

Notice of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date: Tuesday, 25 November 2025 at 6.00 pm

Venue: HMS Phoebe, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth BH2 6DY

Membership:

Chairman:

Cllr S Carr-Brown

Vice Chairman:

Cllr S Bull

Cllr O Brown
Cllr P Cooper
Cllr D Farr

Cllr E Harman
Cllr B Hitchcock
Cllr S Mackrow

Cllr D Martin
Cllr T Slade
Cllr O Walters

Parent Governor Co-opted Representatives

Diocesan Co-Opted Representatives

Mark Saxby

Youth Parliament Representatives

Ryan Cornish and Elliot Prentice

All Members of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=6094>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Democratic Services on 01202 096660 or email democratic.services@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office by email at press.office@bcpCouncil.gov.uk or tel: 01202 118686

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

AIDAN DUNN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

17 November 2025

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app

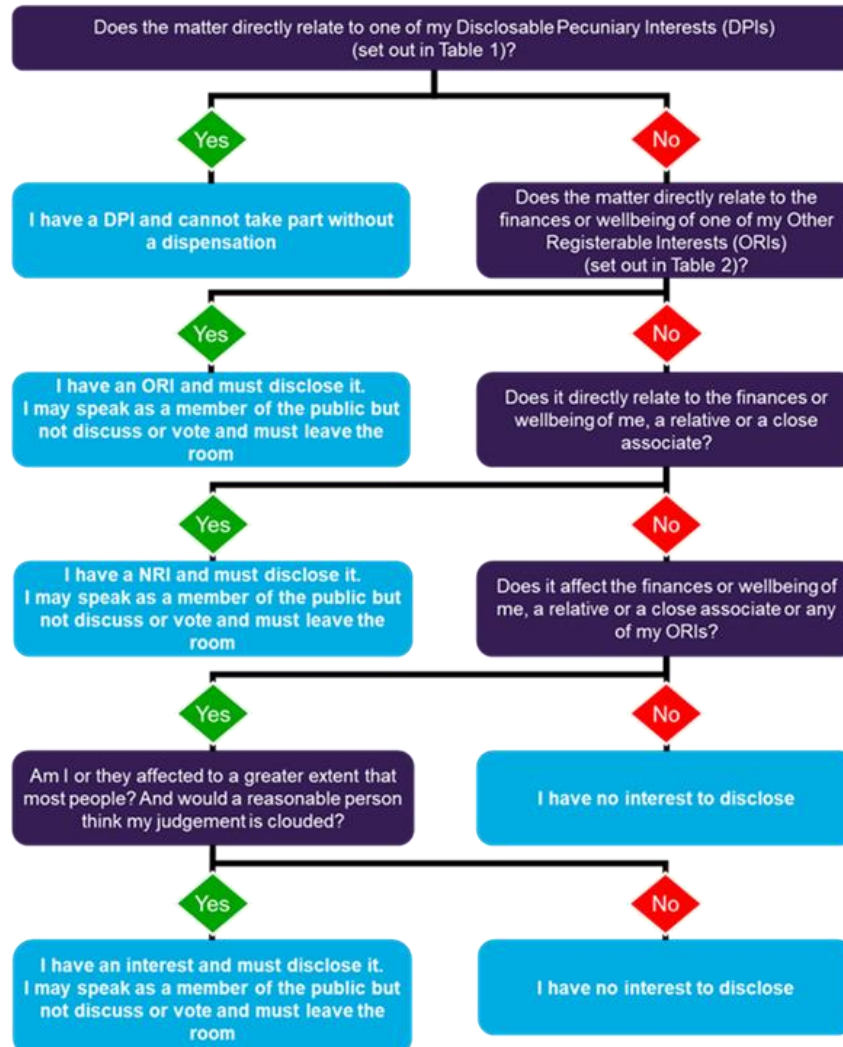


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests



What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.

2. Substitute Members

To receive information on any changes in the membership of the Committee.

Note – When a member of a Committee is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee, the relevant Political Group Leader (or their nominated representative) may, by notice to the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated representative) prior to the meeting, appoint a substitute member from within the same Political Group. The contact details on the front of this agenda should be used for notifications.

3. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

4. Minutes

7 - 20

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 15 September 2025.

a) Action Sheet

21 - 26

To consider any outstanding actions.

5. Public Issues

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution. Further information on the requirements for submitting these is available to view at the following link:-

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/documents/s2305/Public%20Items%20-%20Meeting%20Procedure%20Rules.pdf>

The deadline for the submission of public questions is 3 clear working days before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a statement is midday the working day before the meeting.

The deadline for the submission of a petition is 10 working days before the meeting.

6. Members of Youth Parliament Update

To receive a verbal update from the Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs).

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- | | |
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| <p>7. Verbal update from John Coughlan on SEND improvement Journey
To receive a verbal update from John Coughlan regarding the SEND Improvement Journey.</p> | <p>Verbal Report</p> |
| <p>8. KLOE High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant Expenditure: Benchmarking and Strategic Direction</p> <p>This report responds to a request from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee key line of enquiry to benchmark BCP Council's High Needs Block spend and strategic direction against similar local authorities. The purpose is to better understand the wider context of the Council's High Needs deficit and identify potential strategies for improvement.</p> <p>This report provides a strategic overview of BCP Council's High Needs Block position. It also contains comparative data and insights together with an evaluation of the effectiveness of measures taken to address the accumulated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit.</p> <p>The report aims to support informed decision-making and provide assurance that all reasonable actions are being considered to address the financial challenges within the High Needs Block. improve financial sustainability and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).</p> | <p>27 - 58</p> |
| <p>9. Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions</p> <p>This report provides an analysis of permanent exclusions and suspensions across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP), with a focus on trends over time, comparisons with national and regional data, and the disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Permanent exclusions in BCP have increased significantly in recent years, particularly in secondary and special schools. Pupils with special educational needs (SEND), those eligible for free school meals (FSM), and children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are consistently overrepresented in exclusion data. While national guidance emphasises that exclusions must be lawful, reasonable, and proportionate, BCP's figures indicate that these groups continue to face higher rates of exclusion than their peers.</p> <p>Suspensions have also risen sharply, with BCP's rates exceeding national, Southwest, and statistical neighbour averages across most phases. The number of pupils receiving one or more suspensions has nearly doubled since 2019/20, with the highest rates observed among pupils with EHCPs and those eligible for FSM.</p> <p>This report summarises the policy landscape and national challenges, sets out the council's strategic intent and framework for action and provides benchmarking data for permanent exclusions by phase, SEND status, and FSM eligibility, followed by a focus on suspensions data across the same</p> | <p>59 - 78</p> |

dimensions. The analysis aligns with the ambitions of BCP's Children and Young People's Partnership Plan, which sets out a vision for every child to lead a fulfilling and happy life. Reducing exclusions and improving outcomes for vulnerable learners remains a shared priority across the partnership and this is central to the work we have been doing to develop a BCP Belonging Strategy.

10. Home to School Transport

79 - 148

This report presents the findings of a strategic review undertaken by an external provider into the Local Authority's home to school transport arrangements focussing on our arrangements and provision for children and young people pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The key objective of the review was to identify strategic and operational opportunities that support the development of independent travel options and make improvements to how home-to-school transport is delivered with a focus on potential efficiencies and service improvement.

It identifies key opportunities to introduce travel options that meet individual needs and help prepare young people for adulthood and promote long-term independence. Key issues include the complexity of transport arrangements, market capacity challenges, and the need for improved commissioning models that deliver better outcomes and value for money. The report presents a range of options and opportunities for future delivery and contained details of the investment necessary to achieve cashable savings and cost avoidance.

This report seeks approval to proceed with a formal tendering exercise to commission an external provider to implement a phased delivery of change proposals that encourage independent travel, build independence and reduce journey times for children and young people. The approach will be supportive of young people's development to help young people gain confidence and practical skills for travelling safely on their own will result in making school transport more efficient and sustainable.

Items for Information

11. SEND Sufficiency Strategy

149 - 166

This report provides an overview of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency Strategy 2024-2026. The SEND Sufficiency Strategy is a key part of the Council's work to deliver a sustainable and stable system, working in partnership to ensure that the needs of children and young people are met, without escalating costs, and supporting delivery of the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Recovery Plan. The strategy is based on updated SEND projections presented in this year's annual school capacity return.

Given the scale of our immediate challenge, the SEND Sufficiency Strategy describes the actions we have been taking to respond to pressures in the system over a 2-year period. Details of our progress are contained in this report together with a summary of the key themes and strands of work that will be incorporated in a new refreshed SEND and

Alternative Provision Improvement Plan that is being developed for publication in May 2026.

12. Children's Services Key Performance Indicators Q1 2025-26	167 - 170
This report provides a performance update for the period April – June 2025 (Quarter 1 2025-26) for the key performance indicators relating to Children's Services as detailed in the Corporate Performance Scorecard. It should be noted that these are our amended KPIs and targets for the new financial year. They are based on our previous KPIs and therefore the focus, alignment to corporate priorities and ambitions have not changed. However, minor changes have been made to improve accuracy, clarity and to align with our internal reporting (which is also reviewed annually and set against national comparators whenever possible).	
13. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	171 - 262
This is the annual report of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer on Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) activity within BCP Council. There is a requirement to report on the work of O&S to the O&S Board and Committees and then to Council. This promotes visibility of the O&S function and Council ownership of activity and any improvements required. The annual report contains a summary and analysis of O&S activity during 2024-25, reflections on working practices and identified improvements to strengthen the O&S function. This report version is for consideration by the O&S Board and O&S committees, providing opportunity for comment prior to the supply of the final report to Council. The Council will be the decision maker on any recommendations for change within the report. The final report to Council will be updated to incorporate the views of the O&S Board and Committees on these recommendations.	
14. Children's Services O&S Data Use Toolkit	263 - 280
To adopt the Data Use Toolkit and implement it immediately to strengthen Overview & Scrutiny processes.	
15. Portfolio Holder Update	
To receive a verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People.	
16. Work Plan	281 - 290
The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee is asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.	

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.