children's Workforce Inquiry	To review and make an assessment of progress against the agreed recommendations of the inquiry 12 months on..	Kevin Wright, Committee and Governance Adviser	
18 Jul 2017	Inquiry Scope - Permanent Exclusions From School	For the Committee to consider and agree the scope for the Permanent Exclusions from school inquiry.	Kevin Wright, Committee and Governance Adviser	
18 Jul 2017	The Growth Agenda	For Committee Members to hear from the Children's Social Care and Learning Business Unit about their plans around the growth agenda.	Kevin Wright, Committee and Governance Adviser	
5 Sep 2017	National Funding Formula for Schools	For Members to consider changes to the National Funding Formula and the impact on Buckinghamshire schools.	Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education	
5 Sep 2017	NHS England Sustainability and Transformation Plan	Understanding the impacts of integrating Health and Social Care on Children's Services including the NHS England Sustainability and Transformation Plan	David Johnston, Managing Director, Children's Social Care, Children and Young People	
5 Sep 2017	Preventing Bullying in Schools	For the Committee to look at the work going on to prevent bullying in schools in Buckinghamshire	Yvette Thomas, Children's Policy and Equalities Manager	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
5 Sep 2017	The Educational Psychology Service Action Plan	To update Members on progress with implementing the Educational Psychology Service Action Plan	Craig Tribe	
5 Sep 2017	Voice of the Child and Young Person Inquiry	To review and make an assessment of progress against the agreed recommendations of the inquiry 6 months on	Kevin Wright, Committee and Governance Adviser	
17 Oct 2017	Independent Reviewing Officer Service	For Members to look at the performance of the IRO service and current resourcing.	Sharon Graham, Interim IRO manager	
17 Oct 2017	National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)	For Members to look at the performance of NYAS following recent management changes in Buckinghamshire.	Simon Brown, Operations Manager (Commissioning)	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee				
13 Jun 2017	Bucks Care	For Members to receive an update on Bucks Care and the progress made since January 2017.	Liz Wheaton, Committee and Governance Adviser	Jane Bowie, Director of Joint Commissioning
13 Jun 2017	Health & Adult Social Care overview	Following the Election in May, this item will provide an overview on health and social care for the newly formed Committee.	Liz Wheaton, Committee and Governance Adviser	Lou Patten, Accountable Officer, Clinical Commissioning Groups Neil Dardis, Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Shelia Norris, Managing Director, Communities, Health and Adult Social Care
13 Jun 2017	Recommendation progress monitoring - one year on	For Members to receive an update on the progress made on the recommendations in the "Accessibility and Promotion of Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities" Inquiry report - one year on.	Oliver Stykuc-Dean, Commissioner	
25 Jul 2017	The "Growth" agenda	For Committee Members to hear from health and adult social care colleagues about their plans around the growth agenda.	Liz Wheaton, Committee and Governance Adviser	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
19 Sep 2017	Care Closer to Home	For Members to scrutinise the care closer to home model which was implemented in early 2017 to ensure the quality of patient care and experience has not be affected as a result of the changes.	Liz Wheaton, Committee and Governance Adviser	Neil Dardis, Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust
19 Sep 2017	Vascular Services update on PROM project	Following the January meeting, Members will receive a further update on the results of the Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROM) which seeks to gain feedback from patients on their experiences of care across the network.	Liz Wheaton, Committee and Governance Adviser	Aarti Chapman, Associate Director, Strategic Clinical Network and Senate Clíodhna Ni Ghuidhir, Thames Valley Vascular Network and Service Manager Annie Tysom, Senior Communications and Engagement Manager Carolyn Hinton, Quality Improvement Lead

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Transport. Environment & Communities Select Committee				
12 Sep 2017	The Growth Agenda in Bucks	For Members to agree the Joint Select Committee Inquiry Report: The Growth Agenda in Bucks	Kama Wager, Committee Adviser	

SCRUTINY INQUIRY WORK PROGRAMME – OVERVIEW OF SELECT COMMITTEE CURRENT INQUIRIES

Inquiry Title	Inquiry Chairman	Lead Officer	Mar 17	Apr 17	May 17	June 17	July 17
Finance, Performance, Resources (FPR)							
Growth In Buckinghamshire*	tbc	Kelly Sutherland					
Children’s Social Care & Learning (CSC&L)							
Growth In Buckinghamshire*	tbc	Kevin Wright					
Health, Adult Social Care (HASC)							
Hospital Discharge	Brian Roberts	Liz Wheaton					
Growth In Buckinghamshire*	tbc	Liz Wheaton					
Transport, Environment & Communities (TEC)							
Sustainable Travel to Schools	David Carroll	Kama Wager					
Growth In Buckinghamshire*	tbc	Kama Wager					



Scoping



Evidence gathering



Committee Approval Report



Cabinet / NHS

* **Joint scrutiny report subject to agreement post elections.**

For further information on scrutiny work please contact Sara Turnbull, Head of Member Services on 01296 382876.

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11/04/2017

Report to Cabinet

Title:	Children's Homes – Local Provision
Date:	24 April 2017
Date can be implemented:	03 May 2017
Author:	Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Cabinet Member for Resources
Contact officer:	Anthony Decrop – Assistant Director of Children's Services Simon Brown – Head of Children's Care Service
Portfolio areas affected:	Children's Services, Resources

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

Summary

The Council's Change for Children Transformation Programme seeks to build a strong and financially sustainable future for children and families across Buckinghamshire. In the context of increasing demand on services, and reducing government funding, it aims to achieve changes in the way we deliver services so we provide children and families with the right support at the right time, target services better and work with partners to ensure we can continue to educate and protect children and improve their life chances.

One of the objectives within this Programme is to reduce the reliance on expensive external residential placements and a second related objective is to place more children locally to minimise the disruption to their lives. To help deliver those objectives investigation has been undertaken to explore the establishment of more local Children's Homes.

The outline business case for the establishment of local children's homes is appended to this report. This business case has been presented to both the One Council Board and Asset Strategy Board prior to being presented to Cabinet here and has their in principle support.

There are currently a number of council buildings that are being considered as potential use for children's homes following appropriate building work and modifications. However, there is



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



also the potential to purchase properties on the open market which would have the advantage of bringing online a children's home sooner. In order to be able to bid for any identified property on the open market, or carry out improvement works to existing Council properties, approval is required from Cabinet to add this to the Capital Programme and to fund this from prudential borrowing. It is therefore requested that Cabinet approve this decision in principle but delegated to the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Cabinet Member for Resources the approval of specific projects up to an overall value of £2m.

Recommendation

That Cabinet

- 1) approves the business case for the provision of additional residential places for children in Buckinghamshire; and**
- 2) agrees to prudentially borrow up to a value of £2m to fund the additional property purchases.**
- 3) delegates to the Cabinet Member for Resources, in agreement with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, the authority to purchase properties and carry out improvement works as required funded by prudential borrowing up to an overall value of £2m.**

A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision

Benchmarking analysis indicates that the number of Looked after Children in Buckinghamshire is broadly in line with expectations based on comparators. However, the cost of providing these children with support is substantially above average. This would appear to be significantly due to reliance on relatively expensive external residential placements and on Independent Foster Agencies, rather than the Council's own carers. A significant element of the Change for Children Programme is therefore to look at how those children can be brought closer to home, which should offer improved care and at the same time reduce costs.

One element of this approach is to establish more local children's homes which are appropriately focussed on meeting the needs of Buckinghamshire's children. An outline business case has been prepared to explore the costs and benefits associated with establishing more local homes. This is included as Appendix 1 to this report. This business case clearly demonstrates the advantage of establishing further children's homes locally rather than relying on the spot purchase market. There are a number of options for how that local delivery may be made and the relative merits of these are more marginal. However, looking at the non-financial benefits and the risks associated with the various options in-house provision is the favoured option.

In pursuit of this option the Strategic Assets Team (Corporate Landlord) has been investigating both the use of existing Council property assets and suitable properties available on the open market.

The outline business case for Children's Homes has been presented to both One Council Board and the Asset Strategy Board and received in principle support from both. However, the Capital Programme approved recently by Full Council does not include either the cost of this project, or how the project would be financed. This report therefore seeks approval to add the project to the Capital Programme and to prudentially borrow in order to fund it.

B. Other options available, and their pros and cons

The various options available for the provision of local Children's Homes and their pros and cons are set out in the Outline Business Case appended to this report.

C. Resource implications

It is proposed that the cost of purchase and adaptation will be funded from borrowing. The savings arising from the project will exceed the financing costs of the borrowing.

Inevitably in these situations there is a need to fund the investment up front and the payback comes over an extended period following. The actual savings made will depend on individual cases, however based on the average cost of current external placements compared with the in-house option proposed the payback period is expected to be in the region of 3 years. The revenue cost of funding the borrowing has been taken into account in costing the new proposal and this still demonstrates substantial savings.

D. Value for Money (VfM) Self Assessment

The value for money is demonstrated by the appended business case. This shows that even allowing for the cost of financing the borrowing the proposed course of action is cheaper than the current approach and other options considered.

E. Legal implications

To be able to use a private property as a children's home planning permission for a change of use will be required. In addition all children's homes and their managers have to be registered with Ofsted before becoming operational.

The Council is able to borrow in line with its Treasury Management Strategy prepared under the Prudential Code.

F. Property implications

The property implications are explicit in this report and the supporting appendices. If the recommendations in this report are supported the Council will own additional residential properties with a view to conversion to a Children's Home.

G. Other implications/issues

N/A

H. Communication issues

Inherent in taking these proposals forward will be the need to gain planning approval for the change of use of the property to use as a children's home. This will necessarily involve engagement with the local community and other stakeholders through the Location Assessment for each home.

I. Progress Monitoring

There is a Programme Board for the Change for Children Programme which regularly monitors progress against all the underpinning projects delivering the wider programme.

J. Review

A review of the impact of the project will be undertaken at key milestones to ensure that the intended benefits are being delivered.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Outline Business Case

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Member Services Team by 5.00pm on Friday 21 April 2017. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 387969), or e-mail to democracy@buckscc.gov.uk



Project Management Toolkit

Outline Business Case

Project Title	Increasing Children's Home Capacity in Buckinghamshire		
Project No. or Ref (if applicable)	LAC project	Document Version Ref	V5
Project Manager	Simon Brown	Telephone No.	Ext 7588
Project Sponsor	Anthony Decrop	Telephone No	Ext 3953

Executive Summary

Currently the Council has a low level of local residential social care provision for vulnerable children. Whilst the targets set out in the Change for Children programme set an expectation of a reduced requirement of residential provision it also seeks a much higher proportion of the remaining provision to be locally based. It follows from this that the local provision of residential care for children needs to be expanded. This report is aimed at considering how this might best be achieved.

The number of options available is very large, so the report focusses down on a limited number of the key options and compares these to the do nothing option of continuing to spot purchase in the open market across the country. Options considered are: full in-house provision; continuation and possible expansion of a block contract arrangement and; a hybrid of Council property ownership and contracted out service delivery.

Despite different methodologies being necessary to cost the various options, the final analysis indicates that in financial terms there is very little to choose between the alternative new options, but a substantial gain to be made by moving away from the current predominantly spot purchase approach. The final decision on the options will therefore also be dependent upon non-financial considerations such as risk and operational capacity/experience. It may, in any case, be of some merit to have a mixed economy, with more than one of the options being pursued in parallel. Market preferences may also prove to be a determining factor.



Project Management Toolkit

Background and Reasons

There is an inherent volatility in the number of children in the care system at any point in time and that volatility translates into any particular type of provision, such as residential. In the past year the number of Buckinghamshire children placed in residential accommodation has varied from a low of 50 to a peak of 67. Of these a maximum of 6 can be accommodated in the Council's own provision, leading to a heavy dependence upon commercial providers.

Buckinghamshire has joined forces with five other local authorities in the region to develop a cross regional provision. The contract with Bettercare Keys for this provision is due to come to an end, having already been extended to its full duration, in December 2018. Buckinghamshire has an allocation of 6 beds within this contract, all of which are provided within Buckinghamshire.

There are, in addition, a further 12 beds available for spot purchase run by Benjamin UK within the Buckinghamshire boundary, but are open to all other local authorities to purchase.

It is clear from this, that under current arrangements the majority of residential placements are provided from outside the Buckinghamshire boundary and are not in the control of BCC. Further, if the "Keys" contract is allowed to lapse without equivalent replacement this position will be exacerbated.

The Target Operating Model for Children's Services sets out a number of aspirations relevant to residential provision:

- 70% of children placed within 20 miles of home
- No more than 10% of looked after children in residential care
- Spend per looked after child in line with Statistical Neighbours

Currently the total Looked After Children population is around 450 to 460. Allowing for current trends in demographic growth this might be anticipated to rise to around 490 to 500 over the next 5 years. However, if planned enhancements to the Early Help offer have the desired impact it is anticipated that the overall number can be maintained at around the current levels. On this basis the total residential requirement should not exceed 46 beds, of which 32 should be within 20 miles of the child's home.

Comparing these target levels with the current position indicates that a number of changes are required. First of all the use of residential provision, as a proportion of the total provision, needs to reduce. This is likely to require improvements and expansion of particular types of other provision rather than any action on residential provision itself. Secondly a considerable expansion of more locally based provision in a manner which BCC can have some control over access.



Project Management Toolkit

There is a predominance in the market place of residential provision in the north of the country where both property and wage costs tend to be lower. In seeking more local provision this is a challenge that BCC will need to consider with care.

A number of maps are included **at Appendix 1** to this business case:

- The first shows, based on information at the end of December 2016 where each child in a residential placement is placed relative to their home address.
- The second map shows in more detail the home addresses within Buckinghamshire of all the children in external residential placements
- The third map shows 5, 10 and 15 radii from the centre of the major conurbations in Buckinghamshire to illustrate the coverage if children's homes were placed in these areas.

Taken together consideration of these maps suggests that if the Change for Children objective of keeping children close to home is to be met some provision in the south of the county will be needed, albeit this may increase costs a little.

Business Options

To expand local residential provision a range of options exist. At one end of the spectrum the Council could buy/build its own home(s) and run them itself. At the other end of the spectrum the Council could simply specify what it wants and put that out to the market. There are, no doubt, many other options within that spectrum, for example the Council could buy/build the homes themselves, but then ask others to run them. Of course, the total solution might involve the combination of a number of different types of provision, although one needs to have regard to the cohesion of any such solution.

There are numerous other issues to be taken into account, which lead to a range of sub-options. For example the size of the individual establishment is likely to impact on cost, but also the level of support offered to each individual resident. There may also need to be additional services provided such as education, or therapeutic support.

A number of specific options within the overall spectrum are considered in more detail in the remainder of this document.

Benefits

Finding placements for children locally has the potential benefit of allowing them to keep some continuity in their lives, such as their school/college arrangements and their friendship groups.

There are also benefits in service delivery terms. Social worker visit journey lengths and time are reduced allowing more time for building better relationships with the children. There should also be a reduced time for spot purchasing places on the open market.



Project Management Toolkit

Although this will still be needed in certain circumstances there will be a better opportunity to either understand the local market or directly manage it depending upon the solution chosen. These service benefits should have a knock on benefit in reducing costs along with a reduced average cost of the placements themselves as spot purchases tend to be more expensive for any given type of provision.

Dis-Benefits

There are no clear dis-benefits of the proposal as a whole, but there are some potential challenges or risk depending upon the particular solution adopted.

If the Council chooses to own and run the facilities itself, it will have greater control, but at the same time carry greater risk. Such a solution can guarantee access when spaces are available, but, by contrast, if all spaces are not filled the cost will not reduce proportionately and value for money will be challenged. This solution is likely to offer less flexibility over time if needs change. Further, it tends to be the case that Council's terms and conditions are more favourable to staff than those offered by the private sector in this field, which may push up overall costs.

A market based solution whilst offering the potential of greater flexibility may prove disruptive at the change points between contracts. There would also be no retention of assets.

A solution somewhere in the middle of these options is likely to have some of the benefits and dis-benefits of both. With careful design it may be possible to find a solution which maximises the benefits and minimises the dis-benefits.

Costs

With so many options possible and variations on those options presenting the cost consideration of all permutations is challenging. At the same time consideration of costs will be a major contributing factor in determining which option to pursue. What follows is therefore based on some key scenarios to aid decision making.

Existing Data

The Council currently has one children's home, [REDACTED], which provides some important information on potential costs of the option to own and run additional homes in-house. However, the cost centre for this home does not currently directly bear all its costs, so adjustments are necessary for comparability with other options.

The Council also contracts with the private market place which also provides some base data. Usefully this includes both spot purchase prices and a local block contract providing a number of different comparators.



Project Management Toolkit

The cross regional contract with Bettercare Keys provides Buckinghamshire with access to 6 guaranteed places at an annual contract value of £937k. This equates to an annual cost per child of just over £156k, or a bednight rate of **£429**, assuming full occupancy. Under this arrangement the contractor bears operational risk, such as staff sickness, replacing vacant posts, etc., but the Council bears the risk of underutilisation of the provision.

The use of spot purchased places allows access to a wide range of provision with specific specialisms being offered as appropriate. It is unlikely that local provision, however provided will meet all of these specialist requirements in all eventualities. Due to the different nature of the provisions access there a wide range of prices paid, currently from around **£240** per bednight to around **£1000** per bednight. The average cost is around **£555**.

BCC Owning & Running its own Provision

There are three main blocks of cost involved in owning and running a children's home: the cost of the premises; the cost of the staff running it and; the general running costs. The current provision at [REDACTED] can help us understand the staff and general running costs, but it does not bear the majority of the premises costs itself, so these need to be added in for comparability. The tables below, based on costs from [REDACTED], illustrate what the cost of different sizes of unit might cost.

Number of Children	Number of Bedrooms	Number of Staff	Staff Costs	Premises Costs	Running Costs	Total Cost
No.	No.	No.	£	£	£	£
2	3	11	375000	31100	30000	436100
3	4	11	375000	41800	41000	457800
4	5	15	495000	53900	52000	600900
5	6	15	495000	61600	63000	619600

Depending upon the size of the establishment this give a bednight cost range of between **£340** and **£600** assuming full occupancy.



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Number of Children No.	Total Cost £	Cost per Child £	Cost per Week £	Cost per Bednight £
2	436100	218050	4193.27	599.04
3	457800	152600	2934.62	419.23
4	600900	150225	2888.94	412.71
5	619600	123920	2383.08	340.44

Of course if the provision is in the ownership of the Council the costs will remain largely the same irrespective of the level of usage. Therefore to make the bednight cost comparison effective and allowance needs to be made for less than 100% utility. The average usage at [REDACTED] over the last 5 years has been around 70%, although in the current financial year this has increased to about 85%. The table below shows the impact on bednight costs of occupancy rates of, 90%, 80% and 70%.

Number of Children No.	Cost per Bednight £	@90% Occupancy £	@80% Occupancy £	@70% Occupancy £
2	599.04	665.60	748.80	855.77
3	419.23	465.81	524.04	598.90
4	412.71	458.56	515.88	589.58
5	340.44	378.27	425.55	486.34

BCC Own the Building, but Contract Out the Running

It tends to be the case in this market sector that the terms and conditions offered by the private sector are less generous than available from the Council. This might make an option where the running of the establishment by the private sector is attractive in cost terms. Of course any provider will need to make a financial return which may eat into any cost reductions.

Under this option the Council could keep control over access, but would then need to bear the risk of low occupancy. Alternatively the Council could pass access control to the provider in which case access for the Council would not be guaranteed and the additional risk that the contractor is bearing would be likely to be reflected in the price.

Timescale

There are a number of different timeframes involved in developing children's homes;

- Identification of properties
- Adaptation of properties to be compliant with care standards



Project Management Toolkit

- Recruitment of a registered manager
- Recruitment of staff
- Training of staff
- Registration with OFSTED

This last point is critical as you cannot register until the other elements have been successfully completed, and OFSTED will register a home within 16 weeks of an application. It is likely that these stages will have a combined timeline of 8 months. In relation to the regional block contract with Keys, the provider took just under 12 months from identification of properties to opening the first two homes. However a significant amount of time was spent in the purchasing phase. If the Council is able to use properties it already own this may reduce this element of the timeframe, although there may still be a need for refurbishment of the property, or even planning permission to be gained for a change of use, all of which can take time.

If the Council were to develop a number of additional children's homes this might be approached on a phased basis to manage resources more effectively, but this would extend the overall timeline.

Dependencies

The service aspirations set out at the head of this document indicate an overall reduced requirement for residential provision as well as a need for greater local provision. This business case is largely aimed at delivering the increased local provision, but the overall requirement is dependent upon the wider transformation programme. Improving the Early Help offer will be an important feature of preventing children passing through the care system to the point of needing residential provision. In addition for those children who do require a placement there will need to be a scaling up of alternatives such as fostering, Special Guardianship Orders and adoption, if the use of residential placements is to be reduced.

Investment Appraisal

The "Costs" section of this business case identifies the bednight cost for a number of the main options. However, there are a few additional considerations depending upon the option chosen.

For the in-house buy/build and run option there will need to be some management oversight at an increased level above that currently employed for a single home. It is therefore assumed that an additional management post sitting above all the residential provision would be required. This additional cost needs to be attributed across the whole of the BCC provision.

By contrast research by Loughborough University indicates that there are considerable additional costs associated with supporting residential placements remote from the local authority. The additional travel time and cost for both social worker and parental visits



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along with quality checking arrangements, etc. were estimated to cost an additional £6k per child per annum. This research took place back in 2010, so allowing for inflation this will now be around £7.25k.

For the In-house provision, or any option where the Council bears the risk of voids one needs to determine the level of occupancy that is likely. Historically ██████████ has operated at around 70% occupancy, but more recently at 85%. On the assumption of more active management an 80% occupancy has been assumed for the comparison below. The Bettercare Keys contract has operated at 97.5% occupancy due to the ability to fill capacity from other local authorities within the contract.

Allowing for these adjustments yields the following bednight costs for the main options considered.

Spot purchase (average) –	£575	
Cross Regional Contract –	£440	[assumes 97.5% occupancy]
In-house provision –	£430	[assumes 80% occupancy]

This reveals that there is very little cost difference between in-house provision and that currently provided through the cross regional contract. By contrast there is a substantial saving with either of these options compared to the average cost of spot purchases. This equates to an annual saving of about £50k per child.

In both the case of the in-house provision and the cross regional contract the risk of voids rests with the Council. With the in-house provision the Council additionally bears the operational risk, i.e. staff management, quality control, etc.

A further option worth considering in principle is a hybrid of the Council owning the premises, but contracting out the running of the establishment. Unfortunately data to accurately cost this option is not readily available. This option would have the premises costs of the in-house option, but the staff and running costs of the cross regional option. As these two options are very close in value it might reasonably be assumed that this further option would be of similar costs. It is likely that a private provider would offer less generous terms and conditions to staff and thus have cheaper staff costs. Running costs such as utility costs and catering costs are likely to be similar. Smaller scale providers tend to rent their premises which, in turn, implies a profit element for a landlord. It is therefore plausible that if the Council were the landlord this profit element could be avoided, however, initial discussions with a local provider indicate the rental costs experienced are very close to the costs illustrated in the council ownership model. The care provider would, of course, want to make a profit themselves, but this is already reflected in the cross regional price, which is close to the in-house price already. One might conclude from this that this hybrid option would reduce the overall profit element and thus come in a little cheaper certainly than the cross regional option and possibly also the full in-house option, although the price differential is likely to be fairly marginal.



Known Risks

The main risks to delivering the change project are:

- Planning approval/planning delay
- Cost over-run
- Time delay due to weather conditions, or poor contractor management, etc.
- Failure to identify suitable sites

Additionally there are risks in delivering the desired outcomes once the facilities are in operation. These are covered in a Risk and Benefits Matrix included as **Appendix 2** to this report.

Conclusions

This largely desk-top based assessment of the options reveals that there is very little financial difference between the options. Certainly the differences calculated are within the tolerance of accuracy that can be expected from this type of analysis. At the same time the analysis does confirm that pursuing one or more of these options should yield significant savings over continuing with the current practice.

As well as financial considerations there are other matters to take into account, such as the quality of care and where risks lie. There is no clear evidence to suggest one of the approaches considered offers better quality of care. There is much more to be gained in this respect simply by bringing the care closer to home, which is the whole purpose of the project in the first place. However, whether through direct management, or contract management, what is likely to be important is sufficient management capacity to have appropriate oversight of the arrangements.

As discussed in the main body of the report there are a range of sub-options which give a different balance of risk transfer. In general, however, the more contracted out the greater the risk transfer away from the Council. Nonetheless, ultimate risk remains with the council as it retains responsibility for ensuring that the children are appropriately cared for. Thus in the case of contractor failure the risk immediately transfers back to the Council. Despite this, if considered as a going concern, operational risks such as recruiting and training suitable staff, covering staff behaviour and absence, etc. can be transferred to a contractor. Similarly risks associated with property maintenance can be transferred to a contractor if desired under certain options, as can the risk of voids, or underutilisation of the facility. Of course, if a contractor is bearing risk it is likely that this will be reflected in the price, so from a council perspective there may be a balance to be struck.



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Bearing in mind all of these factors it is likely that the preferred overall solution will lie in a mixed economy. In general operational margins are tight, so a solution which retains a high degree of control for the Council will be preferable. At the same time property development margins tend to be much larger, so a solution which keeps property ownership with the Council should prove more cost efficient.

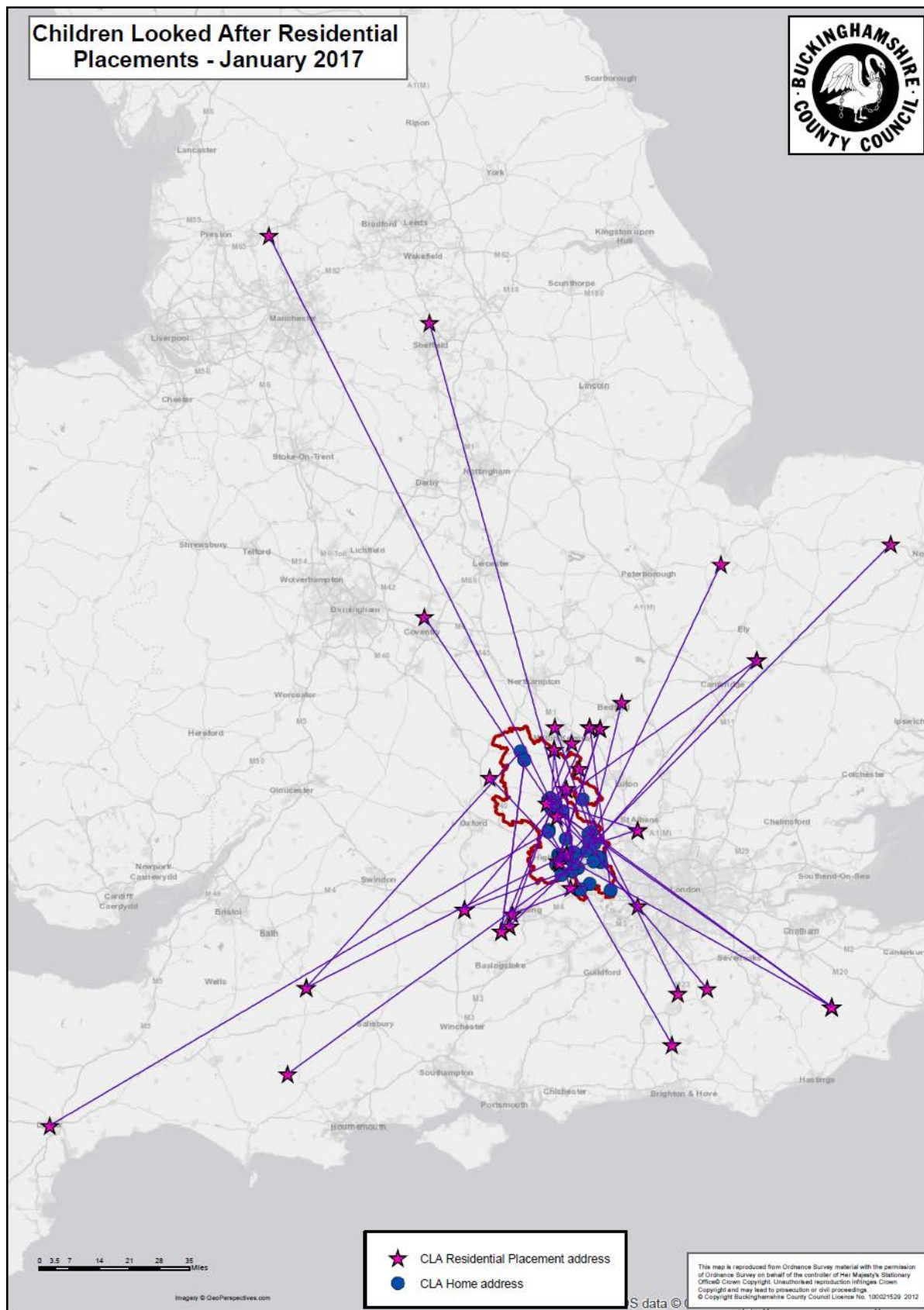
Recommendations

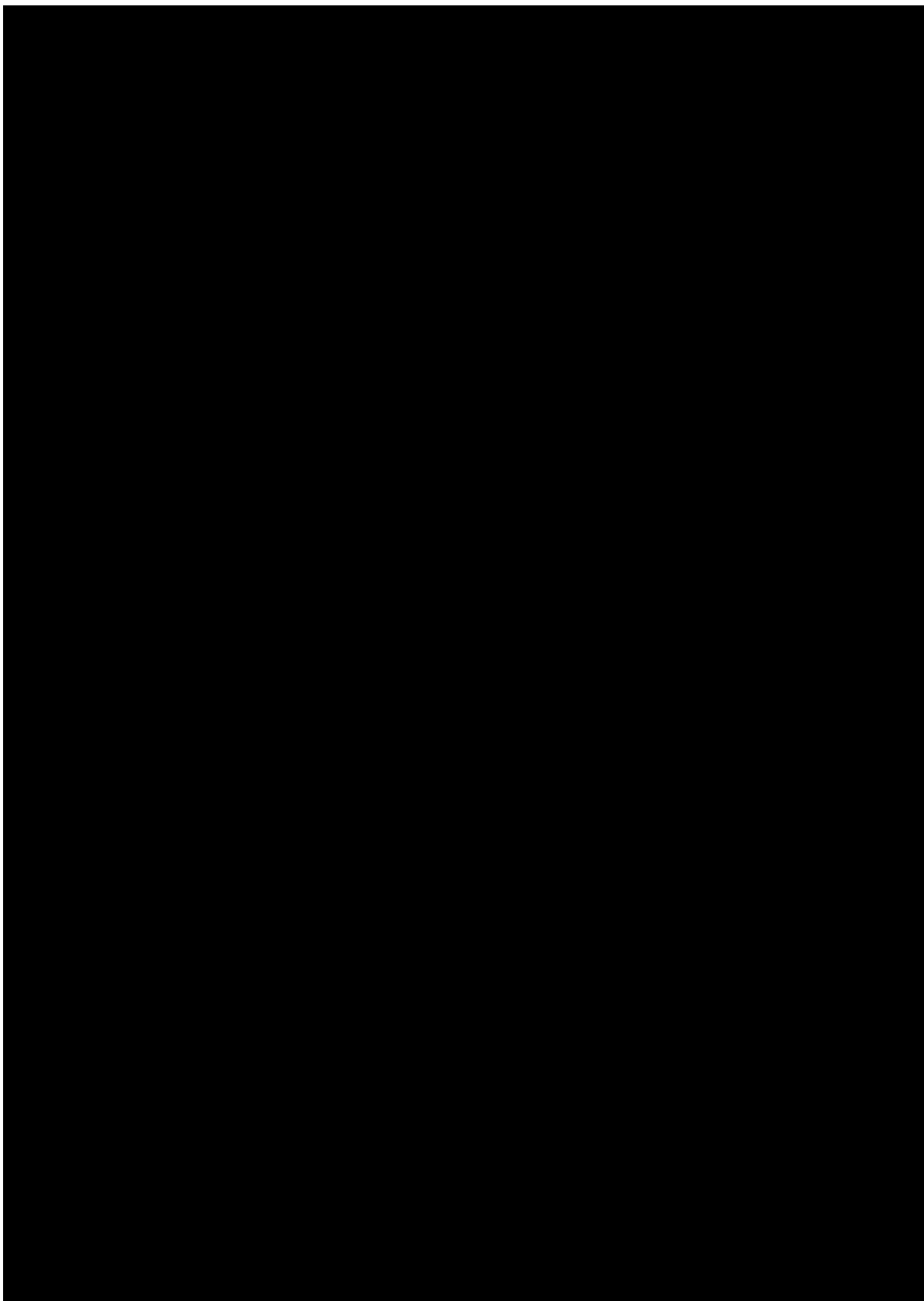
With regard to the preferred option of the Council owning and running the homes to carry out the following.

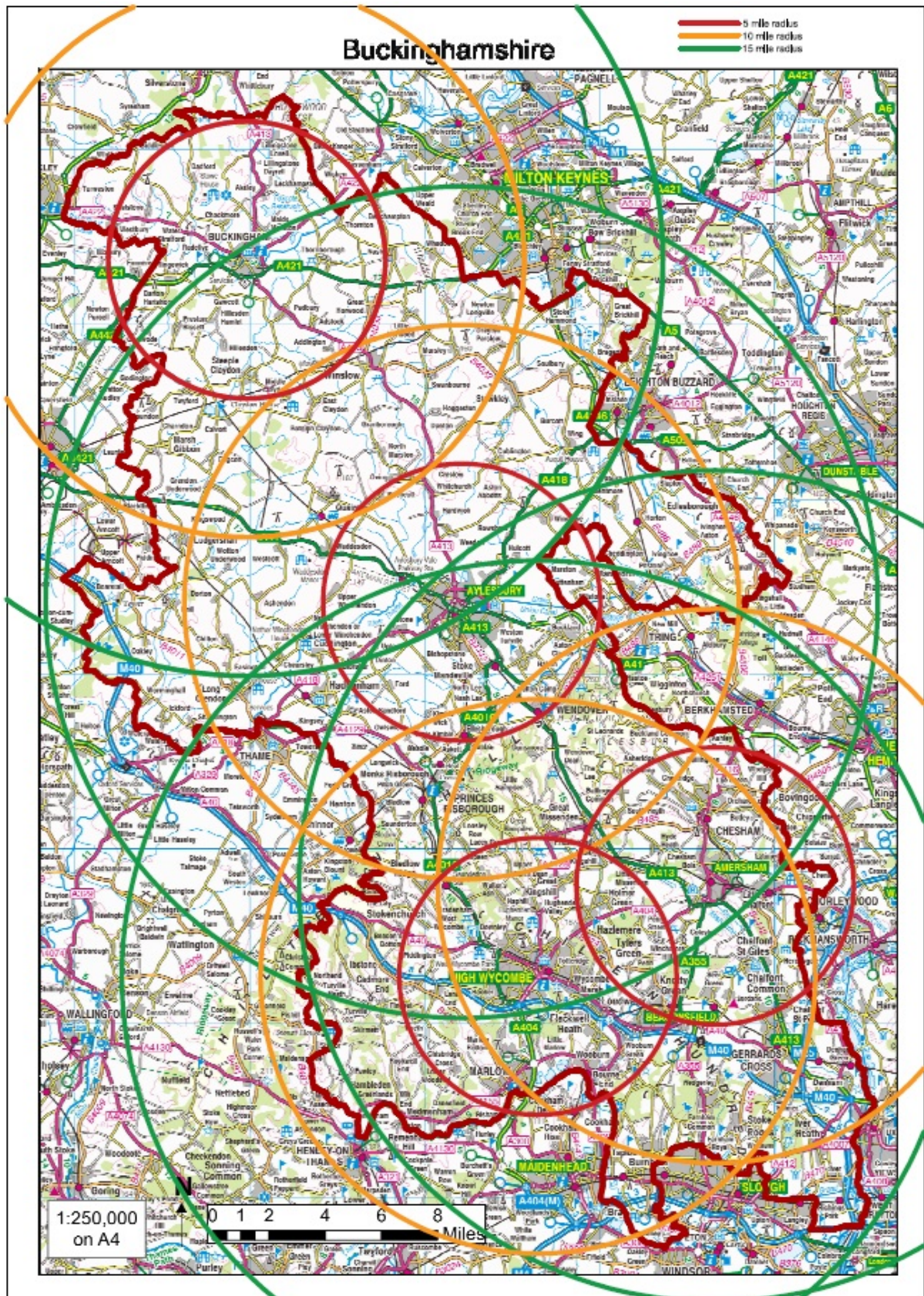
- Work up more detailed designs and costings on those Council owned properties deemed suitable and seek the necessary planning permissions. This will be a necessary step in either the full in-house option, or the hybrid option.
- Develop an implementation plan for running Children's Homes in-house, to include recruiting the necessary staff and gaining the necessary approvals from the appropriate authorities.
- Consider with partner local authorities the re-tendering of the cross-regional contract with a potential expansion of such. Particular emphasis being given to the boundaries of any such expansion.
- Soft market test with potential providers the interest in running council owned facilities and identify any issues/constraints with such an option from their perspective, as a test of value of the in-house option.

Supporting Documents

Property reports on potentially suitable properties already in Council ownership.







Expansion of Local Residential Care Provision for Children – Risk/Benefits Matrix.

Risk	Option 1 Own and Run	Option 2 Outsource (Block Contract)	Option 3 Own and Outsource Running
Unable to recruit staff with the skills and capabilities required to enable successful running of provision	Risk entirely with BCC	Direct risk transferred to contractor but potential risk for BCC should provision fail or require management intervention	Direct risk transferred to contractor but potential risk for BCC should provision fail or require increased management intervention
Retention of permanent staff	Risk entirely with BCC	Risk entirely with contractor	Risk entirely with contractor
Lack of understanding by public of where accountability sits	N/A	Reputational risk remains with BCC as despite being outsourced, customers still see the Council as the responsible body.	Reputational risk remains with BCC but is reduced from fully outsourced due to clear accountability through ownership.
Problems with the property, e.g. maintenance issues	Risk entirely with BCC	Risk predominantly with the contractor.	Shared risk, which would depend in the first instance in the nature of the lease and the contract.
Poor utilisation of the resource, i.e. low occupancy rate	Risk entirely with BCC	Will depend on the nature of the contract, but with a block contract most likely that the risk sits predominantly with BCC.	Will depend on the nature of the contract, but most likely that the risk sits predominantly with BCC.
Inadequate flexibility of resource to respond to changing needs	Reduced risk due to direct control over the resource	Risk with BCC as contract will define what is offered. Only likely to achieve change at a relatively high price.	Risk with BCC as contract will define what is offered. Only likely to achieve change at a relatively high price.

Benefit	Option 1 Own and Run	Option 2 Outsource (Block Contract)	Option 3 Own and Outsource Running
Gain in property value over time is taken by the contractor	Not applicable	Any gain in the capital value of the property over time will be taken by the contractor unless priced into the contract.	Not applicable
Poor reputation/relationship of home with neighbours	Risk entirely with BCC	Predominantly with the contractor in the first instance	Predominantly with the contractor in the first instance
Direct control over the resource and ability to prioritise	BCC children would be placed in a timescale commensurate with their needs	OLA children could be prioritised over BCC child, but would depend on the nature of the contract	OLA children could be prioritised over BCC child, but would depend on the nature of the contract
Flexibility of resource to respond to changing needs	Full flexibility	Possible but would increase cost	Possible but would increase cost
Gain in property value over time	All profit realised by BCC	Profit realised by contractor/landlord	All profit realised by BCC
Develop specialist & innovative provision	Able to work with local partners, e.g. CAMHS to create specialist packages of support for BCC children	Potential but dependent on contract and willingness of provided to work with local partners and incurred costs	Potential but dependent on contract and willingness of provided to work with local partners and incurred costs
Increase in BCC employed residential staff	Will provide greater efficiency and flexibility with existing BCC residential home	N/A	N/A
Manage performance against outcomes for children	Greater ability through direct line management of residential home manager	Can be built into contract management arrangements	Can be built into contract management arrangements

Report to Cabinet

Title:	Children's Improvement Programme Update
Date:	Monday 24 April 2017
Date can be implemented:	Wednesday 03 May 2017
Author:	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Contact officer:	David Johnston, Managing Director Children's Services 01296 383104
Local members affected:	All
Portfolio areas affected:	All

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

[Guidance can be found on the intranet at the following link:

<https://intranet.buckscc.gov.uk/how-do-i/member-services/decision-making/>

Is the report confidential? Please contact Member Services.]

Summary

The Children's Improvement Programme was set up in response to the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Safeguarding Services in August 2014. Since the last report to Cabinet in February 2016, Ofsted have undertaken two Monitoring Visits both of which have concluded that improvements have been made to services for children and families but that there is more work to be done to ensure a consistent, quality service is provided to all children and families.

The Children's Improvement Board continues to monitor and challenge progress against the Improvement Plan and a revised plan will be scrutinised at the Board in April 2017.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to note this update report and the progress and improvements in the service identified by the two Ofsted Monitoring visits as well as the further improvements planned.

A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision

1. Following the Ofsted Inspection Report into Childrens Safeguarding Services in Buckinghamshire in August 2014, an Improvement Plan was approved by Cabinet. Subsequently, a refreshed Improvement Plan was agreed by Cabinet in February 2016.

2. The delivery of the Improvement Plan has been overseen by a multi-agency Children's Improvement Board chaired by a DfE appointed Chairperson, John Goldup. The Board scrutinises performance against key performance indicators and progress against the plan, providing challenge and support. In addition to the Children's Improvement Board, John Goldup meets with senior officers on a monthly basis to further scrutinise in detail performance in those areas that is not progressing at the pace expected. The Chairperson is required to submit regular reports to the Minister which inform the 6 monthly DfE Reviews.
3. The bi-annual DfE Review is conducted by a DfE Advisor on behalf the Minister and involves the production of a number of detailed reports and a meeting with Members and senior officers in relation progress in order to determine whether any further intervention is required by the DfE. Following each review, the Minister writes to the Leader of the Council to confirm the ongoing level of scrutiny.
4. In August 2016, Ofsted published new arrangements for monitoring the progress of local authorities with inadequate children's services through quarterly monitoring visits. The monitoring visits involve a small inspection team (2-3 inspectors) being onsite for 2 days tracking and sampling individual children's journey's and assessing the quality and impact of the partnership on improving children's outcomes, . At the end of each visit, an Ofsted Monitoring letter is published. Whilst a full re-inspection will not usually take place until there have been at least four monitoring visits, as Buckinghamshire was 2 years into its improvement journey when the new monitoring arrangements were published, Ofsted have been clear that they may undertake a re-inspection prior to four monitoring visits being completed.
5. Ofsted have completed two Monitoring Visits in Buckinghamshire to date, with two more planned for April and July 2017.
6. The first Monitoring Visit took place in August 2016 (letter attached as Appendix A) and focused on the front end of the child's social care journey. This involved assessing through First Response and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub how well the threshold for intervention with children and their families was understood across the partnership and implemented by children's social care, The quality of assessment and planning for children and how well the voice of the child was heard when children were in need of help and protection It also looked at how well the service was discharging its duties in relation to children who at risk of or are being sexually exploited (Swan Unit).
7. The inspectors were clear in their report that there had been improvement since the 2014 inspection and progress had accelerated in the last 6 months. They acknowledged the investment and improved leadership across the council in making this improvement possible concluding "children's social care services are now a firm priority for the Council" and that the senior managers in Children's Services are clear about the key priorities they need to concentrate on in order to further improve outcomes for children. There were a number of themes that they identified:
 - All social workers knew their children and families well
 - The MASH and partnership working has improved considerably and is having a positive impact on outcomes for children however there is too much delay in progressing some referrals
 - Thresholds in First Response and Swan are effective and there is evidence of staff using the threshold document to inform decision making
 - The quality of recent assessments has improved but there is still some variability
 - Recording and quality of practice has improved but still remains variable

- Management oversight and supervision is evident and impacting on outcomes for children however it remains too task orientated in its recording in some areas
- Children are being seen and seen alone and there was evidence of good practice for some children with the use of creative tools to hear their voice
- All children have a plan but work is needed to improve their quality so they are effective in driving progress
- Managers are now using the comprehensive performance information to drive improvements
- More work is needed to ensure improvements are made in our private fostering and LADO arrangements

A subsequent action plan was developed and updates reported to the Children's Improvement Board. (See Appendix B)

8. Following on from the first Monitoring Visit by Ofsted, officials from the Department for Education undertook a review of progress. A copy of the overview progress report that was presented to them is attached to this paper for information (Appendix C). In October 2016 the Minister wrote to the Leader of the Council confirming that "on the basis of all the available evidence, I intend to maintain the current level of DfE intervention. The information I have received suggests that the council is prioritising the improvement of children's services and that it is committed to improving outcomes for vulnerable children and their families."
9. The second Ofsted Monitoring Visit took place in December 2016 (letter attached as Appendix D) and focused on services for children in care: thresholds and quality of support provided; effectiveness of the public law outline and legal planning meetings; the independent reviewing service, timeliness and quality of health assessments; and the response to children looked after who go missing and / or are at risk of child sexual exploitation. Again, the inspectors concluded that "the local authority is making steady progress to improve services for children" but highlighted a number of areas which required further work. There were a number of themes that they identified:
 - Social workers know the children well and that there was evidence of good relationships between workers and children.
 - Management oversight is now evident but it is not yet consistently rigorous enough to ensure there is not delay or drift for children.
 - Increased investment in the IRO service has led to significant improvements and their footprint is evidenced on children's files. IRO's are now providing appropriate rigour and challenge and are acting positively as advocates for children.
 - There is significant improvement in the timeliness and quality of health assessments.
 - The thresholds for care are appropriate.
 - Assessments for Looked After Children need to be updated regularly in order to drive the plans and risk assessments for children looked after who are vulnerable to or at risk of CSE are inconsistent.
 - The PLO and Court Tracker needs to be used consistently to provide a clear picture of the progress for cases in proceedings.
 - Further work is required with Legal services to ensure that they are providing a timely and efficient service to all children.
 - Return interviews for children when they go missing are not yet timely or of a sufficient quality.
 - Too many children are waiting for important Life Story work

These additional areas have been added to the action plan and updates reported to the Children's Improvement Board. (See Appendix E).

10. Positive progress and improvements have been made across the four main areas of the Improvement Plan including:
- The development of a shared vision for children and families across the partnership
 - All children who require a statutory social work assessment and intervention have an allocated social worker
 - 652 families, 1,552 children have been allocated a lead family worker through Early Help Panel
 - 757 families have been turned around against Families First criteria
 - Children are now visited within 5 days of referral during assessment and seen alone (94%)
 - A recent survey showed 97% of workers across partnership understood and used the threshold document
 - Improved timeliness of decision making of referrals completed in 3 days from 61% (April 2015) to 94% (Jan 2017)
 - Assessments are now being completed in a timely way (45 working days) increasing from 87% (April 15) to 92% (Jan 2017) to ensure the child's needs are understood
 - Increased number of children subject to CP Plans from 333 to 564 which is now in line with statistical neighbours and shows appropriate identification of significant harm
 - 97% of children in care have an up to date care plan so they are clear about what is happening to them
 - Through the complex case management system there has been a significant improvement in engagement across the partnership which has resulted in the delivery of bespoke packages to jointly support and manage the risks of the most vulnerable children
 - 88% looked after children have an up to date pathway plan so their needs are identified
 - 28 young people open to After Care are in further education and 13 are in higher education
 - Increased the number of qualified social workers from 194 in August 2015 to 227 in January 2017 whilst also reducing the percent of agency workers from 25% in August 2015 to 20% in January 2017.
 - Improvements have been made to the Children's Social Care IT database (LCS) to reduce the amount of time workers have to spend inputting information into the system.
11. In December 2016, the Chair of the BSCB presented a report to the Improvement Board on the work that had been completed by the partnership over the previous two years to improve outcomes for children in Buckinghamshire. (See Appendix F). The report clearly shows the amount of work completed by the BSCB and the sub-groups particularly in relation to increasing the partnerships' understanding and knowledge of thresholds, the development of a multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy and Serious Case Reviews.
12. Following on from the second Monitoring Visit, and in recognition of the evidence of continuing progress and improvement, the Chairperson of the Children's Improvement Board decided, in consultation with Board members and the DfE, to reduce the governance around the improvement journey from monthly to quarterly meetings. The next Board meeting is scheduled for April 2017 and will focus on reviewing progress

against the February 2016 Improvement Plan, with the aim of producing a more focused plan for the year ahead. This will be shared with Cabinet for information once developed.

13. The third Monitoring Visit in April will focus on services for children in care and permanence, including children placed out of area, placement sufficiency and corporate parenting.

B. Other options available, and their pros and cons

N/A

C. Resource implications

Funding for the Improvement Programme Manager and a Project Officer has been secured until March 2018 in order to ensure there is dedicated resource driving the improvement plan.

The technology elements of the refreshed Improvement Plan will be delivered by carrying forward the underspend in the Improvement Programme one-off budget from 2016/17 into 2017/18 via the Improvement Programme reserve.

D. Value for Money (VfM) Self Assessment

N/A

E. Legal implications

N/A

F. Property implications

N/A

G. Other implications/issues

Ofsted have recently set out its future plans for the inspection of local authority children's services. These plans will be subject to piloting over the coming months, ready for implementation in January 2018. They propose moving from a single inspection applied universally to all local authorities to a more proportionate approach that takes account of earlier performance and current data and intelligence.

They have confirmed that they will continue with the current approach to local authorities judged inadequate: that is, quarterly monitoring visits with the next inspection either being a single inspection (SIF) or a post-monitoring SIF as set out in the August 2016 guidance.

H. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views

N/A

I. Communication issues

N/A

J. Progress Monitoring

Progress will continue to be monitored on a regular basis by the Improvement Board. The next Ofsted Monitoring visits are due to take place in April and August. Monthly updates will be taken to One Council Board.

K. Review

N/A

Background Papers

N/A

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Member Services Team by 5.00pm on Friday 21 April 2017. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343), or e-mail to democracy@buckscc.gov.uk

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16 September 2016

Mr David Johnston
Buckinghamshire County Council
Walton Street
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP20 1UA

Dear David

Monitoring visit of Buckinghamshire local authority children's services

This letter summarises the findings of the monitoring visit to Buckinghamshire children's services on 16 and 17 August 2016. This was the first monitoring visit under this arrangement since the local authority was judged inadequate in August 2014. The inspectors were Linda Steele HMI, Donna Marriott HMI and Tara Geere HMI.

The local authority is making progress to improve services for its children. This has been particularly evident in the last six months. However, the pace of improvement in the quality of some social work practice, the management of allegations against professionals and the response to privately fostered children are too slow.

Areas covered by the visit

During the course of this visit, inspectors reviewed the progress made, with a particular focus on four themes:

- the quality of management decision making in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) and the application of thresholds for statutory intervention
- assessment and planning processes for children in need of help and protection
- the arrangements in place to respond to children missing and at risk of child sexual exploitation
- management oversight.

Inspectors also considered:

- the management of allegations against professionals working with children
- the effectiveness of response to private fostering arrangements.

The visit considered a range of evidence, including electronic case records, supervision files and notes, observation of social workers undertaking referral and assessment duties and other information provided by staff and managers. In addition, we spoke to a range of staff including managers, social workers, other practitioners and administrative staff.

Summary of findings

- All children who require a statutory social work assessment and intervention have an allocated social worker. This is a significant improvement from the findings of the inspection in August 2014.
- A permanent senior management team is now in place and has developed a comprehensive understanding of the key priorities for improvement.
- Staff report that senior managers are more visible and communication has improved.
- Children's social care services are now a firm priority for the council.
- There are positive signs that the recruitment and retention strategy, combined with a sharper focus on poor performance, is beginning to have an impact on recruiting permanent staff.
- Appropriate management oversight, comprehensive performance management, and quality assurance processes are now in place. These have improved compliance significantly.
- Practice improvement managers are highly valued by social workers. These managers have been instrumental in highlighting practice shortfalls and strengths, as well as raising the standard of social work practice.
- Social work practice in the first response and children in need units is now of better quality than it was during the last inspection.
- Further work is still required to strengthen the quality of child in need and child protection plans.
- Child protection enquires are timely and informed by discussions at strategy meetings which include the participation of a range of partner agencies.
- Attendance by partners at child protection conferences and core groups has significantly improved.
- Direct work by social workers using resources appropriate to children's individual needs continues to be of variable quality.
- The MASH and partnership working has improved considerably. The partnership has been working effectively to strengthen a common understanding of thresholds.
- There is too much delay in progressing some referrals. This is particularly evident when the MASH is seeking information through partner agencies.

- There are ongoing pressures on police capacity to progress and screen domestic abuse notifications. This is adversely affecting the capacity of the children's social care service.
- Processes for responding to children who go missing from home are clear, but children do not consistently receive a timely return home interview.
- The quality of work within private fostering remains too variable.
- Capacity to manage allegations against professionals working with children remains insufficient.

Evaluation of progress

Based on the evidence gathered during the visit, we identified that in the last six months the pace of improvement has accelerated in some areas. However, progress has not met expectation in all areas. Senior managers now need to continue to focus on improving consistency in the quality of social work practice.

Political leaders have prioritised improvements in children's services to make sure that the infrastructure is in place to support effective social work practice. This renewed focus has resulted in improved capacity across the workforce, with sufficient social workers and managers to respond to demand. At the time of the monitoring visit, all children who required assessment or a statutory social work service had an allocated social worker.

The investment in children's services is particularly evident in the development of the MASH and child sexual exploitation SWAN unit, as well as in the significant increase in social work capacity across the service. The MASH is effective and partnership working has improved considerably, with partners now working together to strengthen professionals' understanding of thresholds. However, re-referral rates remain high. Senior managers are conducting an analysis to understand the reasons. This has so far revealed some errors in recording but has yet to conclude.

Since June 2016, ongoing pressures of police capacity have caused delays in screening domestic abuse referrals. At the time of this visit, 450 notifications were waiting to be screened by police, with the oldest dating back to 31 July 2016. Senior managers had escalated these concerns to the local safeguarding children board and the police subsequently implemented a plan to manage the associated risks and reduce the backlog. Police prioritise all notifications where children are present and refer to the MASH for managers to assess whether intervention is required. However, because the police have not screened all notifications in advance, children's social care service has less information to inform effective decision making about the need for intervention. Additionally, this has impact on the capacity of the children's social care service.

Social workers now visit children regularly and see them alone. This has resulted in increased opportunities for children to build and sustain positive relationships with

their social workers. However, the purpose of visits is not always clear. In all cases, social workers know children well, although some children have experienced too many changes of social worker.

The recruitment and retention strategy, combined with a sharper focus on poor performance, is beginning to show a positive impact and reduced turnover of social workers. However, a particularly high turnover of frontline managers in the children in need units remains. Practice improvement managers are highly valued by social workers, and have been instrumental in highlighting practice shortfalls and strengths, as well as raising standards in social work practice. Staff welcome the practice standards, which have brought clarity of expectations and professional accountability.

Social workers now consistently undertake all statutory assessments. Completion timescales have improved, but more work needs to be done to ensure that all assessments are of a consistently good quality. Assessments now include historical factors, parenting capacity and analyse risk and strengths, but the voice and experiences of children are not always present. Partner agency engagement in strategy discussions, child protection conferences, and core groups has improved significantly. Professionals' views now inform decision making about how plans should progress. Considerable work is still required to strengthen the quality of child in need and child protection plans.

The quality of private fostering work remains too variable. Improvement is still required to ensure scrutiny of the suitability of each placement and ensure that placements are supported, with regular visiting and robust assessments. Awareness raising has taken place and has resulted in an increase in private fostering notifications from four to 24. However, more needs to be done to improve the quality of the service.

Capacity to manage allegations against professionals working with children remains insufficient to respond effectively to all referrals; consequently, tracking outcomes and closing cases are delayed. The development of an allegation management system is not fully completed.

I am copying this letter to the Department for Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Linda Steele
Her Majesty's Inspector

BCC Response to Ofsted Monitoring Letter September 2016




Ofsted Said....	We have....
Senior managers now need to continue to focus on improving consistency in the quality of social work practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed Consistency of Best Practice action plan updated following Ofsted visit with ongoing meetings of managers to monitor progress and unblock issues - Continued to use exception reports to highlight missing / late information - Reviewed the training programme to ensure focus on practice standards - Added additional quality checking by managers at key points of the child's journey - Continued to performance manage staff where poor practice remains - Committed to a third senior management 'audit week' in December 2016
Capacity to manage allegations against professionals working with children remains insufficient to respond effectively to all referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruited additional 2fte LADOs – one to cover long term sick leave and one over-establishment for 2 months to clear 'backlog' - Reviewed and amended the LADO recording system to ensure it is as efficient as possible - Added additional business support capacity to chase outstanding information
The quality of private fostering work remains too variable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Given social workers in the fostering team access to update children's records - Arranged training for staff on 24/10/16 - Undertaken a review of all existing open Private Fostering placements - Created a performance management tool to measure progress through the system as part of monthly supervisions - Developed and launched an audit tool to evaluate the carers journey - Established annual QA panel for all Private Fostering placements - Highlighted at BCSB the need for partners to take responsibility for raising awareness
Considerable work is still required to strengthen the quality of child in need and child protection plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed guidance on 'what is a good CP Plan' with links to examples of good practice - Delivered training to staff on good planning through October, last session 14/10/16 - Established a CP Conference Chair buddy system to quality assure plans, minutes and conferences - Added mandatory box to LCS plan templates for 'risk assessment and contingency plan'

There is too much delay in progressing some referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained managers in Contact and MASH in relation to thresholds to ensure that children, where the need for an assessment is clear, are progressed straight through - Introduced multi-agency audits of MASH referrals to ensure all agencies recognise their responsibilities and their impact on timeliness of children's journeys.
Since June 2016, ongoing pressures of police capacity have caused delays in screening domestic abuse referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Escalated the issue to senior officers in Thames Valley Police as well as to the BSCB - TVP have dedicated resources to clear the backlog – should be cleared by 15/10/16. This has impacted on performance in Contact and MASH but is being closely monitored by PIM and Head of Service. - Contingency plans between BCC and TVP agreed for any future occurrences
Children do not consistently receive a timely return home interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommissioned the contract to ensure the provider sees the child withing 24 hours of returning home. - The provider (Barnardo's) has also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed all current missing episodes • Developed a comprehensive Flow Chart for administrators • Appointed a Missing Co-ordinator to risk assess and allocate each missing episode
Re-referral rates remain high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audited 194 re-referrals and identified themes – a plan will be developed by end of October to address the emerging issues
A particular high turnover of frontline managers in the children in need units remains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High turnover of managers has been driven by improved management of poor performance - Launched restructure consultation with staff that will reduce the number of teams from 13 to 6 to address some of the work pressures issues highlighted by staff – all teams will be managed by a permanent Team Manager
Work needs to be done to ensure that all assessments are of a consistently good quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing auditing programme is addressing this - Developing guidance on 'what is a good assessment' by end of October. - Further training to be undertaken by end of December 2016 for all staff

IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY




IMPROVING PERFORMANCE ACROSS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

YOU SAID: Inspection June 2014	Achieved	WE'VE DONE: Progress delivered / embedded	Future plans	Timescale
1. Early Help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authority and partners coordinate and target early help effectively 	✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established Early help panels in June 2015. More children are receiving the right service at the appropriate time. Annual report complete. Clear recommendations and timescales 	Continue to focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Services review 	March 2017 (embedded March 2018)
2. First Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All unallocated cases closed without child's needs being assessed All partners understand and agree on the multi-agency thresholds document Qualified staff undertake assessments, focus on the needs and wishes of the child Information about children and families is shared and recorded in line with legislation Children visited regularly, seen alone by their social workers and build and maintain positive relationships. Case records contain an accurate account of the child's experiences, an analysis of their cultural, religious and diversity needs and detailed reasons for key decisions. Child protection strategy meetings, discussions and conferences consider the views of all relevant agencies and professionals 	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children allocated. Cases closed with management oversight Threshold documents relaunched through BSCB (Aug 2015). Audits evidence all agencies understand threshold document well No unqualified staff. Audits confirm child's voice is visible Increased staffing capacity at the front door and SWAN from 8 to 40 staff, including managers to ensure that there is sufficient capacity and effective management oversight. Social Care Practice Standards launched (2015) and revised (July 2016), this is a foundation for ensuring legislation complied with. Audits and Ofsted monitoring demonstrate children are being seen alone Significant improvements to LCS. LCS single system for recording a child's journey, appropriate sharing with partners Missing Persons functionality implemented early August 2016 Workshops on getting to good (throughout 2015) Comprehensive training programme (started 2015 – ongoing) ensures staff record child's journey accurately. Average time to find documents reduced Diversity training and exception reporting on demographic (April 2016) no management sign off unless demographics have been considered (June 2016). New strengthen families model of child protection conference (April 2016) encourages engagement from family and agencies. 	Continue to focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing auditing of compliance to practice standards Monitoring KPI's and challenging performance Reviewing pathway for MASH M-SERAC considering all children going missing Innovation bid for specialist missing service 	Ongoing monthly Monthly performance meetings October 2016 Monthly meetings End Sept 2016
3. Children in Need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core groups review progress / escalation processes. All plans focus upon assessed needs, with timescales Timely stat visits and record they are spoken to alone. Managers' decisions clearly recorded with risk 	✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children allocated a qualified social worker Audits demonstrate greater participation and action in core groups Audits demonstrate significant progress All children seen within appropriate timescales, standard practice are now seen alone. Audits and performance system demonstrate progress in this. Management decisions recorded with risks 	Continue to focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIN redesign – consultation starts 9th September Ongoing auditing Challenge performance 	Embed March 2017 Ongoing monthly Monthly performance meetings

<p>influential in revising the Care Leavers' Pledge.</p>		<p>and to influence decision making (audits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved evidence of the voice of the child's wishes and feelings being recorded(audits) Continue to support children in care council, corporate parenting panel engages regularly with CIC council. Have improved care leaver reps however university means high turnover. Annual award ceremony 	<p>with Social Workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management oversight to ensure appropriate tools continue to be used 	
<p>10. Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authority as a whole takes responsibility for and prioritises the improvements needed Review governance arrangements between the Partnership Board, the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Health and Well-being Board 		<p>Embedded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant investment corporately, overspends 'written off' whilst improvements embed, support from other units i.e. IT, strategy. More Select Committee reviews / focus supporting improvements Member briefings well attended Governance arrange completed March 2015 presented through BSCB 		
<p>11. Workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there are enough suitably qualified and skilled social workers and first-line managers to provide services that are safe, responsive and effective. Ensure sufficient Independent Reviewing Officer capacity exists for them to undertake their statutory responsibilities, including monitoring children's care plans and visiting children between statutory reviews. 	 	<p>Delivered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive recruitment and retention package to recruit hard to fill social work posts (37% - reduce to 25%) Memorandum of cooperation agreed with south east region – managing the market for agency workers. Turnover of staff has reduced across CSCL Business Unit has decreased from 17% (Aug 15) to 16.5% (Aug 16) sickness levels stands at 8.58 days in July 16 ASYE program established to ensure newly qualified social workers are given the knowledge and skill Exit interview regularly completed and analysed 	<p>Continue to focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop talent management and succession planning to ensure key staff are identified and supported Viewpoint staff survey results analysed and management team action plans complete 	<p>March 2017</p> <p>November 2017</p>

IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE ACROSS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

YOU SAID: Monitoring visit actions (Aug 2016)	Achieved	WE'VE DONE: Progress delivered / embedded	Future plans	Timescale
Quality of Children in Need and CP plans		Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice standards refreshed (July 2016) Specific training with child protection chairs Auditing of CP plans Heads of service observing cp conferences Exemplars of smart plans (CP and CIN) Increased capacity of cp chairs Programme work workshops 	Review of CIN plan template	End of Sep 16
Direct work by social workers – using appropriate tools		Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to suite of appropriate tools for a range of ages and abilities Implemented MOMO, completed analysis of first 100 LAC review of implementation Purchase (books / games etc) and allowed access ability for social workers Iphone 6 plus for all social workers and uploaded appropriate apps for engagement for children 	Piloting MOMO for children with disabilities Child's roundabout with accessible guidance for children	Oct 2016 End of Sept 16
Delay in progressing some referrals		Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased management capacity in contact and MASH Relaunched thresholds document (august 2016), survey last week revealed 90% partners understood document used regularly and displayed visually in offices. Education task group established with aid memoir about expectations on schools / social workers – escalation process in place any referrals where response hasn't been received. Joint audits been completed with GP safeguarding lead and acute trust safeguarding lead and probation. 	Deep dive analysis on 'cause'	Oct 2016
Process for responding to children going missing receiving timely return home		Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommissioned following tender exercise – changed expectations of provider service to visit child within 72 hours 	Audit compliance with the new standards	Nov 2016

interview				
Quality of work with private fostering remains too variable	✓ ✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of private fostering which greatly increased referrals • All new referrals have been assessed • Implemented new pathway for private fostering 	Improve recording on child's file and ensure we cross reference child and carer Ensure process in place to reassess and review Auditing compliance	Oct 2016 Oct 2016 Ongoing
Capacity to manage allegations against professionals working with children	✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responded appropriately to all referrals • LADO processes have been completed on all existing referrals • Implemented electronic recording 	Improve effectiveness of closing down referrals when work completed Revisit type of referrals coming through to LADO	Nov 2016 Nov 2016
Clarity on purpose of visits for children	✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaunched practice standards • Delivered exception report to identify children's visits going out of timescales • Exemplar of good visit • Auditing at key transition points for children to ensure compliance • Auditing children's journeys regularly 	Monitoring to ensure quality is consistently good Induction / onboarding for all staff around expectations	July 2016 Start September
Turnover of front line managers in CIN	✓ ✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following significant performance management of staff to ensure high standards there has been a degree of turnover linked to poor performance • Launched consultation of CIN redesign (September 2016) • Management development programme to engage and retain staff 	Ongoing performance management CIN redesign as above	March 2017 full implementation
Consistent quality of assessments	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice standards relaunched • Front door assessments are routinely of a good standard • Exemplars of good assessments given to staff • Reviewed LCS pathway to assist in completion • "Historical factors, parenting capacity and analysis of risk and strengths no evident" visit 2016 	Further work ensures good practice across all teams (parts of the service) Auditing compliance	Ongoing Ongoing

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10 January 2017

Mr David Johnston
Buckinghamshire County Council
Walton Street, Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
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Dear David

Monitoring visit of Buckinghamshire children's services

This letter summarises the findings of the monitoring visit to Buckinghamshire children's services on 30 November and 1 December 2016. The visit was the second since the local authority was judged inadequate in August 2014. The inspectors were Linda Steele HMI and Donna Marriott HMI.

Based on the evidence and cases seen by inspectors during this visit, the local authority is making steady progress to improve services for children in some areas. The local authority has taken action to strengthen practice in respect of children at risk of sexual exploitation and children who go missing, but the pace of improvement in these areas is not meeting expectations and the use of the public law outline is not yet effective.

Areas covered by the visit

During the course of this visit, inspectors reviewed the progress made in the areas of children looked after with a focus on:

- thresholds for care, the quality of support provided, management oversight and recording on children's case files
- the effectiveness of the public law outline and legal planning meetings
- the capacity and effectiveness of the independent reviewing service
- timeliness and quality of health assessments
- the response to children looked after who go missing and/or are at risk of child sexual exploitation.

The visit considered a range of evidence, including electronic case records, and other information provided by the judiciary, Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCAS) and the local authority's commissioned legal service. In addition, we spoke to a range of staff including managers, social workers and independent reviewing officers (IROs).

Summary of findings

- Social work practice has improved for children entering care in the last six months. However, drift and delay are still evident for some children who have been subject to statutory intervention for some time.
- Decisions for children to become looked after in the vast majority of cases seen by inspectors were timely and appropriate.
- Management oversight is evident in case files, through unit meetings and supervision but is not always effective in driving children's plans, or ensuring that actions are completed.
- Social workers do not regularly update assessments in response to children's changing circumstances.
- Risk assessments of children looked after vulnerable to, or at risk of, sexual exploitation are inconsistent and in some cases absent.
- There is evidence of proactive work to disrupt and respond to concerns of sexual exploitation, including the use of sexual harm orders and abduction notices.
- Social workers see the vast majority of children looked after on their own and visit them regularly, according to their plan, which is often more frequently than prescribed by statutory guidance.
- The quality of the recording of interviews, carried out by commissioned services, when children return after going missing is poor. Return home interviews are not timely and the take-up by children is not good enough.
- The system in place to monitor the progress of work, which meets the threshold for public law outline, is not effective. The pre-proceedings tracker is not regularly updated, monitored, or used by managers and therefore does not give a coherent overview of public law outline work.
- Too many children are waiting for important life story work to enable them to understand their life histories.
- There has been investment in the IRO service, which has resulted in increased capacity and real improvement in the service. Consequently, IROs are now rigorously monitoring children's progress; they advocate for children and hold social workers and managers to account.
- There has been significant improvement in the timeliness and quality of health assessments for children looked after.
- The judiciary and the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service report positive improvements in the quality of practice in court proceedings.

Evaluation of progress

The current leadership team has been effective in achieving improvements in some parts of the service, most notably in the work carried out to strengthen the independent reviewing service, stabilise the workforce, and improve the timeliness and quality of children's health assessments. Senior managers have strengthened their auditing tool, which now places an increased emphasis on the quality of social work practice. As a result, there is greater focus on outcomes and the child's lived experience

Despite evidence of stronger managerial grip in some areas since the last inspection, there remains too much variability for children in care. Some managerial decision-making does not effectively drive children's plans to ensure that they receive appropriate intervention. Social workers do not always complete actions from supervision and managers do not rigorously track or challenge the lack of progress. Consequently, there has been drift and delay for some children. Inspectors saw children in a very small minority of cases where they had been in unsatisfactory circumstances for too long. A more robust approach to performance management and auditing had been effective in enabling managers to identify these shortfalls and take appropriate action.

Assessments and care plans do not consistently demonstrate a comprehensive analysis of children's needs. When children looked after return to the care of their parents under legal orders, assessments to ensure suitability are not sufficiently robust and not always completed. Social workers do not always update assessments with significant events in children's lives, and this contributes to drift and delay. In a small minority of children's cases, care plans were not available for the first review.

Recording in children's case files is improving. Helpful summaries of the child's journey identify key issues. Children's wishes and feelings are evident in case recording. However, there continue to be delays in uploading key documents to children's files. For example, legal planning meeting minutes, public law outline letters, and return home interviews.

The judiciary report positive improvements in the timeliness of court proceedings and the quality of evidence presented. In most cases the quality of evidence is now good. CAFCAS report the local authority is responsive and communicates well with them.

When the plan for children is not to return home, life story work is not always available when needed by the child. This means some children have gaps in their knowledge and understanding about their histories. Senior managers are aware that there are 61 children currently waiting for life story work. A reconfiguration of the service will increase capacity but has not yet reduced the number of children waiting for this work.

When children looked after go missing, they do not routinely receive timely return home interviews to gather intelligence and develop a more comprehensive

understanding of the risks. Prior to this monitoring visit, managers had already identified that the arrangements to protect children missing from care and home needed strengthening. They have taken action to review and recommission the return interview service, strengthen missing procedures and appointed a 'missing children' coordinator. This work is in development and the impact is too early to consider.

The response to children looked after who are vulnerable to or at risk from sexual exploitation is inconsistent and not as effective as it is for new referrals to the multi-agency safeguarding hub and SWAN unit (child sexual exploitation unit). Not all children looked after have an up to-date assessment that identifies risks or effectively drives planning. There is further work needed to provide a more coherent and joined up approach to the management of risk for these children. Nevertheless, there is evidence of proactive work to disrupt and respond to concerns of sexual exploitation, including the use of abduction notices and sexual harm orders. Senior managers have recognised the weakness in practice in this area and have undertaken work, including developing the case management system to ensure a more coherent holistic overview is available.

When children are on the edge of care, the use of the public law outline is not always effectively used. Public law outline letters are not always clear or written in a language that is accessible to parents and carers. Management oversight of pre-proceedings is not consistent and the tracking of this work lacks rigour, which means that there is not a clear overview of public law outline work. Consequently, public law outline processes do not always ensure a robust or timely response to escalating risks.

Social workers see the vast majority of children looked after on their own with visiting tailored to children's individual needs. They talk knowledgeably about the children they support and reflect their views in case records. There is evidence of direct work to build relationships and help children understand their experiences, but this would benefit from being more structured to ensure that it is responsive to children's needs. While ethnicity is on record, the wider impact of equality and diversity is not always fully explored. Social workers report caseloads in the children looked after units, of 16 to 20 children, as manageable. The vast majority of social workers in the children in care units are now permanent staff.

Since the inspection in August 2014, the local authority has invested in the IRO service, which has resulted in the appointment of permanent IROs and manageable caseloads. The majority of reviews of children looked after take place on time. Children are encouraged to attend, and IROs routinely see children before their reviews. IROs are robust in challenging drift and delay on cases and escalating concerns about the support provided to children.

Senior managers and health partners have responded positively to the findings of the last inspection and have significantly improved the quality and timeliness of health assessments.

I am copying this letter to the Department for Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Linda Steele

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter is copied to the Department for Education [at SocialCare.INSPECTION-IMPROVEMENT@education.gsi.gov.uk]

BCC Response to 2nd Ofsted Monitoring Letter March 2017

Ofsted Said.....	We have.....
Management oversight....is not always effective in driving children's plans, or ensuring actions are completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued guidance on 'what is good management oversight' and trained all managers • Examples of good practice identified by Ofsted/ IRO's /CP Chairs and through auditing shared • Identify poor performers through monthly audit process and provide support and challenge to managers • Introduced a new Supervision Casenote in LCS • Developed Group Supervision Guidance
Assessments and care plans do not consistently demonstrate a comprehensive analysis of children's needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered training on quality of plans and risk assessment – total of 75 staff trained to date with more sessions booked • Introduced expectation that managers review all CIN plans after 6 months to ensure there is a meaningful intervention • Reviewed all children on CIN plans over two years and identified follow up actions – reduced from 121 to 79 since launch of new Safeguarding Service • Additional SMART plan training organised • Introduced dip sampling of plans by PIMs
Social workers do not regularly update assessments in response to children's changing circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforced practice standard that all assessments must be updated every 12 months or following a significant incident in a child's life • Monthly exception report used to monitor compliance • Introduced Pre-Assessment Report for LAC reviews to ensure assessments are updated prior to all LAC Reviews
Risk assessments of children looked after vulnerable to, or at risk of, sexual exploitation are inconsistent and in some areas absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained all social workers in CIC and CWD units and all CP Chairs in relation to assessing CSE risk – total of 70 staff trained to date • Increased capacity in Swan unit for more complex CSE work – addition of ATM and 2 Social Worker • Introduced risk assessment toolkit

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE module implemented in LCS
The quality of the recording of interviews, carried out by commissioned services, when children return after going missing is poor. Return home interviews are not timely and the take-up by children is not good enough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a detailed improvement plan with the providers, Barnardo's, including weekly update reports, QA auditing and regular monitoring meetings – see detailed report
The system in place to monitor the progress of work, which meets the threshold for public law outline, is not effective. The pre-proceedings tracker is not regularly updated, monitored, or used by managers and therefore does not give a coherent overview of public law outline work. Public law outline letters are not always clear or written in a language that is accessible to parents and carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Court Tracker spreadsheet, in consultation with Legal Services, as an interim solution before LCS Legal module is in place (this will be in place in May 2017). • Developed MOU with Legal Services including monthly KPIs • Reviewed process for issuing PLO letters and language used • See detailed report
Too many children are waiting for important life story work to enable them to understand their life histories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Service monitors waiting list and triaging priorities • Commissioned training programme to offer 2 days training in Life Story Work. All C&F workers will be trained as well as some social workers. A rolling programme will start in May 2017 • Currently consulting on proposal to employ fulltime Life Story Workers in CP/Court and CIC teams • Current number of children waiting for Life Story work is 27 (reduced from 61)
When children looked after return to the care of their parents under legal orders, assessments to ensure suitability are not sufficiently robust and not always completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed Placement with Parents forms and pathway in LCS • Developed guidance to ensure meet the regulations and specify the requirement to contact all • Launched new LCS forms alongside guidance and training to ensure all social workers are aware of the requirements



Children's Services Improvement Board December 2016

Fran Gosling-Thomas (BSCB Chair)
Matilda Moss (BSCB Business Manager)

Timeline

Summer 2014: Inadequate Ofsted rating



November 2014: New Independent Chair appointed & Board Membership reviewed



February 2015: Board develops 2 year Improvement & Development Plan focusing on 5 priority areas



February 2016: Plan refreshed for second year of delivery

- **Presentation** provides update on progress and next steps against key recommendations from Ofsted – supported with evidence pack
- **Annual Report** 2015/16 provided for wider view across priorities

Leadership and Governance

Ofsted finding

- Leadership & governance needs strengthening
- Board needs to evaluate its own effectiveness and provide robust challenge
- Funding insufficient to carry out core functions

What have we done?

- Strong leadership through new Independent Chair
- Governance and individual agency responsibilities defined through Member Compact, role descriptions for sub groups and refreshed terms of reference
- Board effectiveness measured through dashboard and annual self-assessment
- Increased funding agreed for 2015/16 and maintained for 2016/17

Outcomes

- Increased challenge and scrutiny at Board meetings and Sub Groups means Board is more aware of safeguarding concerns
- Clearer roles for Sub Groups and stronger links to Board
- Funding has enabled substantial development to manage & reduce risk around key areas of concern
- Board has improved level of self-awareness

Next steps

- Pressures across partners mean budget is an ongoing concern
- Responding to Wood Review & defining next steps for Bucks

Partnership Working

Ofsted finding

- Board has been ineffective in ensuring partners are working together – including to find capacity to support board activity
- Relationship with other Strategic Boards not leading to effective partnership working



What have we done?

- Stronger monitoring of partnership attendance and engagement
- Improved communication (e.g. newsletter, website, Twitter) to promote and encourage ownership of consistent messages across partnership
- Links and partnership working across other Strategic Boards supported by Joint Protocol



Outcomes

- Strengthened engagement from a number of partners
- Joint Protocol supporting inter-board challenge, co-ownership of priorities, improved sharing of risk, reduced duplication and a wider oversight of safeguarding arrangements across different agendas
- September monitoring letter positive about partnership working



Next steps

- Maintaining engagement & challenge across Board and ALL sub groups
- Ensuring partners take a shared responsibility for supporting a child's journey

Performance & Quality Assurance

Ofsted findings

- Board not effective or robust in assessing whether agencies are fulfilling statutory duties to protect children
- Staff must be included in programme of multi-agency audits of practice
- Poor use of data to understand practice and identify concerns (no data set; too focused on CSC; insufficient enquiry & challenge)
- Individual agencies must own audit findings and use them to promote improvement



What have we done?

- Revised Section 11 process – increased focus on local priorities, evidence of outcomes and voice of the child
- Challenge event format used to gain assurance and identify concerns
- Development of Risks and Concerns Log
- Annual multi-agency audit schedule agreed – focus on frontline practice with some standard lines of enquiry (e.g. thresholds, escalation, voice of child) ; significant single agency audits being reviewed
- Learning from all audits shared via online learning logs
- Multi-agency dataset developed

Performance & Quality Assurance

Outcomes

- Ownership of data across sub groups is opening up new lines of enquiry and informing our work
- Dataset has improved reporting links between Sub Groups and Board
- From both data and auditing activity, Board has improved assurance around practice, better visibility of areas of concern and improved mechanisms for hearing the voice of the child
- Monitoring of audit recommendations is providing evidence of improvements to services and outcomes



Next steps

Dataset

- Opportunities to develop links across Strategic Boards
- Automation of system
- Make more data available online

Auditing

- Share learning more quickly
- Improve ability to respond flexibly to emerging areas of concern
- Complete current Section 11 process

Early Help & Thresholds

Ofsted findings

- Need to ensure partners fully engaged in delivering Prevention & Early Intervention Strategy
- Need to ensure Thresholds document agreed and understood across partners, supported by guidance, implemented and monitored



What have we done?

- Consulted on and relaunched Thresholds document (Sept 15)
- Published revised Early Help Strategy (Nov 15)
- Published revised MARF (Feb 16) to improve alignment to thresholds document
- Communication & awareness raising campaign around Early Help & thresholds (over 4,000 laminated thresholds documents distributed along with wallet cards and referral flow diagrams)
- Tailored training and awareness raising and support for partners to disseminate key messages within their own organisation
- Embedded Early Help training into core training programme
- Improved scrutiny around partner engagement & the effectiveness of Early Help including through Early Help dashboard and regular reporting from Early Help Panel
- Public awareness raising campaign through joint video with Safeguarding Adults Board and support for DfE 'Concerned about a Child' campaign

Early Help & Thresholds

Outcomes

- Evidence of improved knowledge & confidence around thresholds (e.g. peer review, Home Office Review, BSCB web stats, auditing activity, feedback from partners, survey results)
- Good evidence of excellent partnership working around Early Help panel process
- Board has evidence of a wide range of good quality Early Help services
- Continually improving evidence of impact and outcomes of Early Help for children and families



Next steps?

- Communication and awareness raising now needs to focus on increased ownership and embedding of the key message by individual agencies
- Outcomes Star has been endorsed as the Early Help engagement tool but take up needs to be wider; there has been confusion in some agencies around whether the Star is a requirement and which staff should be using the tool
- Progress work more quickly around Neglect, including roll out of new Graded Care Profile (Bucks is part of pilot)

Knowledge of Thresholds

April 2015 – 40% of those who answered our Thresholds survey had not heard of the Thresholds document

Results from September 2016

- **4%** were unaware of the Thresholds document (compared to 40% in spring 2015)
- **95%** knew where to access the Thresholds document
- **90%** said the Thresholds document was prominently displayed in their organisation
- **80%** said they regularly or sometimes used the Thresholds document as part of their day to day work (compared to 61% in 2015)
- **83%** said they found the Thresholds document helpful to inform decisions regarding children
- **87%** said they knew the level(s) at which their service / organisation was providing support

Child Sexual Exploitation

Ofsted findings

- Identified areas of good work – including Chelsea's Choice and awareness raising



What have we done?

- CSE Strategy launched
- Agencies have signed up to CSE Promise
- Joint working with Safer Stronger Bucks Partnership Board to deliver 'Pursue' strand of strategy
- CSE 'pop up' event to build knowledge around CSE and share Serious Case Review learning
- 2 challenge events to gain assurance around practice
- Serious Case Review into CSE since 1998 – including engagement with victims
- Well attended multi-agency CSE training – outside of our training pathway
- Chelsea's Choice delivered free to secondary schools
- Awareness raising for parents and carers
- Audit of Swan Unit
- Development of CSE Dataset
- Work to explore emerging themes – learning disability and transitions

Child Sexual Exploitation

Outcomes

- Effective partnership engagement and working together around CSE
- Good evidence that awareness raising has made a positive difference – including disclosures
- Good evidence that frontline services are achieving positive outcomes for children
- Evidence from Swan Unit audit of good performance
- CSE SCR identifies poor past performance, but shows significant improvements
- Improved data providing assurance and opening new lines of enquiry
- What victims and survivors have told us is shaping our work



Next steps?

- Communication and awareness raising – need to focus on reaching all sections of the community
- Continue to work with other Strategic Boards to look at the provision for children after they turn 18 and for adults disclosing past CSE
- Look at how we ensure the families of victims are effectively supported
- Implement SCR recommendations
- Learn from the coordinated and targeted approach that has been taken to CSE
- Develop a more coordinated approach across other forms of exploitation

“Then it started to get out of control. I didn’t think it could get worse but it did. If I had a drink or took something it did stop for a while. Well not really, you can never stop thinking about it. They won’t let you. **Then someone listened to what I was saying.** It felt like it was my last chance. I couldn’t manage this on my own any more. They didn’t rush me or ask me to speak on a video. They got to know me. She said I needed help and she would make sure I got it....This time they did listen and I wasn’t allowed to go home”

(The story of young Person J—extract from an audio recording based on her experiences)

“ My daughter had to bare her soul in front of the court. They called her a liar. The judge said she was brilliant but she walked out of there and was dropped. **Suddenly there was nothing.** Now the guys are getting out of prison before she’s even got any treatment” *(Parent, CSE Serious Case Review)*

“ I didn’t tell anyone when it was happening. I didn’t attend school much. I had panic attacks and needed extra help. I was a difficult student. Then we had an R U Safe assembly at school and a teacher picked me out after and said I needed to speak to someone. I didn’t want to at first. I spoke to Claire at R U Safe; she was really nice to me. Second time I saw her I told her everything. I was crying when I said it. **I was heard.** *(Megan, CSE Serious Case Review)*

"It made me more aware of the issue and has made me more careful on the internet"

"I will now make sure I keep all my social medias on private."

"I now know that you shouldn't trust everything and everyone on the internet."

"It has changed my perspective as to how often it occurs and how easy it is to be fooled."

"It is very detailed and presented well. It shocks enough to get the students talking about it without being too overwhelming. Very well thought out."

"Made me more aware of what can happen to us"

(Pupil and school feedback after watching Chelsea's Choice)

Journey & Voice of the Child

Ofsted findings

- Increased awareness raising required around private fostering
- Need to ensure the views of young people inform service improvement



What have we done?

- Number of privately fostered children monitored through dashboard
- Reports from the service to gain assurance and understand ongoing risks
- New section on private fostering on BSCB website
- Partner agencies reminded about private fostering responsibilities through newsletter
- Offer to service to support with communication through other channels
- Increased engagement through Youth Voice Steering Group (e.g. Bullying event, CYP version of Annual Report, assurance around how partners are working with young people to improve services, co-design of new microsite with young people)
- Work with E-Safety Ambassadors through our E-Safety conferences
- Increased focus on voice of child in auditing activity

Journey & Voice of the Child

Outcomes

- Young people directly influenced the Board's decision to design a new microsite, and have co-designed the site with us
- Zap Bullying workshops trialled for young people – now being evaluated
- Board has a better understanding of how young people feel about the Board and our priorities.
- Permanent young person rep on E-Safety Sub Group

Next steps?

- Publish and test website with young people
- Work with young people to do a CYP version of our 2015/16 Annual Report
- Continue to think more widely about how our Board partners respond to the views of children and look for wider opportunities to engage young people in our work

“Who would read all that?”

“What would happen if a 12 year old rang First Response?”

“Needs more pictures”

“I like the videos, but some of them are a bit strange.”

“The home page has buttons all over the place”

(feedback from young people on BSCB website)



74% told us they felt safe online.

30% said they had over 500 friends on social networks.

46% either had their phone's location settings switched on or didn't know whether they did.

Serious Case Reviews

Ofsted findings

- Completed in line with statutory guidance with the implementation of recommendations monitored through the Board
- Effective dissemination of learning
- Ineffective at tackling common themes such as escalation – poor understanding of procedure across partners



What have we done?

- Review of SCR process – increased flexibility of model
- Continued monitoring of all SCR recommendations – stronger escalation around delays
- Strengthened links between SCR Sub Group and Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)
- Sought more innovative ways to share learning including recent learning events to ‘bring the baby into the room’
- 6 monthly monitoring of single agency serious incidents to look for trends
- Self-assessment against nationally developed quality markers
- Significant work around escalation (audits, review of procedure)

Serious Case Reviews

Outcomes

- SCRs continue to be conducted inline with statutory requirements
 - We have assurance that all relevant cases are identified for review
- BUT....
- SCRs continue to highlight common themes – including poor escalation & challenge and non-accidental injury to babies

Next steps?

- More work underway focusing on creating the right culture for escalation and challenge
- Continue to ensure we are effective in sharing learning and that we can evidence the difference this is making
- Progress piece of work to look at analysis across all our SCRs to understand the impact and outcomes that have been achieved
- Plan focused work around our response to non-accidental injury in babies



Photo from recent SCR learning session

Training

Ofsted findings

- Training covers a broad range of safeguarding issues including some evidence of training being developed in response to local and national issues
- Courses evaluated on the day and follow up after 3 months
- Capacity to maintain breadth of training significantly compromised by funding restrictions and by the fact some agencies do not release staff for training



What have we done?

- Started signposting to relevant training opportunities offered by partners
- Conducted a Learning & Development Challenge event – provided assurance, identified risks across partner training and identified areas for the BSCB to improve
- Introduced shorter learning sessions and delivered 3 free half day conferences
- Training manager post maintained
- Agency attendance and evaluations monitored and reviewed through L&D Sub Group
- Developed training quality assurance framework and undertaken some observations

Training

Outcomes

- Training evaluations continue to be positive with feedback at 3 months suggesting training does impact on practice (BUT low response rates from partners!)
- The BSCB has an improved understanding and assurance around safeguarding training offered across partners
- Wide range of training courses continue to be offered
- Actions taken to explore low agency attendance

Next steps?

- Reduce amount of training being delivered by our Training Manager and increase her quality assurance role
- Undertake 1:1 conversations with Board partners as a follow up to Challenge Event
- Continue to develop more flexible learning opportunities

3 Month Feedback

"[XX] has been able to use this knowledge to the benefit of families she has worked with. She has been able to discuss concerns with parents who then were able to put safety boundaries in place around their children" **CSE April 2016 (Line Manager)**

"I made a referral to First Response – had to gain consent from the parent, was able to achieve this and have a difficult conversation with the parent, was made easier by having this training." **Working with Challenging Families June 2016 (Delegate)**

Policies & Procedures

Ofsted findings

- Board continues to develop a range of appropriate policies and procedures
- Review of their impact is not undertaken therefore impossible to tell whether they have improved practice



What have we done?

- Deep dive evaluation of effectiveness – a number of weaknesses identified
- Board decision to commission refresh across all policies and procedures
- Board decision to move to online manual
- Website analytics starting to be used to look at how frequently procedures are accessed
- Policy impact assessment tool developed – now being used to review equality impact and plan for how wider impact will be evaluated
- Developed child protection policy toolkit to help external agencies create robust child protection policies

Policies & Procedures

Outcomes

- Board has increased its ability to focus on keeping core policies and procedures up to date
- Board has recognised weaknesses in current arrangements and taken steps to resolve



Next steps?

- Complete commissioned refresh (December / January)
- Move to online manual (Jan – March 2017)
- Promote child protection policy toolkit
- Continue to work on understanding impact and effectiveness

QUESTIONS?

Fran Gosling-Thomas: BSCB Independent Chair
Matilda Moss: BSCB Business Manager

Contact us:

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Report to Cabinet

Title:	Hospital Discharge Inquiry report
Date:	Monday 24 April 2017
Date can be implemented:	Wednesday 03 May 2017
Author:	Brian Roberts, Chairman of Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee
Contact officer:	Liz Wheaton, Committee & Governance Adviser, ext. 3856
Local members affected:	All
Portfolio areas affected:	Health & Wellbeing

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

Summary

The Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee set up an Inquiry to review the existing pathways across the whole health and social care system, in terms of Hospital discharge to better understand the reasons behind the delays in transfers of care and to suggest areas of improvements which could help to minimise delays. The outcome of this Inquiry could inform key stakeholders in any future service redesign discussions. The work could also be used to help promote closer working practices across the whole system in terms of the Hospital Discharge process and caring for people closer to home.

Recommendation

That Cabinet consider the recommendations of the Hospital Discharge Inquiry of the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee.

- 1. That BCC, BHT and the CCGs continues to work together to drive forward improvements to the patient discharge pathway. The Inquiry Group recommends that this includes the following:**
 - a. Developing a seamless patient pathway with standardised and computerised paperwork across the whole system;**

- b. Jointly leading on a piece of work with care providers to develop and implement the “Trusted Assessor” model to an agreed timescale;
 - c. Undertaking a piece of work to gain patient and family/carer feedback on their experience of the discharge process – before and after discharge from the Hospital setting. The results to be used by those involved in the discharge process;
 - d. Strengthening the mechanisms for recording and sharing patient and family conversations to minimise the risk of misunderstanding and duplicate conversations taking place;
 - e. Introducing a module within the induction programme (and ongoing training programme) to increase the Hospital nursing staff’s understanding of the community teams and to aid closer working;
 - f. That commissioned services specify seven day cover within the contracts and access to services is 7 days a week;
 - g. That a question on patient transport be included as part of the joint assessment form;
 - h. That the process for TTOs is streamlined to speed up the issuing of TTOs.
- 2a. That Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust removes the requirement for Buckinghamshire County Council to pay reimbursement fees for social care delays.
- 2b. That Adult Social Care negotiates the removal of reimbursements with other neighbouring Trusts.
3. That BCC, BHT and the CCGs strengthen and accelerate the plans for health and social care integration through the following:
- a. Co-locating the Hospital discharge team and the ASC discharge team together;
 - b. Developing a specific joint action plan for bringing the “Delayed Transfers of Care” Better Care Fund performance indicator out of “red”.

A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision

See report as set out in Appendix 1.

B. Other options available, and their pros and cons

As above.

C. Resource implications

None.

D. Value for Money (VfM) Self Assessment

As above.

E. Legal implications

None.

F. Property implications

There are no property implications.

G. Other implications/issues

See report as set out in Appendix 1.

H. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views

None.

I. Communication issues

The response will be published following Cabinet's decision and the recommendations will be jointly owned by the Communities, Health and Adult Social Care (CHASC) Business Unit, Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust and the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

J. Progress Monitoring

Progress on recommendations will be reported to the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee after 6 & 12 months and all three organisations will be asked to provide a written progress update to the lead Cabinet Member. The Cabinet Member and relevant lead health and social care professionals will be invited to the Select Committee to follow-up on progress.

K. Review

As above.

Background Papers

None identified.

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Member Services Team by 5.00pm on Friday 21 April. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343), or e-mail to democracy@buckscc.gov.uk

Report to Cabinet, Buckinghamshire Healthcare
Trust and Clinical Commissioning Groups

Hospital Discharge

A Report of the Health & Adult Social Care
Select Committee

Contact Officer: Liz Wheaton, Committee & Governance Adviser



Message from the Inquiry Chairman



“On behalf of the inquiry group, I would like to pass on our sincere thanks and appreciation to all those people who gave up their valuable time to talk to us and allow us to gain a deeper insight into this important area of work.

The inquiry group and the wider Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) Select Committee continues to be impressed by the dedication and professionalism shown by all those working within the health and social care sector.

Whilst recognising there is no simple solution to this very complex area, the inquiry group hopes that this report will help to improve current ways of working”.

Brian Roberts, Chairman of the inquiry group and the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee



Members of the Inquiry Group:

- Brian Roberts (Chairman), County Councillor
- Brian Adams, County Councillor
- Noel Brown, County Councillor
- Julia Wassell, County Councillor
- Thalia Jervis, Healthwatch Bucks
- Sandra Jenkins, District Councillor (Aylesbury Vale)
- Nigel Shepherd, District Councillor (Chiltern)

Purpose of the Inquiry

- To seek the agreement of Buckinghamshire County Council's Cabinet, Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust and the Clinical Commissioning Groups to the report and recommendations of the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee.



Glossary of terms

Acronyms used within this report:

- BHT - Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust
- CCGs – Clinical Commissioning Groups
- ACHT – Adults Community Healthcare Team
- ASC – Adult Social Care
- BCC – Buckinghamshire County Council
- HASC – Health & Adult Social Care
- CQC – Care Quality Commission
- DToC – Delayed Transfers of Care
- TTOs – Tablets to Take Out
- PTS – Patient Transport Service
- SM Hospital – Stoke Mandeville Hospital
- MuDAS – Multi-disciplinary Day Assessment Service
- SCAS – South Central Ambulance Service
- STP – Sustainability and Transformation Plan



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Recommendations (1)

1. That BCC, BHT and the CCGs continues to work together to drive forward improvements to the patient discharge pathway. The Inquiry Group recommends that this includes the following:
 - a. Developing a seamless patient pathway with standardised and computerised paperwork across the whole system;
 - b. Jointly leading on a piece of work with care providers to develop and implement the “Trusted Assessor” model to an agreed timescale;
 - c. Undertaking a piece of work to gain patient and family/carer feedback on their experience of the discharge process – before and after discharge from the Hospital setting. The results to be used by those involved in the discharge process;
 - d. Strengthening the mechanisms for recording and sharing patient and family conversations to minimise the risk of misunderstanding and duplicate conversations taking place;
 - e. Introducing a module within the induction programme (and ongoing training programme) to increase the Hospital nursing staff’s understanding of the community teams and to aid closer working;



Recommendations (2)

- f. That commissioned services specify seven day cover within the contracts and access to services is 7 days a week;**
- g. That a question on patient transport be included as part of the joint assessment form;**
- h. That the process for TTOs is streamlined to speed up the issuing of TTOs.**

2a. That Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust removes the requirement for Buckinghamshire County Council to pay reimbursement fees for social care delays.

2b. That Adult Social Care negotiates the removal of reimbursements with other neighbouring Trusts.



Recommendations (3)

- 3. That BCC, BHT and the CCGs strengthen and accelerate the plans for health and social care integration through the following:**
 - a. Co-locating the Hospital discharge team and the ASC discharge team together;**
 - b. Developing a specific joint action plan for bringing the “Delayed Transfers of Care” Better Care Fund performance indicator out of “red”.**



Inquiry Scope

The Inquiry was set up to:

- Review the Hospital Discharge process to include performance around delayed transfers of care.
- Explore the reasons for the highest number of delays within the acute setting, which related to:
 - Awaiting further non-acute NHS care;
 - Awaiting care package in own home.
- Inquiry scope agreed by HASC Select Committee on 29 November 2016



Microsoft Word
Document

Out of scope for this Inquiry:

- Reviewing the Hospital Discharge process of patients who are cared for out of county and where the delays in the system occur due to this and Bucks patients being transferred back into the Buckinghamshire system.



Methodology

- Evidence gathering meetings were held between 9 January - 8 February 2017 with the following people/teams:
 - Neil Macdonald, Chief Operating Officer, BHT
 - Marcia Smith, Head of Business Improvement, ASC
 - Cythnia Tapping, Business Manager, ASC
 - Natalie Fox, Divisional Director, Integrated Elderly Community Care
 - Debbie Richards, Director of Commissioning & Delivery, CCGs
 - Lee Ferman del, Interim Managing Director (Bucks Care)
 - Ali Bulman, Service Director (ASC Operations)
 - Dr Syed Hasan, Consultant Geriatrician, BHT
 - Jo Birrell, Consultant nurse for older people, BHT
 - Focus group with the Discharge team, BHT
 - Discharge team, ASC
 - Focus group with the ACHT, including Reablement team
 - Sandra Cotter, Assistant Director, Urgent Care
 - Jayne Ballinger, Chief Pharmacist
- Desk top research to provide national context alongside local intelligence and examples of Hospital Discharge from other authorities



Background – the Context

National context

- The Care Act 2014 – sets out statutory duties for ASC
- National Audit Office – Health and Social integration report (February 2017) – highlighted concerns on the progress made with integration to date.
- 195,300 total delayed days in December 2016 compared to 154,000 in December 2015
- “Care package in home” and “Completion assessment” were the two main reasons nationally for delays in 2016
- Better Care Fund was introduced by the Government in June 2013 to support health and social care integration
- Government plans for full integration by 2020

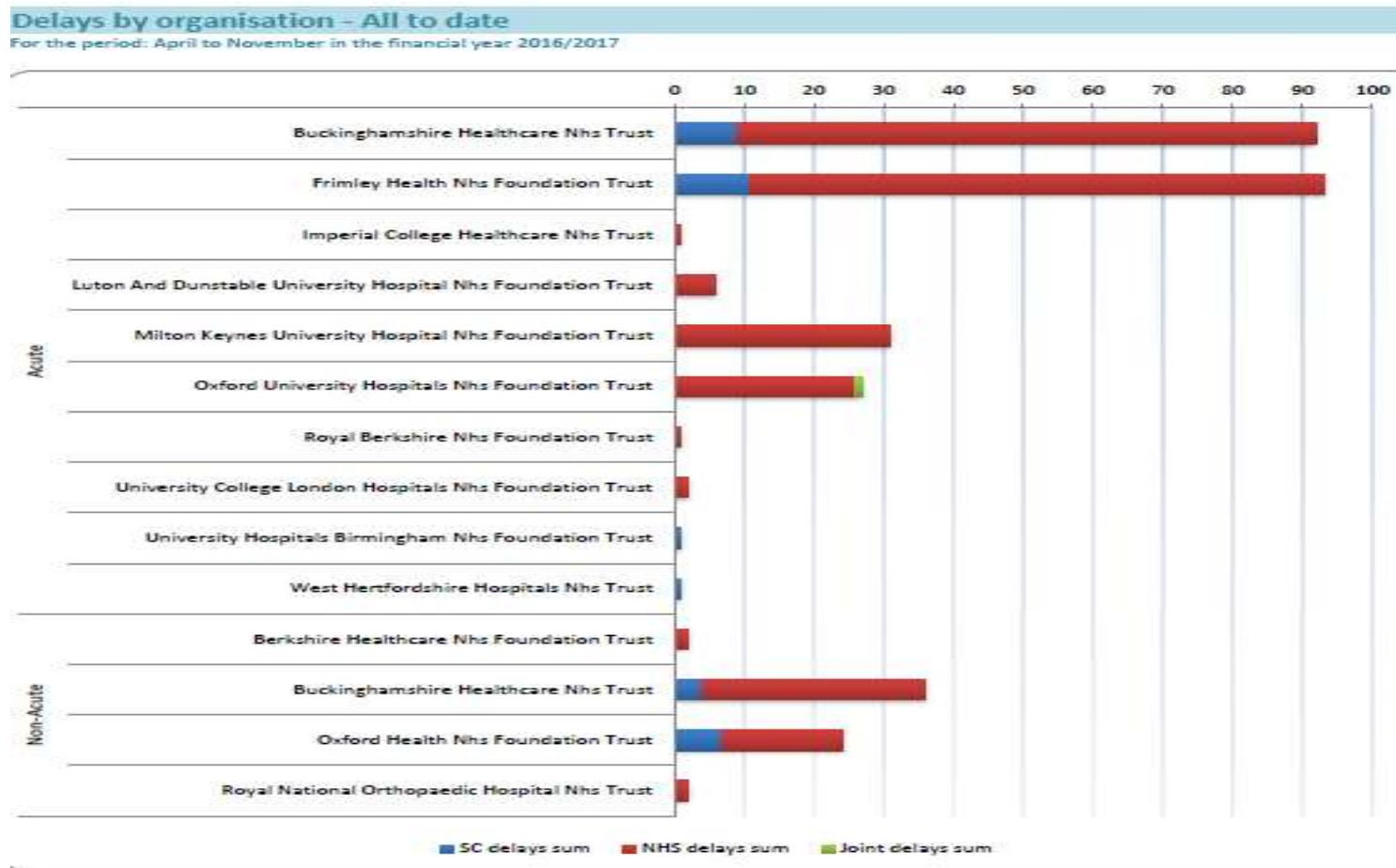
Local context

- Pressures are put on the whole system as a result of delays in getting patients, who are medically fit for discharge, moved to the right place for ongoing care. These delays are categorised as either a health delay, social care delay or both.
- In Buckinghamshire, the main reasons for delay are due to “further non-acute NHS” and “care package in the home”
- In Buckinghamshire, the Better Care Fund performance metrics are monitored by the Health & Wellbeing Board. One of the metrics relates to Delayed Transfers of Care and continues to be on “red”.



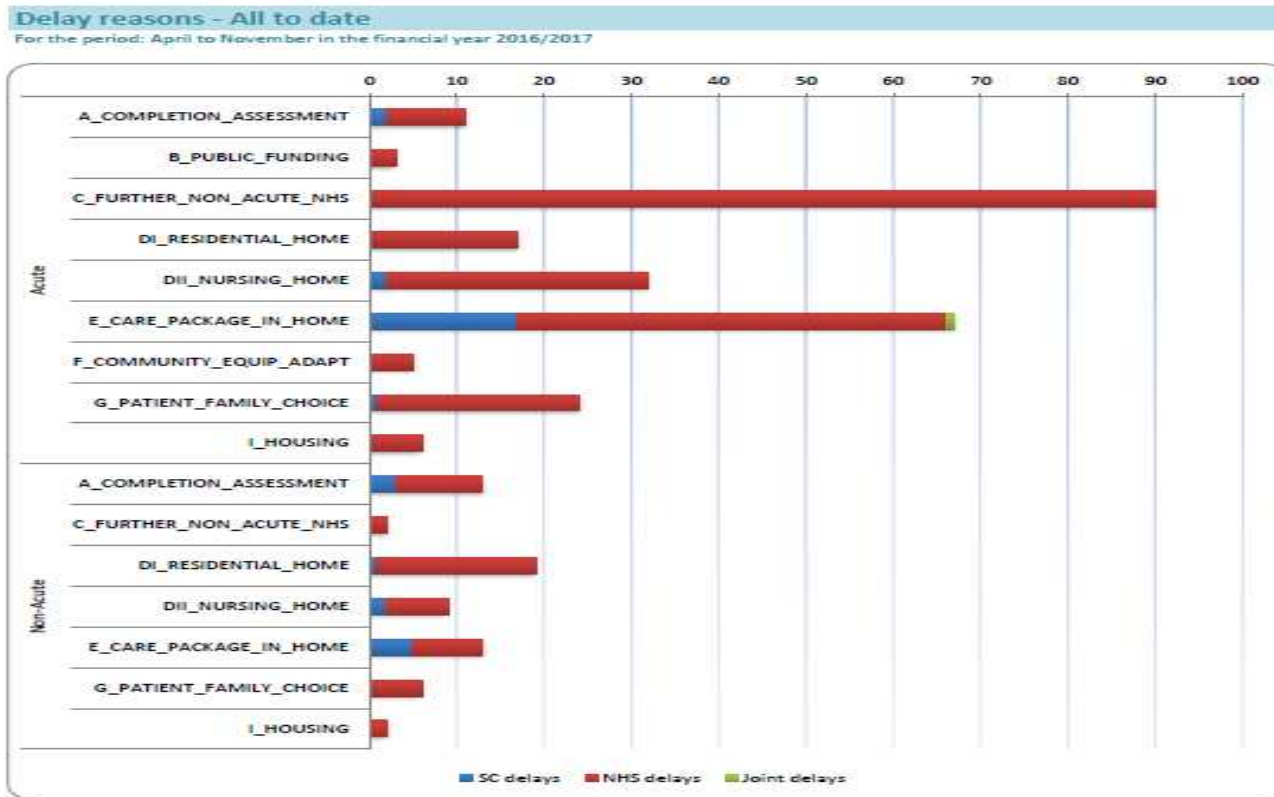
Extract from latest DToC's report – delays of Bucks residents by Hospital Trust

(Source: BCC's Monitoring Report)



Extract from latest DToC's report – delay reasons (Buckinghamshire)

(Source: BCC's Monitoring Report)



The Discharge process

The discharge process is complex and challenging and a multi-disciplinary team is required to ensure a safe and timely patient discharge from the Hospital setting.

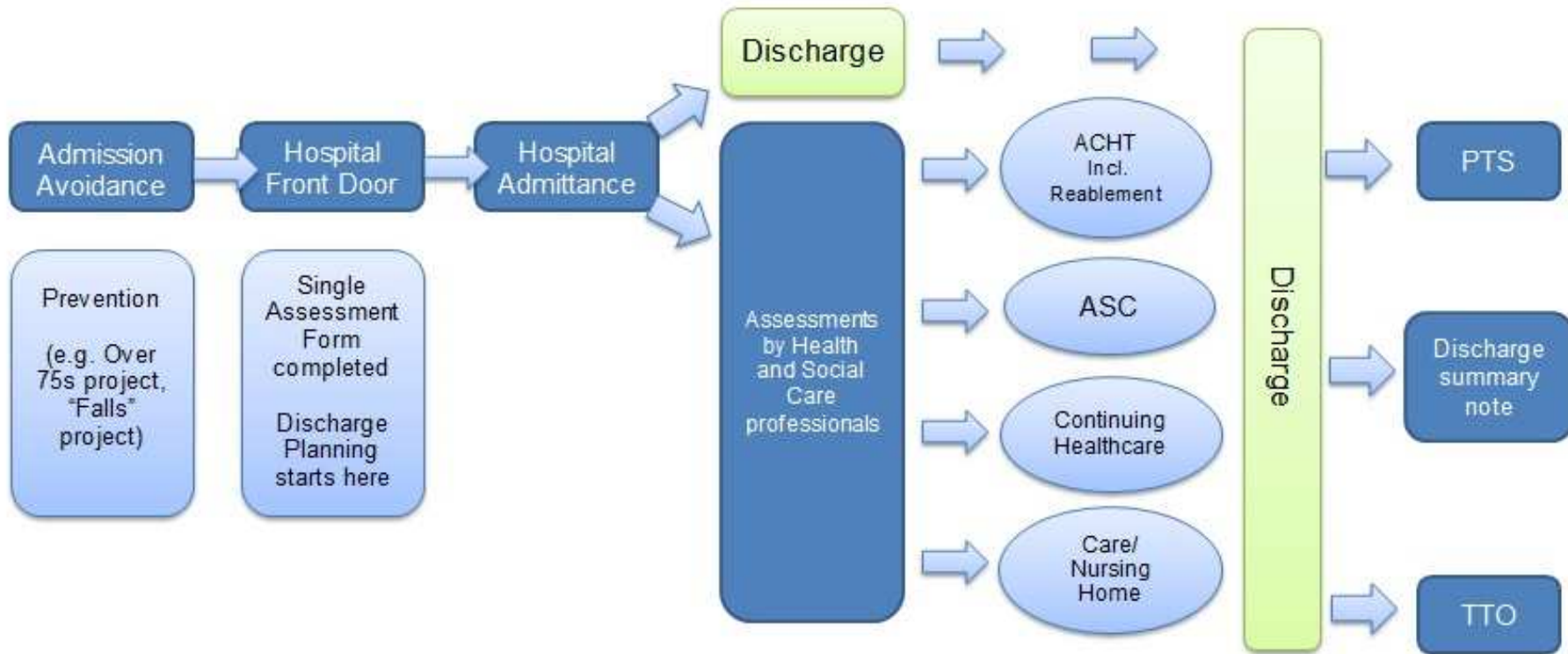
We recognise the different statutory duties of both health providers and social care providers and that each component works within its own operating framework in order to meet these duties.

The Inquiry Group believes that the move towards more integrated health and social care services provides an opportunity to review the current discharge process to see which areas require more focus and resource in order to create a seamless patient pathway in the future.



Patient Journey

Below is a very simple flow-chart showing a possible patient journey through the “system”



Key Finding – Paperwork & Assessments

Throughout all evidence gathering meetings, we were told about the amount of different paperwork involved in the discharge process.

Currently, the IT systems used by health organisations (including community teams) and social care teams are not compatible. Patient information is not accessible to the whole system and needs to be recorded more than once by health and social care professionals which results in duplication at many levels depending on a patient's pathway.

The discharge teams felt that there needed to be more trust and confidence in the accuracy of the patient paperwork to avoid duplication.

Recommendation 1a – Developing a seamless patient pathway with standardised and computerised paperwork across the whole system



Key Finding – Trusted Assessor model

The Hospital Discharge team told us that care home providers undertake their own assessment for those people who are eligible to receive a placement in a care home. We heard that the timeframe for undertaking the assessment can sometimes cause delays - care homes do not carry out assessments over a weekend and new people are not admitted to their homes over the weekend – due to the CQC’s requirement for a Care Home Manager to be available at the time of admitting new patients.

We heard about the Trusted Assessor model where Local Authorities, Trusts and Care Providers join forces to employ a trusted assessor on behalf of a group of care homes and the assessments can be carried out seven days a week which helps to reduce delays in the system. Hertfordshire has introduced the Trusted Assessor model and has seen a 45% reduction in delayed transfers with 305 bed days saved over a 6 month period (source: BBC local news report, 9th February 2017)

Recommendation 1b - That the Council, Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust and the Clinical Commissioning Groups jointly lead a piece of work with care providers to develop and implement the Trusted Assessor model to an agreed timescale.

Key Finding – Patient Voice

As part of the evidence gathering, the inquiry group spoke to a number of health and social care professionals but we were also keen to hear about the patient experience. Healthwatch Bucks was asked whether they could undertake some patient interviews, using their “enter and view” status. Unfortunately due to the short timeframe for this inquiry and their other work commitments, they were unable to do this.

We received a copy of BHT’s Inpatient Survey 2015 which showed that the Trust had worsened significantly on the following questions.

	2014	2015
Discharge: delayed by 1 hour or more	83%	90% *
Discharge: family not given enough information to help	48%	57% *

* Lower scores are better



Key Finding – Patient Voice (2)

We felt that there should be a more in-depth piece of research undertaken to better understand the patient and family/carer experience and to help with targeting the improvements.

Recommendation 1c – Undertaking a piece of work to gain patient and family/carer feedback on their experience of the discharge process – before and after discharge from the Hospital setting. The results to be used by those involved in the discharge process.



Key Finding – Patient and Family information

Following on from this, we heard that there is a weakness in terms of documenting meetings with family members which can then result in miscommunication and misunderstanding, as duplicate conversations are then had by others. We heard that some nursing staff feel unable to have conversations with the patient and family members around their discharge plans for fear of saying the “wrong” thing.

As the patient approaches being discharged, there can be delays around getting patient transport organised (due to the patient’s transfer not being discussed in advance). There can sometimes be delays in processing a patient’s TTO (due to demand and workload of the junior doctors) so by setting expectations early on around what to expect, as a patient, around the discharge process would help to reduce misunderstandings.

Recommendation 1d – Strengthening the mechanisms for recording and sharing patient and family conversations to minimise the risk of misunderstanding and duplicate conversations taking place.

Key Finding – Patient and Family information (2)

Delays can occur as a result of insufficient care planning. The inquiry group heard that if families have put in place Powers of Attorney and Care Plans, it can make the process much easier and smoother.

Whilst not putting this as a formal recommendation, the inquiry group felt that there should be a public campaign set-up to encourage families to have discussions around care planning and securing the relevant legal paperwork. By working with GPs, community groups and the voluntary sector, this could be started in advance before people require acute health services.



Key Finding – Induction and Training

We heard from members of the Adults Community Healthcare Team (ACHT) that the services provided by the community teams is not always fully understood by the Hospital staff. ACHT provides vital services to patients in their own homes and the team comprises therapists, District nurses and the Reablement team. If a patient is discharged late in the day and requires equipment for their home, there can be a financial impact if the equipment has to be delivered out of normal hours.

We also heard that the ACHT used to be involved in the ward round discussions involving patients who were about to be discharged but this does not happen now which has contributed to the views of the ACHT.

Recommendation 1e - Introducing a module within the induction programme (and ongoing training programme) to increase the Hospital nursing staff's understanding of the Community teams and to aid closer working.



Key Finding – Seven Day working

The Government's drive is towards seven day working across the health and social care system by 2020.

We heard that some areas of the Hospital Discharge service work seven days a week whilst others currently do not (ie. Care Homes do not currently admit new patients over a weekend) which creates inconsistencies across the system. It also causes pressure on the system and can result in delays in getting a patient transferred to their next care placement. We believe that access to services should be consistent across the system and patients should receive a seamless discharge irrespective of the day of their discharge.

Recommendation 1f – That commissioned services specify 7 day cover within the contracts and access to services is 7 days a week.



Key Finding – Hospital Patient Transport

South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) is responsible for the Patient Transport Service (a new contract was awarded in April 2016).

The Associate Director for Urgent Care told us that patient transport should be pre-booked by the discharge team the day before a patient is discharged but this does not always happen.

One of the key performance indicators for PTS is that 35% of patient transport journeys must be booked 24 hours in advance of a patient being discharged. The rationale being that if it is planned, then resource can be assigned it to appropriately. We heard that, on average, 20-30 patients need transport assistance per day. SCAS employs a “halo” officer who works closely with the Wards to identify the priorities and there are plans for this person to also confirm the PTS bookings to reduce the number of aborted bookings.



Key Finding – Hospital Patient Transport (2)

The patient joint assessment form, which is currently being used by the discharge teams, does not include a question about transport and we felt that this would help nursing staff confirm these details (and set patient expectations) if it were to be included as part of this form. We believe that by having the conversation with the patient well in advance of their discharge will benefit the PTS and ensure bookings are made within the specified timeframe.

Recommendation 1g – That a question on patient transport be included as part of the joint assessment form.



Key Finding – Hospital Pharmacy services

The Chief Pharmacist, who oversees a team of 86 FTE pharmacists and technicians across BHT, told us that the recently introduced “DOCGEN” electronic system has not cut down on the amount of time it takes to get TTOs processed. Prior to this system being introduced, around 25% of TTOs were received by mid-morning. Now, the TTOs are received significantly later in the day (between 2-4pm) which has an impact on the discharge process.

We heard from the hospital discharge team that it can take between 2-3 hours for consultants to finish their ward rounds and for the junior doctors to then sit down at a computer to process the TTOs for those patients being discharged that day.

Recommendation 1h: That the process for TTOs is streamlined to speed up the issuing of TTOs.



Key Finding – Health and Social Care working together (1)

The Government plans for full integration of health and social care by 2020.

In order for health and social care to become fully integrated, BCC and the NHS must work collaboratively, with pace, to shift investment from reactive services to early intervention and preventative services, looking at the whole life cycle with particular focus on transition points (extract from Health & Wellbeing Board papers, 9 March 2017).

The Inquiry Group was surprised to hear that the NHS in Buckinghamshire continues to fine Buckinghamshire County Council for social care delays even though the Care Act removed the requirement for Local Authorities in England to pay reimbursement fees for social care delays. The fines are low due to the low number of delayed days for ASC (Bucks is top of its comparator group).



Key Finding – Health and Social Care working together (2)

The Inquiry Group feels that imposing fines goes against the spirit of partnership working and creates an unnecessary bureaucratic layer in this process. We feel that this money could be better used to support the patient discharge process.

We heard that BHT has been in discussion with ASC for sometime now about removing the fines but this has not yet resulted in its removal.

Recommendation 2a – That Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust removes the requirement for Buckinghamshire County Council to pay reimbursement fees for social care delays.

Recommendation 2b – That Adult Social Care negotiates the removal of reimbursements with other neighbouring Trusts.



Key finding – Health and Social Care working together (3)

We were surprised to find out that the Hospital discharge team and the Adult Social Care discharge team are not located together at SM Hospital.

Whilst recognising how well the teams currently work together, by locating them under one roof we believe this will increase opportunities to be more efficient and minimise the risk of duplication.

Recommendation 3a – Co-locating the Hospital discharge team and the ASC discharge team together.



Key Finding – Health and Social Care working together (4)

The Better Care Fund (BCF) was introduced by the Government in June 2013 to assist Local Authorities and Health organisations with their integration plans. The Integrated Care Executive Team (ICET) is responsible for driving the integration of health and social care. One of the performance metrics within the BCF relates specifically to Delayed Transfers of Care and is showing as a “red” indicator. The overall performance metrics are reported to the Health & Wellbeing Board.

We recognise the complexities around this area of work but felt that there needed to be greater visibility around the work that is currently being undertaken around DToC, which is reported as part of the BCF. We also felt that there needed to be clarity around where progress was being monitored.

Recommendation 3b - Developing a specific joint action plan for bringing the “Delayed Transfers of Care” Better Care Fund performance indicator out of “red”.

Other Observations

There are no specific recommendations to be made around the following as they were not directly in scope. However during our evidence gathering, we identified the following as issues for the health and social care organisations.

- **The Growth agenda**

Work started last July to get the NHS more involved with planners. Joint meetings have taken place between BCC and the NHS to specifically look at the local plans. Both Public Health and the NHS receive all planning applications from Chiltern and South Bucks Districts and are discussing what is needed to be reviewed in relation to AVDC and Wycombe.

- **Communications**

Having identified the complexities around the discharge process, we felt that communications between the different elements is key and would like to see greater sharing of information across the system, particularly around the “Bucks” local plans within the STP.

- **Contract management**

How well are the contracts (both health and social care) being managed and reviewed in order to ensure patient needs are being met and good quality maintained.



Other Observations (2)

- **Governance**

Throughout the evidence gathering, we heard about a number of Boards and teams who are responsible for monitoring the performance and delivery of parts of the system. Whilst recognising the need for different groups to drive forward the work streams, we questioned whether the existing structure is working efficiently and whether a more streamlined structure would be more beneficial and reduce the amount of time spent in meetings. We also felt that the use of the word “Board” needed to be reviewed as this implied a board structure with a potential decision-making remit. By looking at the existing structure, we felt that it needed to be tightened up and clarification around the roles of each “board” needed to be made.

- **Celebrating Success**

Whilst recognising that there will always be areas that can be improved on and also acknowledging the financial challenges facing both the NHS and ASC, we felt that there were examples of great work being undertaken by staff within the health and social care organisations and felt that these successes should be celebrated. For example, a recent CQC inspection report (published on 16 February 2017) stated the following: “In all areas, patients and relatives were positive about the caring attitude of staff, their kindness and compassion” and “Staff worked effectively within their team and with other teams to provide co-ordinated care to patients, which focused on their needs.”



Appendices

- Appendix 1 - What does “good” look like?



Appendix 1 - What does “good” look like?

All those interviewed as part of the evidence gathering were asked to describe what “good” would look like in terms of the Hospital Discharge process.

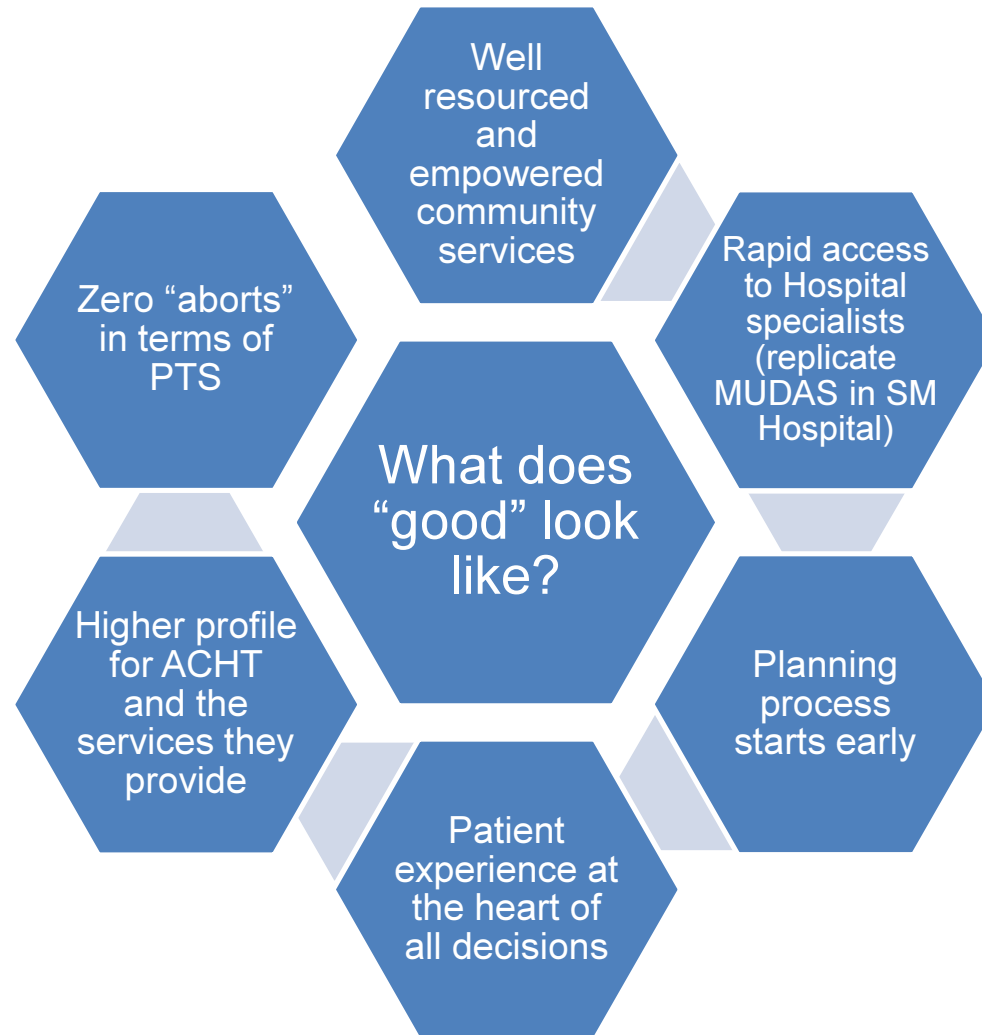
The following two slides summarise the comments made by the health and social care professionals.



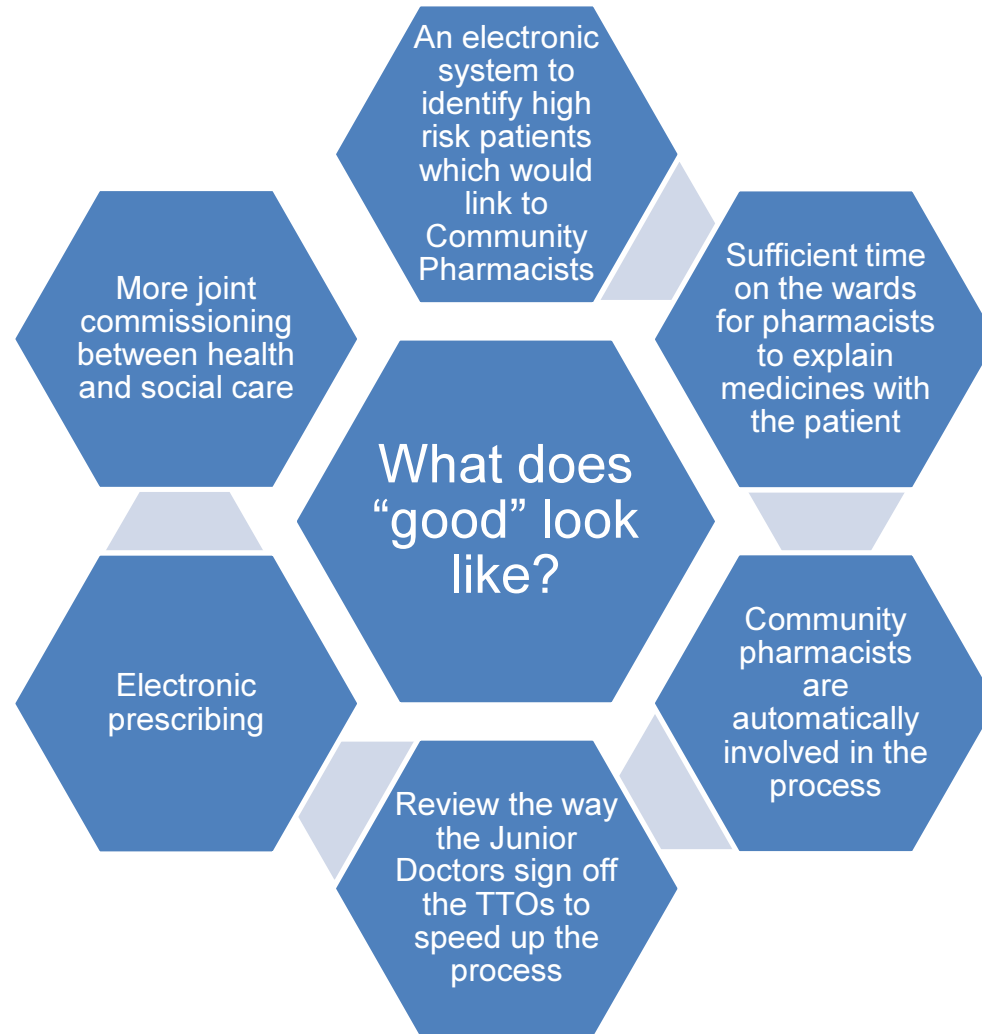
What does “good” look like? (1)



What does “good” look like? (2)



What does “good” look like? (3)



Next steps

- The report to be discussed and agreed by the Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) Select Committee (14 March 2017).
- A co-ordinated response to the recommendations to be prepared by the CCGs, BHT and BCC following the approval of the report by HASC.
- The report and recommendations to be presented to BCC Cabinet (24 April 2017).
- Recommendation progress monitoring by the HASC at 6 and 12 months.



Report to Cabinet

Title:	Sustainable School Travel in Buckinghamshire
Date:	Monday 24 April 2017
Date can be implemented:	Wednesday 03 May 2017
Author:	David Carroll
Contact officer:	Kama Wager
Local members affected:	All Members
Portfolio areas affected:	Transportation and Education & Skills

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

Summary

The Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee agreed to undertake an Inquiry into Sustainable School Travel in Buckinghamshire with a view to understanding:

- how to reduce problems around schools, associated with travelling to school by car
- the challenges around encouraging people to use alternative methods of transport.

The Committee also wished to consider planning for the future and the impact of growth in Buckinghamshire.

Evidence was gathered through desktop research, a number of online surveys with Local Area Forums, Schools and Junior Road Safety officers, a full day evidence session with officers and national experts and a stakeholder roundtable discussion with 24 stakeholders.

The Inquiry Group found that Buckinghamshire has been recognised nationally for its work on Sustainable Travel and School Travel Planning, but was disappointed to hear that Council resources to support schools in developing and promoting travel plans had been significantly reduced. In light of the growth in Buckinghamshire, Members believe this is an opportune time for the Council to clarify its overall approach to sustainable school travel.

The attached report (Appendix 1) outlines the Inquiry Group's key findings and recommendations.

Recommendation

1: That the Council clarifies its future approach to sustainable school travel work by:

1a Undertaking a return on investment analysis of sustainable school travel work to assess the wider benefits of investing in this area;

1b Following the analysis, the Council publishing its vision for sustainable school travel work

1c Adequately resourcing the achievement of its vision, including longer term contracts for officers and an increase in budget

2: That the Council develops and adopts a policy which clarifies its position on encouraging sustainable travel and the mitigation of transport impacts in relation to the expansion of current and development of new schools.

3: That the Council adopts an holistic approach to the planning of new and expanding schools, including factoring infrastructure provision and mitigation measures to reduce car use in costings.

4: That the Council addresses 'unsafe routes' to school for example through the Integrated Transport project, to ensure:

4a Prioritisation for regular/appropriate maintenance of routes to school where vegetation overgrowth jeopardises safety of the route.

4b An equal focus on the assessment of primary schools routes.

4c A return on investment analysis for routes where the assessment's recommendation is for 'engineering' options to deliver a safe route to school.

5: That the Council develops and delivers a publicity campaign aimed at all schools, stakeholders and Parent and Parent Teacher Associations to highlight:

- **The role and responsibility of schools in promoting active travel for the school journey;**
- **The wider value and benefits to schools of active travel planning work e.g. higher educational attainment, links to other curriculum areas, Ofsted and health benefits; and**
- **The resources available to schools on schooltravelplanning.com and the value of the annual conference.**

6: That the Council raises the profile of sustainable travel planning amongst schools by ensuring STP activity is included regularly on the agenda of the Head Teacher Liaison Group, BASH and any other school liaison meetings.

7: That a Member briefing session is held on the Member advocacy role in working with schools on School Travel Plans and promoting sustainable travel for the school journey. This should include:

- **Information on the self help toolkits for schools and how they can be used;**
- **How the Council can help support schools;**
- **Providing the tools and information to deal with complaints and challenges;**

- **How Members can help schools address issues and identify solutions in their community leader role.**

A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision

Please see report attached at Appendix 1.

B. Other options available, and their pros and cons

Please see report attached at Appendix 1.

C. Resource implications

The resource implications of all recommendations are to be considered as part of Cabinet's response to the Inquiry report.

D. Value for Money (VfM) Self Assessment

See above

E. Legal implications

N/A

F. Property implications

N/A

G. Other implications/issues

N/A

H. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views

N/A

I. Communication issues

Cabinet's response to the Inquiry report and recommendations will be published.

J. Progress Monitoring

Where recommendations are agreed by Cabinet, the lead officer for each recommendation will be asked to provide a written progress update to the lead Cabinet Member. The Cabinet Member and relevant officers will be invited to the Select Committee to follow-up on the progress of the recommendations at 6 & 12 months.

K. Review

As above.

Background Papers

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Member Services Team by 5.00pm on Friday 21 April 2017. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343), or e-mail to democracy@buckscc.gov.uk

Sustainable School Travel in Buckinghamshire

A Report of the Transport, Environment, Economy and
Communities Select Committee

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Inquiry Support: Member Services Team

Lead Officer: Kama Wager, Committee & Governance Adviser

Agenda Item 12



Sustainable school travel in Buckinghamshire

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From the Inquiry Chairman

“On behalf of the inquiry team, I would like to pass on our huge thanks to all those people who gave up their valuable time to come and talk to us or complete our survey. Their contributions have allowed us to gain a deeper insight into the successful work that takes place across the schools within our county and to understand the challenges.

The inquiry team was impressed to learn that Buckinghamshire is nationally recognised for its innovative solutions to promoting sustainable travel for the school journey and reducing the use of cars. The dedication of those schools who actively work to reduce car journeys and the Council’s School Travel Planning Officer was inspiring.

It is only through the willingness of officers, schools and other stakeholders to share best practice and identify solutions to barriers that we can strive to encourage other schools, parents and children to adopt healthy travel choices for the school journey and for that we are very grateful.”

David Carroll – Chairman – TEC Select Committee

Inquiry Team

The Inquiry was conducted by the following Members of the Select Committee:

- Mr David Carroll (Chairman)
- Mrs Lesley Clarke OBE
- Mrs Avril Davies
- Mr Phil Gomm
- Mrs Angela Macpherson
- Mr Brian Roberts

Inquiry Purpose

The purpose of the Inquiry was to look in detail at school travel planning & sustainable school travel activity and:

- How it can reduce problems around schools caused by travelling to school by car
- The challenges around encouraging people to use other modes of transport
- Planning for the future and the impact of growth in Buckinghamshire


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Inquiry Scope

Agreed at TEC Select Committee, 17 January 2017

<https://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/documents/s92350/Report%20for%20Draft%20Inquiry%20proposed%20Scope.pdf>

Out of scope:

- Home to school transport (except in relation to the issues)
 - An analysis of individual school/community issues
 - Enforcement measures
- 

Methodology

Evidence was gathered through:

- Desktop research
- Survey via LAFS (142 responses)
- Survey to schools via Liaison group/school Bulletin (22 responses)
- An all-day evidence gathering session with internal officers and national experts
- A stakeholder roundtable discussion with 24 external stakeholders
- Survey for Junior Road Safety Officers

Detail provided in Appendices 1 & 2

Background: National Context

Government's Travel to School Initiative in 2004:

- Aim for 100% schools developing a travel plan by 2010
- Funding provided for Regional Advisors, LA School Travel Advisors
- A one off Capital Grant payment for schools that developed a travel plan (average £5k for Primary schools; £10k for Secondary schools).

Statutory duty since 2006 for Local Authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport for the school journey

Following the General Election in 2010, Government withdrew the final year of Capital Grant funding.

No monetary incentive currently for schools to develop and deliver School Travel Plans.

Background: National Context (2)

YET, there is recognition of the benefits of active travel in national public health policy, with:

- 3 NICE Public Health guidelines promoting active travel
- Department for Transport guidance
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and
- Public Health England evidence briefings around the benefits of active travel:
 - Obesity & the environment (Nov 2013), and
 - Working together to promote active travel: a briefing for Local Authorities (May 2016)

Background: Local Context

Success

- ✓ Buckinghamshire seen as best practice nationally in relation to its school travel planning work and other sustainable school travel initiatives.
- ✓ Buckinghamshire has 70 schools with national Modeshift Stars accreditation for their School Travel Plans - by comparison the next highest local authority has 44 schools.
- ✓ Innovative projects such as Go for Gold sustainable travel incentive scheme and the Parent Parking Promise replicated by other authorities
- ✓ 162 schools engaged in active sustainable school travel work
- ✓ Car use for school travel has kept at 30% over last 5 years.

Challenges

- ✗ 101 schools currently disengaged – not recognising a school role or responsibility for promotion of active travel.
- ✗ Parental choice may mean the car is the only viable option

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation	Focus
1	<p>That the Council clarifies its future approach to sustainable school travel work by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1a Undertaking a return on investment analysis of sustainable school travel work to assess the wider benefits of investing in this area;1b Following the analysis, the Council publishing its vision for sustainable school travel work1c Adequately resourcing the achievement of its vision, including longer term contracts for officers and an increase in budget
2	<p>That the Council develops and adopts a policy which clarifies its position on encouraging sustainable travel and the mitigation of transport impacts in relation to the expansion of current and development of new schools.</p>



Summary of recommendations

Recommendation	Focus
3	That the Council adopts an holistic approach to the planning of new and expanding schools, including factoring infrastructure provision and mitigation measures to reduce car use in costings
4	<p>That the Council addresses 'unsafe routes' to school for example through the Integrated Transport project, to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="533 743 1750 908">4a Prioritisation for regular/appropriate maintenance of routes to school where vegetation overgrowth jeopardises safety of the route.<li data-bbox="533 915 1789 1015">4b An equal focus on the assessment of primary schools routes.<li data-bbox="533 1029 1769 1193">4c A return on investment analysis for routes where the assessment's recommendation is for 'engineering' options to deliver a safe route to school

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation	Focus
5	<p>That the Council develops and delivers a publicity campaign aimed at all schools, stakeholders and Parent and Parent Teacher Associations to highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The role and responsibility of schools in promoting active travel for the school journey;• The wider value and benefits to schools of active travel planning work e.g. higher educational attainment, links to other curriculum areas, Ofsted and health benefits; and• The resources available to schools on schooltravelplanning.com and the value of the annual conference.
6	<p>That the Council raises the profile of sustainable travel planning amongst schools by ensuring STP activity is included regularly on the agenda of the Head Teacher Liaison Group, BASH and any other school liaison meetings.</p>

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation	Focus
7	<p data-bbox="533 372 1711 586">That a Member briefing session is held on the Member advocacy role in working with schools on School Travel Plans and promoting sustainable travel for the school journey. This should include:</p> <ul data-bbox="533 658 1785 1043" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="533 658 1785 758">• Information on the self help toolkits for schools and how they can be used;<li data-bbox="533 772 1503 815">• How the Council can help support schools;<li data-bbox="533 829 1591 929">• Providing the tools and information to deal with complaints and challenges;<li data-bbox="533 943 1707 1043">• How Members can help schools address issues and identify solutions in their community leader role.



The Council's Approach: Wider Benefits

From discussions with Public Health we learned that:

1. Inactive children become inactive adults. Investment in walking and cycling can benefit the individual and the wider community. If every local authority reduced inactivity levels by 1% for five-years, local taxpayers would be saved £44 per household.
2. The school commute can build activity into daily life that physical activity for school pupils helps:
 - Alertness and concentration for all and improve learning for children with learning difficulties
 - Achievement at GCSE - active young people have 10-20% better results
3. Physical inactivity costs Buckinghamshire an estimated £84.5m per year. Currently 32% of boys and 48% of girls aged 5-15 are inactive; only 14.1% of 15 year olds achieving the recommended level of daily activity.
4. Addressing inactivity is a key priority in the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the Bucks Physical Activity Strategy.

We consider that the wider benefits of sustainable travel should not be underestimated

The Council's Approach: Current Resource

Through discussions with the Transport Strategy Officers, we learned that:

- The Council has reduced its resource on School Travel Planning work from 13 officers pre 2009 to one officer currently (budget for School Travel Planning of £7,000 per annum).
- The dramatic reduction is a reflection of government support and local financial pressures.
- The Council is no longer has the capacity to proactively work with the 101 disengaged schools.

It is evident that the support, advice and guidance of the Council's officer has been instrumental in engaging and supporting schools to deliver this work.

We were disappointed to hear that the officer has now left the organisation and that, despite the importance of relationship building, the post is being offered only as a 6-month contract.



The Council's Approach: Current Resource (2)

We heard that the major challenge in engaging schools is that not all view School Travel Planning (STP) work as their responsibility or priority.

Head teachers and STP staff within engaged schools told us that their success had been due to the high profile that school itself placed on school travel work.

We recognise it is crucial that someone/people within the school lead(s) on the STP and that it can be difficult for individuals tasked with this role drive forward actions alongside a day job.

We learned that due to capacity and budget the Council's work was currently limited to facilitation and working with schools already engaged.



The Council's Approach: Planning Schools

We looked at the planning for new and extended schools in relation to school travel planning. The schools commissioner told us:

- A condition for schools to have a School Travel Plan (STP) was often imposed on planning applications, and
- That schools commonly breach the STP condition, highlighted through the issues experienced recently in Berryfields, Aylesbury.

STPs should be implemented and reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain a useful tool for the school rather than an exercise to gain planning permission.

The Council relies on the School Travel Planning officer to work with schools to ensure they deliver and maintain their STP once the school is occupied.

Feedback from schools was that the support from the Council was important in working with schools to implement their plans.

We heard that there is currently not enough resource in the team to undertake this work.

The Council's Approach: The Growth Agenda

We were very impressed to find that in Buckinghamshire:

- We lead the way nationally in its school travel planning and sustainable travel planning work with schools
- Almost 2/3rds of schools have an active STP and/or actively promote sustainable school travel through initiatives and campaigns to reduce car use.
- Car use for the school journey has been maintained at 30 % over the last 5 years.

However, we believe that inadequate resource for this work may prove short-sighted given the County's growth, growing number of school places, and the significant added benefits to individual health, the NHS, the environment, the transport system and the economy as a whole.

We consider it an opportune time for the Council to consider the wider value of sustainable school travel work, to clarify its role in relation to future work in this area, and to consider the capacity needed to deliver.

The Council's Approach: Recommendation 1

Recommendation 1

That the Council clarifies its future approach to sustainable school travel work by:

- 1a Undertaking a return on investment analysis of sustainable school travel work to assess the wider benefits of investing in this area;
- 1b Following the analysis, the Council publishing its vision for sustainable school travel work
- 1c Adequately resourcing the achievement of its vision, including longer term contracts for officers and an increase in budget

Co-ordination: Business Units

We spoke to officers from across the organisation to understand how the different Business Units contribute to the work of school travel planning.

Although school travel planning work currently sits and is funded in the Transport Strategy Team, its remit crosses over a number of the Council's portfolio areas (highways, school commissioning, health, infrastructure etc.)

All the officers we spoke to highlighted the complexity of the planning system and reflected on the challenges of joint working, with each Business Unit having its own statutory obligations, separate budgets, capacity and budget constraints.

We were told services worked well together in some areas, e.g. development projects and resolving local school issues, but that there can be a lack of co-ordination between Education and Highways on planning schools/school extensions.

Defining and applying the Council's position on sustainable travel work in relation to the development of new schools and the extension of expanding schools could improve efficiency of the system.

Co-ordination: Designing for Sustainable Travel

The national experts from the Transport for London Behaviour Change Unit and Modeshift explained that designing travel solutions when planning schools makes it easier to encourage parents to not travel by car.

We heard about the challenges of identification, funding and implementation of adequate infrastructure for new and expanding schools.

The Council's Highways Development Manager told us that infrastructure provision is currently not factored in when costing a school, but that funding from developers could be better identified if the definition of a "serviced school" for new school builds included infrastructure requirements.

We believe that the Council has an opportunity to ensure that going forward school travel related issues can be designed out and/or mitigated in the early planning stages.



Co-ordination: Recommendations 2 and 3

Recommendation 2

That the Council develops and adopts a policy which clarifies its position on encouraging sustainable travel and the mitigation of transport impacts in relation to the expansion of current and development of new schools.

Recommendation 3

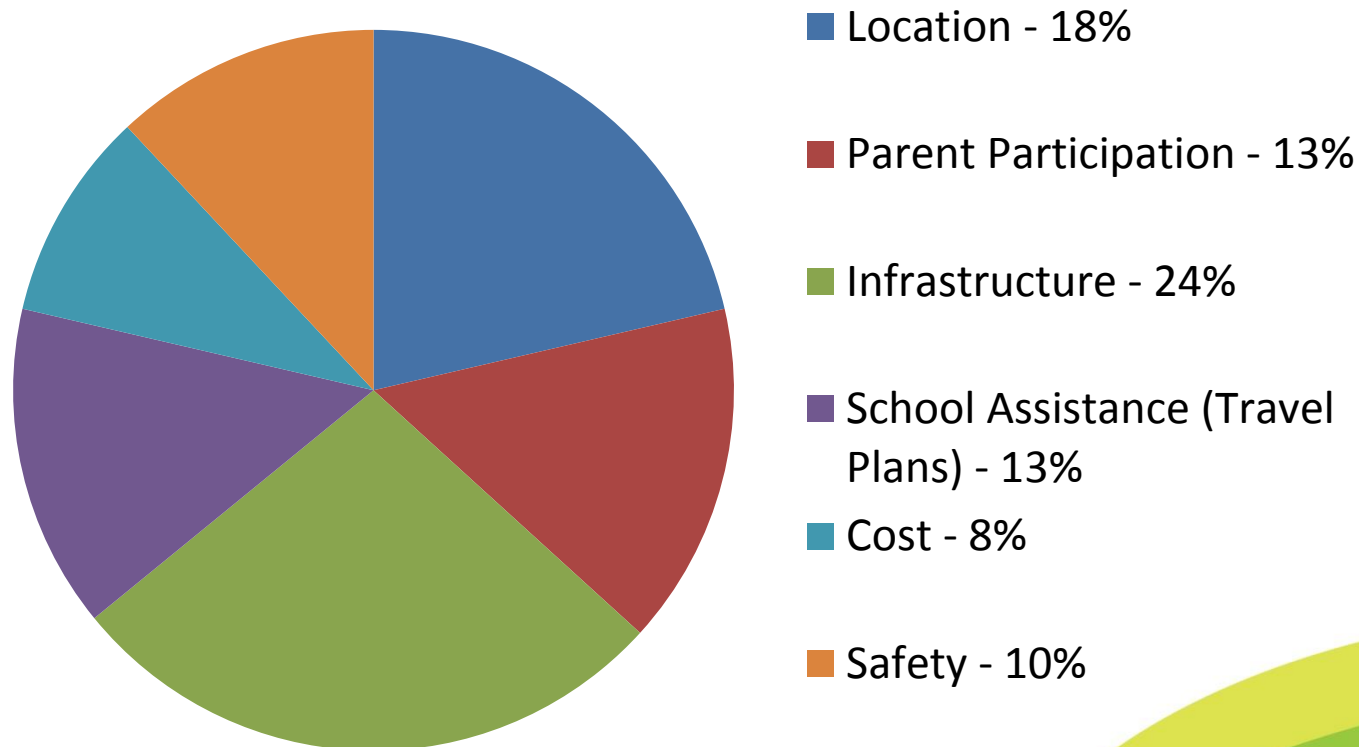
That the Council adopts an holistic approach to the planning of new and expanding schools, including factoring infrastructure provision and mitigation measures to reduce car use in costings.

Reducing Car Use: Barriers

School Admissions officers and schools told us that the lack of appropriate/safe infrastructure (walking/cycling routes) was a major barrier to increasing sustainable travel choices and reducing car use.

This was backed up by respondents to our survey distributed via Local Area Forums (Appendix 2):

Barriers to reducing car use



Reducing Car Use: Unsafe Routes

We learned that pupils who attend their nearest school are provided with free home to school transport where the distance is less than the statutory walking distance AND where the route is deemed to be 'unsafe'. Where there is no bus route, the Council pays for a taxi.

We heard that a number of routes are unsafe due to encroaching vegetation.

We were told that the Council used to prioritise routes used by Crocodile Walking Buses, ensuring they remained clear of vegetation. We believe that the Council should reprioritise this vegetation clearance.

We recognise that with the devolution to Parish Councils, it is not always easy to identify who is responsible for vegetation clearance but for a relatively low cost of clearance, there are savings to be made in the cost of transport.

Where possible, other measures such as the installation of a crossings or pedestrian refuges should be considered, to improve activity and to make savings in the longer term.

Reducing Car Use: Assessing Routes

We found two issues in relation to assessing the safety of routes to school:

- **Cost:** where a parent deems a route to the nearest school as unsafe, a site visit is undertaken to determine the safety of the walking route. This costs the Council approximately £500 per assessment
- **Focus:** currently safety assessments are focussed on secondary schools. We heard that behaviour change is most effective with primary school aged children so we consider that the assessment of primary school routes should be an equally important part of the work.
- **Mitigation:** when routes to schools are not assessed, for example where information on likely routes of pupils to new or expanding schools is not available or provided, there is a risk that potential mitigation opportunities can be missed.

We understand that the Integrated Transport project is reviewing the whole home to school transport system and welcome consideration of our recommendation in this area.

Reducing Car Use: Recommendation 4

Recommendation 4

That the Council addresses 'unsafe routes' to school for example through the Integrated Transport project, to ensure:

- 4a Prioritisation for regular/appropriate maintenance of routes to school where vegetation overgrowth jeopardises safety of the route.
- 4b An equal focus on the assessment of primary schools routes.
- 4c A return on investment analysis for routes where the assessment's recommendation is for 'engineering' options to deliver a safe route to school

School Engagement

Schools who attended our stakeholder discussion told us:

- It is the school's responsibility to promote healthy and sustainable travel for the school journey and to make efforts to engage with the community to address issues such as parking
- They see the links to other areas of the curriculum associated with STP and other sustainable travel work.
- Successful STP work has a high profile within the school, support of parent governors, the head teacher and a lead person who takes ownership of the work – which may be a teacher, teaching assistant, parent governor, or volunteer.
- There would be value in including STP work in the Healthy Schools initiative

We learned that, often with support of the Council, schools can and do successfully deliver sustainable school travel activity within their schools.

See Appendix 3 for Modeshift Awards and link to case studies

School Engagement (2)

We were told by officers, the Transport for London and Modeshift witnesses and schools themselves that engaging schools is one of the most significant challenges to affecting wider behaviour change.

The Council runs an annual conference which:

- Provides the opportunity to share best practice and network
- Schools found a valuable way of sharing ideas and building motivations
- Could encourage self-support work between schools in future.

We were shown an excellent self help website created by the Council with toolkits and other resources for schools to use:

www.schooltravelplanning.com

We understand the capacity challenge but believe that better use could be made of existing channels to publicise the benefits of sustainable travel to schools.

School Engagement: Recommendations 5 & 6

Recommendation 5

That the Council develops and delivers a publicity campaign aimed at all schools, stakeholders and Parent and Parent Teacher Associations to highlight:

- The role and responsibility of schools in promoting active travel for the school journey;
- The wider value and benefits to schools of active travel planning work e.g. higher educational attainment, links to other curriculum areas, Ofsted and health benefits; and
- The resources available to schools on schooltravelplanning.com and the value of the annual conference.

Recommendation 6

That the Council raises the profile of sustainable travel planning amongst schools by ensuring STP activity is included regularly on the agenda of the Head Teacher Liaison Group, BASH and any other school liaison meetings.

The Member Role

We recognise that many local Members receive complaints about issues such as parking, congestion and safety surrounding schools.

Schools told us that the support and commitment of their local Member(s) had helped identify and deliver solutions and work with the wider community.

We heard that a Chesham school had successfully addressed issues of school crossings through the help of the local Member and their work on stakeholder engagement.

We also learned that the Elected Member role in Local Area Forums has been beneficial in resolving issues for schools.

In their community leader role, Elected Members are perfectly placed to work with local schools on travel issues, helping to find solutions by signposting to the online toolkits and engaging with key stakeholders in the community.



The Member Role: Recommendation 7

Recommendation 7

That a Member briefing session is held on the Member advocacy role in working with schools on School Travel Plans and promoting sustainable travel for the school journey. This should include:

- Information on the self help toolkits for schools and how they can be used;
- How the Council can help support schools;
- Providing the tools and information to deal with complaints and challenges;
- How Members can help schools address issues and identify solutions in their community leader role.

Other Findings

During its evidence gathering, we identified the following as issues which, although not in scope, are issues that we would like to highlight. There are no specific recommendations but the Committee will use the findings to inform potential future Committee work items:

- **Home to School transport:** Raised in a number of responses to the survey and by Members, Home to School transport (and the increasing costs) was highlighted as an area which has a clear impact on car use. We heard that the Council is exploring alternative options through the integrated transport programme. The Committee intends to monitor this programme of work within its future work programme.
- **Data on mode of travel:** We were disappointed to find that the mode of travel question was removed from the school census in 2011. The data would have been invaluable to the Council to help target work with schools. The Council has a voluntary “hands up” survey for schools and we suggest that schools could be more widely encouraged to complete this to aid planning.

Appendix 1: Detail of Evidence Gathering

Day 1: Scene setting

- Transport Strategy/School Travel Planning Officers
- TfB Road Safety
- School Commissioning
- Highways Development Management
- Client Transport and Public Transport Managers
- Head of Highways Infrastructure
- Ross Butcher, Transport for London, Behaviour Change Unit
- James Hardie, Modeshift STARS Project Officer

Day 2: Stakeholder roundtable discussion

24 external attendees including:

- School head teachers/STP lead staff/volunteers
- Area Managers
- Police
- Fire Service
- Public Health

Appendix 2: Public Engagement Results

The Inquiry Group thanks all schools, parents, residents and pupils who responded to the Inquiry's call for evidence.

Junior Road Safety Officers

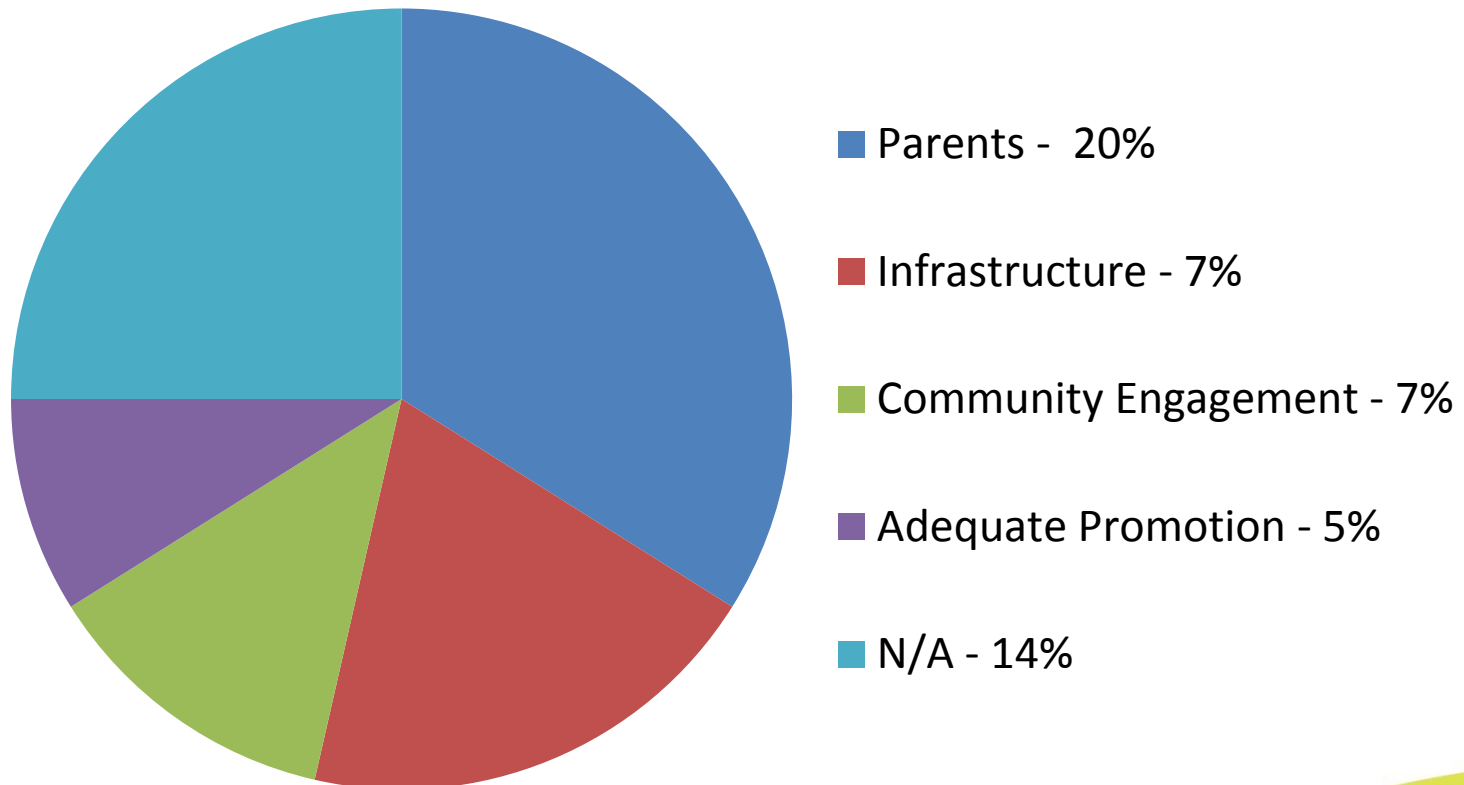
The Inquiry is grateful for the Junior Road Safety Officers who submitted evidence. Thank you to:

Alexandra Horwood and Katie Wilkinson from High March School
Molly and Henry from Elangeni School, and
The pupils of Roundwood Primary, who sent a fantastic video clip

Appendix 2: Public Engagement Results

Responses to public survey:

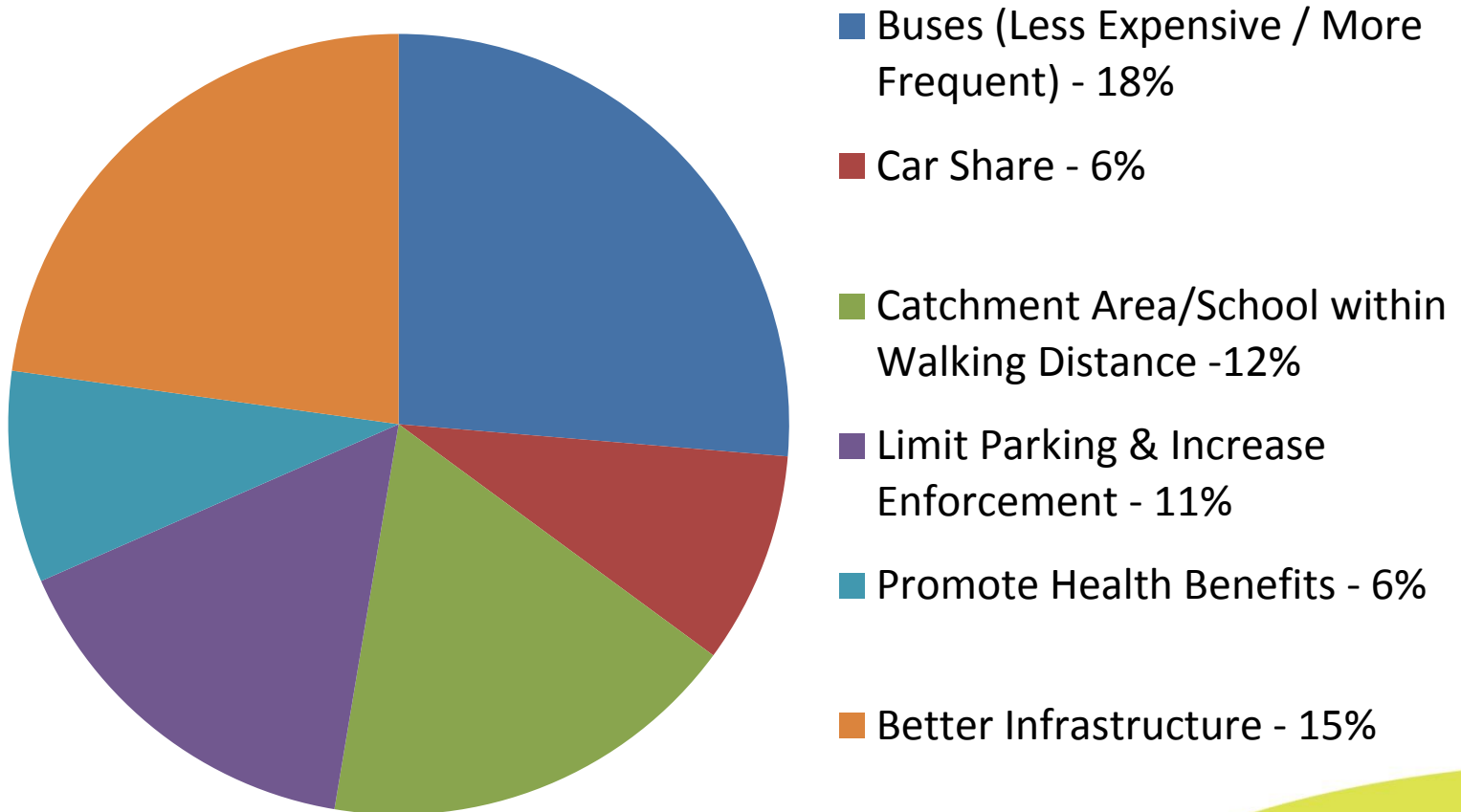
Key Factors to success of initiatives to reduce car use



Appendix 2: Public Engagement Results

Responses to public survey:

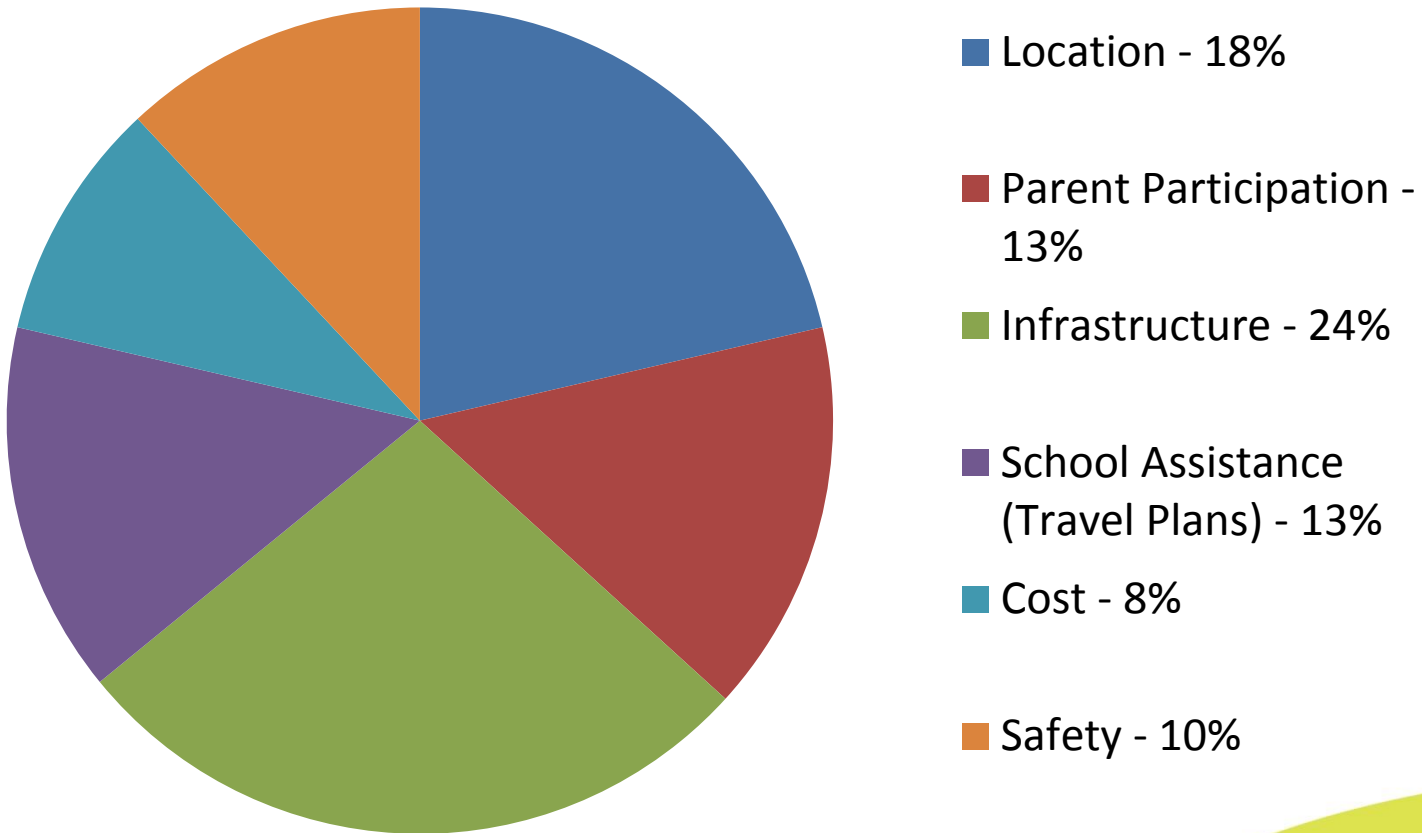
Opportunities for reducing car use



Appendix 2: Public Engagement Results

Responses to public survey:

Barriers/limitations to reducing car use



Appendix 3: Modeshift Awards

National Sustainable Travel Awards (for education providers, businesses and communities)

2014

Contribution to sustainable travel – Individual – *Kim Key, Cheddington*
Award for sustainable travel – Community - *Beaconsfield Cycle Project*
(initiated by High March School working group, engaged whole community)

2015

Contribution to sustainable Travel – Team – *Bus Behaviour Project, Bucks Fire & Rescue* (BF&R worked with Cottesloe School to develop project to improve behaviour and safety on buses, offered to all Secondary schools, currently working on project for Primary)

2016

Contribution to National School Travel Awards – *Nicky Batkin, BCC Officer*

Appendix 3: Modeshift Awards

Modeshift STARS – National School Travel Awards for schools

2013

STARS School of the Region – *Cheddington Combined*

2014

STARS School of the Region– *Long Crendon*

2015

STARS Regional Award for promoting walking – *The Downley School*

STARS Regional Award for promoting road safety – *Stoke Mandeville Combined*

2016

STARS School of the Region– *Wendover Junior* (due to attend an Awards event at Houses of Parliament in April 2017)

STARS Regional Award for walking – *Wendover Junior*

STARS Regional Award for effective partnerships – *Haddenham Junior*

STARS Regional Award for reducing car use – *Farnham Common Infant*

STARS Regional Award for promoting road safety – *Longwick CofE Combined*

Link to STARS Case Studies for Schools of the Region

<https://www.modeshiftstars.org/caseStudies.php>

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

