

Notice of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date: Tuesday, 27 January 2026 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

Jeremy Payne and Matt Tuddenham

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=6374>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Sinead O'Callaghan on 01202 096660 or email sinead.ocallaghan@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

19 January 2026

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app

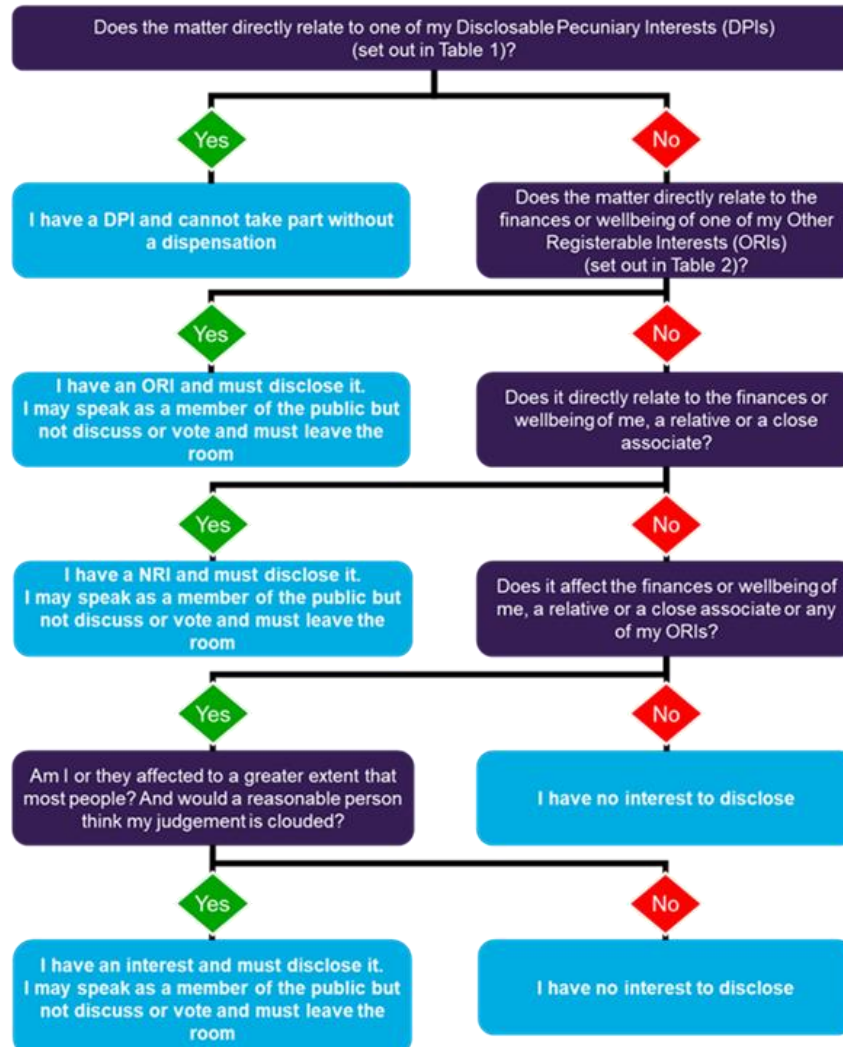


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

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 25 November 2025.

5. Recommendation Tracker

21 - 56

To note the latest updates to the recommendation tracker.

6. 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.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

7. Housing for Care Experienced Young People Update

57 - 86

This report updates the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on arrangements to support Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) as they move toward independent living. It responds to the committee's recommendation in June 2025; that the Committee seeks assurance that the new Joint Housing protocol has been successfully agreed and is working effectively to ensure our Care Experienced Young People are seeing an improved service and are in receipt of timely advice and safe housing that suits their individual needs and hopes for the future.

It evidences the effectiveness of the Joint Housing Protocol review in improving partnership working, reducing homelessness, and ensuring priority access to housing options such as Staying Put, Supported Lodgings, Specialist Supported Housing, and independent accommodation.

Governance has been strengthened through the BCP Youth Homelessness Board, embedding strategic oversight and accountability. Young people's voices have shaped improvements to housing information, pathway clarity, and pre- and post-move support, while specialist and supported housing commissioning continues to provide tailored assistance for those with higher needs.

Support for planning independence is integrated across pathways, with recommissioned services to be focused upon enhancing life skills and resilience. Despite progress, challenges remain due to local housing market pressures and affordability, requiring continued learning from reviews and lived experience alongside implementation of the forthcoming Children's Wellbeing and Skills Bill to secure positive outcomes for CEYP.

8. Invest to Save Budgets in the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

87 - 100

This report responds to the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee's second set of KLOEs on High Needs Block (HNB) "invest-to-save" activity. It distinguishes: (i) initiatives funded from HNB (which impact the in-year position unless offset by savings) and (ii) initiatives funded from the General Fund or external grants (which do not worsen the HNB position but can drive service improvement and future cost avoidance). It summarises delivery to date (including sufficiency expansion and early-years interventions), the emerging impact, the approach to measuring cost avoidance, and the new initiatives now in development.

9. Family Hubs Working Group final report

101 - 106

The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a Family Hubs Working Group to better understand and review progress of the implementation of Family Hubs in BCP.

The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the output of the working group, including suggested recommendations.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

10. Children's Services Capital Strategy Report 2026-2029	107 - 122
<p>This report sets out the Education and Skills Capital Programme for the period 2026/27– 2028/29. The report summarises available capital funding totalling £34.9 million and provides an indicative programme of investment of £33.5 million set against key budget headings aligned to improvement priorities across the service. The planned expenditure of available capital is set out in this report and shows a balanced budget.</p>	
11. School Admissions Arrangements 2027/28	123 - 152
<p>BCP Council is responsible for administering admission arrangements for its community and voluntary controlled schools. There is a legal requirement to determine the arrangements annually as described in the School Admissions Code 2021 and associated legislation.</p> <p>The local authority must also formulate and publish a scheme to coordinate the admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools within their area for the 2027/28 academic year.</p> <p>A public consultation on the proposed 2027/28 admission arrangements was held on from 10 November 2025 until 22 December 2026. The proposed change is a reduction to the Published Admission Number at Burton CE Primary School to reflect the broader trend of fewer families seeking school places in the area due to falling birth rates.</p> <p>It is recommended that the arrangements are determined by council members.</p>	
12. Corporate Performance Report - Q2	153 - 186
<p>BCP Council adopted 'A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28' in May 2024.</p> <p>The shared vision is the corporate strategy which sets out the council's vision, priorities and ambitions as well as the principles which underpin the way the council works as it develops and delivers its services.</p> <p>Incorporated in the vision is a set of measures of progress for achieving the vision, priorities and ambitions.</p> <p>This is the performance monitoring report for Quarter Two 25-26, presenting an update on the progress measures.</p> <p>The council's delivery against its priorities and ambitions can also be monitored through the performance dashboard which is available on the council's website providing up-to-date real time information on the progress measures.</p>	
13. Portfolio Holder Update	
<p>To receive a verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People.</p>	
14. Work Plan	187 - 196

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.

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 November 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Carr-Brown – Chair

Cllr S Bull – Vice-Chair

Present: Cllr O Brown, Cllr D Farr, Cllr E Harman, Cllr B Hitchcock,
Cllr D Martin, Cllr O Walters.

Co-Opted Members: Mark Saxby

Also in attendance: Ryan Cornish and Elliot Prentice

30. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr P Cooper.

It was noted that Cllr T Slade and Cllr S Mackrow attended online.

31. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members on this occasion.

32. Declarations of Interests

Cllr Simon Bull declared an interest in relation to Agenda Item 10 (Home-to-School Transport) as a family member was in receipt of home school transport.

33. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2025 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

34. Action Sheet

The Chair highlighted the action sheet and advised the Committee that closed items would be removed.

35. Public Issues

The following questions and statement were received from Mr Adam Sofianos with the answers from the Portfolio Holder set out in response:

Q1

The Key Lines of Enquiry paper is an important work, and I thank councillors and officers for coordinating it.

It tells, indirectly, the story of SEND, from over-stretched services to under-supported children. And beyond the council experience, the situation is even worse, with many children waiting years to access diagnosis, struggling daily with their mental health, experiencing systematic unmet needs at school, only to be excluded from their community – because they were deprived of the support which they were entitled to under law.

This is a multi-layered crisis, seemingly without end. It falls to councils to try to do the best they can, despite it.

One overriding theme in the Enquiry is: how can the deficit be reduced? Does Council agree that it's just too big to significantly reduce, that service cuts won't deliver it, and that only widescale government intervention can achieve this?

Cllr Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, provided an answer as follows:

Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Adam, for your question.

I would also like to thank you for the recognition and understanding of the situation as demonstrated by your question and agree with most of what you say. I've said most, actually, probably more than most, especially the bit that you said it falls to councils to try to do the best they can.

As always, we remain committed to improving outcomes for children and families with special educational needs and disabilities in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. A recent Department of Education review recognised the significant progress that we've made locally: strengthening our partnership, improving governance and restructuring our SEND service. These steps are laying the foundations for lasting improvement.

But like many councils, the demand for SEND services and the cost of delivering fall outstrip the funding available from central government. This continued lack of government intervention to address the growing Dedicated Schools Grant deficit and the current system that has generated and is perpetuating it is not just a local issue.

It's a national crisis that requires urgent action. Without fair and sustainable funding systems, councils will be forced into impossible decisions, with devastating consequences for children and young people and families across the country.

That is why we are calling on government to act. Every child and young person in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole deserves the support they need to thrive, and that cannot happen without immediate reform to the SEND system backed by a sustainable funding model.

It is also why we commissioned this report to understand why BCP Council is experiencing a high deficit and similar authorities, and to endorse a package of improvement that includes early intervention, strengthened Education, Health and Care Plans oversight, expansion of local provision and improved dispute resolution.

These actions are designed to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND by reducing demand pressures and delivering better value for money by investing in what really makes a difference.

Thank you.

Q2

The data for suspensions and exclusions is heartbreaking. Sanctions here are above the national rate. FSM children are excluded 4 times and suspended 6 times more than other children. Those with SEN support are excluded 6 times more than peers. Children with EHCPs are suspended 8 times more than peers.

The report shows a vastly disproportionate impact on our most vulnerable children. It underlines the urgent need for earlier intervention, faster diagnosis, better awareness of trauma-informed practice, and a culture of inclusion embedded in all settings.

There are schools which already embrace these cultures – such as my local primary Highcliffe St Mark's, which – despite the same funding challenges as others – battles to support and develop vulnerable children. How can the Council use its best examples, to encourage and support improvement across the conurbation?

Cllr Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, provided an answer as follows:

Thank you again, Adam, for your second question.

We recognise the dedication and commitment that our local schools demonstrate every day in supporting our children and young people. We have several networks which allow schools to share best practice across the conurbation, for example Head Teachers, SENCO and Attendance Forum.

We also hold an annual education conference and at the last one, which I attended, a local Head Teacher shared how they enable children to develop a sense of belonging to their school community.

There was also movie input from practitioners from other areas of the country explaining their journey to become a totally inclusive establishment and the impact of a sense of real belonging has on their students. There is more details of this in the KLOE paper that's coming up.

We're also connected to regional and national networks, which ensures we can bring the best practice from across the Southwest and the country to

BCP. We are currently establishing a BCP Education Partnership Board, which will further improve collaboration across the conurbation.

The published suspension exclusion figures are always out of date by the time they have gone through due process and are made publicly available. It'll be interesting to see how they change over the next few years as these practices are enacted.

Q3

The agenda papers don't break down sanctions by school. But the Government's data does. The release of 2023/24 statistics show that 5 schools among 100 in BCP gave half of all permanent exclusions, and 6 schools gave almost half of all suspensions.

One school gave 1,148 suspensions in a schoolyear: the equivalent of 6 suspensions every single schoolday for a year.

In that time I read of local children suspended for having a period panic in class, isolated for having a short haircut, sanctioned for being unable to afford school uniform, and countless SEND children reporting unmet needs. Budgets might be impossibly restrictive, but school cultures shouldn't be. Yet there are few ways to hold schools to account.

Would the Committee consider inviting representatives from some of these schools to a future meeting, to discuss how cultures impact children, especially the most vulnerable?

Cllr Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, provided an answer as follows:

Thank you again, Adam, for your question.

There are several ways in which we support schools in understanding performance and approaches to alternatives, and suspensions and exclusions. These include data sharing and the utilisation of this data to target, support and challenge.

Data sharing also allows for robust discussion through several networks. For example, through the Head Teachers Forum, SENCO's meetings, and targeted attendance meetings. To strengthen challenge further, we are developing an Education Effectiveness Framework and Education Partnership Board.

We need to be careful not to oversimplify these statistics as we have a complex mix of different schools within BCP.

Cllr Carr-Brown, Chair of the Children's Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee also provided an answer as follows:

Thank you for that question, Adam.

I have brought this to the committee. We have had a discussion and of course it's an incredibly important area and issue that you raised. We also

acknowledge the stresses and strains on schools and what they are dealing with and those stresses and strains on parents.

We think that yes, inclusion is obviously a key element of any response that we build towards the central budget recovery, as well as being an intrinsically important issue for every single child in our conurbation. We would like to, in broad terms, seek to understand more about this and hear the views of schools. However, we need to do that within a scrutiny format. We have a committee here that has particular ways of doing things. We have to show that our test and challenge is there for the right reasons and it's carried out in the right way.

So what I'd like to do is take away your proposal, and we will discuss it in terms of our work planning and we will then scope it and see how we can deal with it most appropriately.

Thank you.

Statement from Mr Sofianos:

S1

With the Government's SEND reforms delayed, and services under colossal pressure, children's rights are under threat, and families need your support more than ever.

There are concerns that the Government will spend less money, that children could have less legal protections.

And some in politics are apparently using this moment to attack and delegitimise vulnerable children.

Reform deputy Richard Tice recently claimed there's a "crisis of over-diagnosis" among neurodivergent children.

Reform leader Nigel Farage has claimed Britain is "massively over-diagnosing... mental illness problems" and even claimed neurodivergent children were being diagnosed by GPs over Zoom.

These comments are ill-informed, divisive, destructive, and offensive, and should be condemned.

This is a dark time for vulnerable people. I urge all councillors to support SEND families, to use their voices to support the retention of children's rights, and to take that message to Government itself.

36. Members of Youth Parliament Update

The Member of the Youth Parliament provided an update of all the MYPs recent activities, which included:

- Participation in the House of Commons debate on issues affecting young people, with contributions on unpaid internships and knife crime.
- Appointment to the Youth Select Committee, currently focusing on standardising the PSHE curriculum. Written evidence has been gathered, and oral evidence sessions with organisations and the

Minister for Education are scheduled. A formal report launch is expected in March 2026.

- Delivery of the *Tackling Knife Crime Together* event on 1 October at Oakmedians Rugby Club. The event was attended by Dorset Police (including armed response and dog units), local partners, and pupils from Oak Academy. Activities included interactive sessions and a rugby game aimed at breaking down barriers between young people and the police.
- Engagement with the BCP Youth Forum to gather views on key issues and promote youth participation in decision-making.
- Plans for ongoing collaboration with partners to sustain the impact of recent initiatives and encourage wider participation.

The Member of Youth Parliament responded to questions from the Committee. The Committee commended the energy, commitment, and ability to use the platform to influence change. Members welcomed the update and offered support for future initiatives.

37. Verbal update from John Coughlan on SEND improvement Journey

The Committee agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

38. KLOE High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant Expenditure: Benchmarking and Strategic Direction

The Director of Education and Skills and the Assistant Chief Financial Officer presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

This report responded 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 was to better understand the wider context of the Council's High Needs deficit and identify potential strategies for improvement.

This report provided a strategic overview of BCP Council's High Needs Block position. It also contained comparative data and insights together with an evaluation of the effectiveness of measures taken to address the accumulated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit.

The report aimed to support informed decision-making and provide assurance that all reasonable actions were being considered to address the financial challenges within the High Needs Block, improve financial sustainability and outcomes for children.

The Committee discussed the report, including:

- In a response to a query raised regarding the scale of the High Needs pressures and joint lobbying, the Committee was advised that officers worked with other South West authorities, shared best practice, and used detailed data to strengthen engagement with the Government.
- In response to a query raised regarding anticipated Government policy changes, the Committee was advised that updates were expected in the New Year, with a likely focus on early support systems and multi-agency teams working closer to communities.
- In response to a query raised regarding the commissioning business case, the Committee was advised that the approach aimed to reduce EHCP numbers and reliance on alternative provision, although further work was needed on financial modelling.
- In response to a query raised regarding the engagement with schools and inclusion, the Committee was advised that openness and consistent data sharing were essential, and work was ongoing to secure borough-wide engagement.
- In response to a query raised regarding academy trusts, the Committee was advised that termly meetings with trust Chief Executives provided an opportunity for collaboration.
- In response to a query raised regarding IT systems, the Committee was advised that the SEND Dorset Intelligence and Insight Service supported early notifications and that the Synergy education management system was in place.
- The Committee was advised that AI tools are being used to assist with drafting EHCPs and refining content, but they do not replace practitioner input. It was noted that other local authorities are already using branded solutions for this purpose.
- In response to a query raised regarding post-16 provision, the Committee was advised that bespoke provision had been established urgently to meet immediate need, and steps were being taken to strengthen engagement with schools.
- The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People advised the Committee that early intervention and multi-agency working were critical to addressing demand pressures and noted ongoing collaboration with other local authorities to share best practice.

RESOLVED that the Committee used the information in the report to support informed decision-making about the measures and actions necessary to improve financial sustainability. The Committee endorsed a strategic package of improvement that included early intervention, strengthened Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) oversight, expansion of local provision, and improved dispute resolution. These actions were designed to reduce demand pressures, deliver better value for money, and align with an emerging High Needs Block Recovery Plan. The approach demonstrated that the Council was actively pursuing reasonable, evidence-based strategies to address the High Needs Block deficit while improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Voting: Nem. Con.

It was agreed that the Committee delegated to the Chair to work with officers to scope further work on this matter and to share the proposed scope with the Committee for agreement.

39. Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions

The Head of Inclusion, Places and Capital presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

This report provided 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.

Permanent exclusions in BCP had 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) were consistently overrepresented in exclusion data. While national guidance emphasised that exclusions must be lawful, reasonable, and proportionate, BCP's figures indicated that these groups continued to face higher rates of exclusion than their peers.

Suspensions had 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 had nearly doubled since 2019/20, with the highest rates observed among pupils with EHCPs and those eligible for FSM.

This report summarised the policy landscape and national challenges, set out the council's strategic intent and framework for action and provided benchmarking data for permanent exclusions by phase, SEND status, and FSM eligibility, followed by a focus on suspensions data across the same dimensions. The analysis aligned with the ambitions of BCP's Children and Young People's Partnership Plan, which set out a vision for every child to lead a fulfilling and happy life. Reducing exclusions and improving outcomes for vulnerable learners remained a shared priority across the partnership and this was central to the work we had been doing to develop a BCP Belonging Strategy.

The Committee discussed the report, including:

- In response to a query raised regarding the impact of current work on exclusion numbers, the Committee was advised that while progress was being made, improvements would take time, with some early signs seen in attendance.

- In response to a query raised regarding consistency of engagement with schools and SENDCOs, the Committee was advised that work was ongoing to ensure a consistent approach and that the SENDCO forum was supported by senior officers. The next stage would include developing a toolkit to strengthen SENDCO confidence.
- In response to a query raised regarding isolation practices, the Committee was advised that schools were required to monitor isolation internally under DfE guidance but were not obliged to report this to the local authority, although it may be reviewed during Ofsted inspections.
- In response to a query raised regarding the three-tier alternative provision model, the Committee was advised that this was being developed to ensure appropriate use of AP and avoid overreliance, with a focus on quality and nurture-based provision.
- The Committee was advised that while there had been an increase in exclusions in special schools, this related to a very small number of pupils within a small cohort.
- In response to a query raised regarding the role of academy trusts, the Committee was advised that termly meetings with trust Chief Executives provided opportunities to strengthen collaboration and improve consistency.
- The Committee noted the importance of building trust and improving relationships across an evolving education system to support inclusion and reduce exclusions.
- The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People advised the Committee that consistent engagement with schools and SENDCOs was essential, alongside developing the three-tier alternative provision model to ensure appropriate use and avoid overreliance.

RESOLVED that the Committee agreed to make Cabinet aware that the Committee appreciates the detrimental impact of school exclusions, which were highlighted in the report, and recognises the work that is underway to address this. The Committee agreed that through this work the council's primary focus is improved outcomes for the children of BCP but that this work will also likely bring budgetary savings such as:

- **A reduction in exclusions and associated costs (e.g. transport, AP placements, tribunal processes)**
- **Improved outcomes for vulnerable pupils, reducing future demand on social care, youth justice, and post-16 support service**
- **A reduction in the need for unregistered and costly AP as more needs are met by schools**

Voting: Nem. Con.

40. Home to School Transport

The Head of Inclusion, Places and Capital presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

This report presented 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 supported the development of independent travel options and made improvements to how home-to-school transport was delivered with a focus on potential efficiencies and service improvement.

It identified key opportunities to introduce travel options that met individual needs and helped prepare young people for adulthood and promote long-term independence. Key issues included the complexity of transport arrangements, market capacity challenges, and the need for improved commissioning models that delivered better outcomes and value for money. The report presented 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 sought approval to proceed with a formal tendering exercise to commission an external provider to implement a phased delivery of change proposals that encouraged independent travel, built independence and reduced journey times for children and young people. The approach was supportive of young people's development to help young people gain confidence and practical skills for travelling safely on their own and would result in making school transport more efficient and sustainable.

The Committee discussed the report, including:

- In response to a query raised regarding the rationale for commissioning an external provider, the Committee was advised that specialist expertise was required to deliver independent travel training at scale and ensure best practice.
- In response to a query raised regarding the financial implications, the Committee was advised that the proposed investment was expected to deliver significant long-term savings and improve outcomes for young people.
- In response to a query raised regarding the impact on families, the Committee was advised that engagement and communication would be prioritised to ensure changes were introduced gradually and with appropriate support.
- In response to a query raised regarding safeguarding and risk management, the Committee was advised that robust processes would be in place to ensure pupil safety during independent travel training.

- Members queried why an external provider was preferred over an in-house solution. The Committee was advised that the external approach would bring specialist skills, deliver a phased programme at pace, and leave a legacy by upskilling staff, whereas an in-house model would take longer and lack the necessary infrastructure.
- The Committee discussed the three-year phased delivery plan and noted that the proposals represented a package of measures, including route optimisation, commissioning changes, and independent travel training, rather than a single intervention.
- Members raised concerns about balancing efficiency with child welfare and were reassured that route optimisation would be interactive and responsive to individual needs, ensuring journey times remained within statutory limits and that children arrived ready to learn.
- In response to a query raised regarding safe pick-up points and clustering, the Committee was advised that any changes would be carefully assessed to ensure suitability for vulnerable children and that flexibility would remain where individual needs required bespoke arrangements.
- The Committee was advised that future-proofing systems, including investment in route optimisation technology and performance dashboards, would support ongoing efficiency and monitoring.
- The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People advised the Committee that the proposed approach aligned with the Council's commitment to improving independence for young people and delivering sustainable transport solutions.

Following a request from a Committee member to ask a question relating to the exempt appendix to this report, it was Proposed, Seconded and agreed to exclude the public and press at this point:

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs such interest in disclosing the information.

The Committee continued to discuss the report.

The Committee then resumed in public session.

RESOLVED that the Committee agreed to endorse the recommendation within the report to Cabinet to tender an external provider to deliver a transformation project over three years at a total cost of £1.5 million, funded by the flexible use of capital receipts, to deliver service improvements and, by the end of the project, ongoing savings in SEND school transport projected at £3 million (net of additional resource requirement).

Voting:

For:8

Against:0

Abstentions:1

41. SEND Sufficiency Strategy

The report was circulated for information only with no discussion in Committee and provided an update on the SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

42. Children's Services Key Performance Indicators Q1 2025-26

The report was circulated for information only with no discussion in Committee and provided Children's Services Key Performance Indicators for Q1 2025-26.

43. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

The report was circulated for information only with no discussion in Committee.

44. Children's Services O&S Data Use Toolkit

The report was circulated for information only with no discussion in Committee.

45. Portfolio Holder Update

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People provided an update which included:

- A follow-up on a question raised at the previous meeting regarding the proportion of Alternative Provision delivered online. The Committee was advised that this data is still not available due to limitations in the current case management system. The issue has been escalated to the system supplier, and alternative options will be explored, including the planned transition to Synergy next year.
- Confirmation that the Ofsted/CQC SEND inspection took place between 3 and 21 November. The Portfolio Holder thanked all staff, partners, and families involved. Initial feedback was positive, and the draft report is expected on 5 December, with publication anticipated around Christmas.
- Details of recent visits, including Court Hill Primary School, Merley First School, Bearwood Primary School, Avonwood Primary School, Bethany CE Junior School, and events such as the Youth Homelessness Action Planning Workshop, Dingley's Promise Poole site opening, Oak Academy new building opening, Foster Carer Awards, STAR Awards for care-experienced young people, and the opening of Linwood Post-16 Skills Centre.
- Upcoming Cabinet items: Home-to-School Transport and Youth Justice Service Plan, and Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Expenditure Forecast scheduled for 17 December.

46. Work Plan

The Committee noted the work plan in its current form.

The Overview and Scrutiny Specialist advised that annual work programming would be undertaken with the Committee in the new year. It was also highlighted that the Data Toolkit, listed earlier under the information items, was intended for adoption by the Committee. Members confirmed their agreement to adopt the toolkit.

It was explained that the toolkit would be incorporated into the work programme as a link and would provide a self-serve resource to enable easier access to data.

The Chair confirmed that work programming had not been forgotten and would be addressed in the new year.

The meeting ended at 9.33 pm

CHAIR

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RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS TRACKER – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY FUNCTION

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

UPDATED: [14.01.2026]

Minute number	Item	Recommendation made <small>*items remain for monitoring until implementation is complete or committee agree to remove.</small>	Recommended to <small>*name of receiving body/ Officer, and date received</small>	Outcome <small>*accepted/ partially accepted/ rejected/ unknown.</small>	Implementation updates
Recommendations from Board meeting – 13 May 2024					
9.	A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28 Strategy and Delivery Plan	<p>RESOLVED that the Board support the recommendations to Cabinet, subject to the suggested amendments from the Board:</p> <p>(a) The delivery plan be approved (b) The measures for monitoring progress and ensuring accountability for delivery be agreed.</p> <p>Note – minor amendments to the measures contained in the report were suggested by the O&S Board and captured in the full minutes of the meeting.</p>	Cabinet - 22 May 2024	Accepted	The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the amendments suggested at O&S Board had been incorporated into the revised version of the Strategy and Delivery Plan supplied for decision by Cabinet.
Recommendations from Board meeting – 16 July 2024 – No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Board meeting – 27 August 2024 – No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Board meeting – 23 September 2024 – No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Board meeting – 1 October 2024 – No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Board meeting – 21 October 2024					

60.	Blue Badge Service Update Report	<p>The Board resolved that:</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder/Leader and the Chief Executive be asked to write to the Department for Transport to raise the concerns outlined by the O&S Board and that the Portfolio Holder take the issue forward with local MPs and the Local Government Association to encourage local authorities to raise these issues with the Department for Transport and request that central government gives local authorities the freedom to set fees which cover the cost of administering the system and that the system should be simplified in terms of renewal processes.</p>	Portfolio Holder/Leader/ Chief Executive	Partially accepted by the Portfolio Holder	<p>The Portfolio Holder confirmed that they had written to the Department for Transport and provided the response received to the O&S Board at its meeting on 12 May.</p> <p>It was unknown if this had been raised directly with the LGA and at the O&S Board meeting on 12 May the Portfolio Holder undertook to follow up on this.</p>
Recommendations from Board meeting – 18 November 2024					
69.	O&S Budget Working Groups – findings and recommendations	<p>Recommended to Cabinet</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the principle of an inflationary increase across all parking charges be endorsed for the 2025/26 budget. 2. That it requests Officers to take into account the suggestion that an assessment be made on using a proportion of surplus income to accelerate the parking charging machine replacement programme prioritising the best value machines in order to reduce future costs (subject to the necessary procurement processes). 3. That Officers be requested to explore options to reduce costs for the Council and make the process easier for the public to pay for car parking, in particular an option to be able to pay in advance/on Council website. 	Cabinet – 10 December 2024	Partially accepted	<p>Responses provided to the Cabinet meeting on 5 February</p> <p>://ced-pri-cms-02.ced.local/documents/s55921/Appendix%203a%20-%20Portfolio%20Holder%20Responses%20to%20Budget%20Scrutiny.pdf</p>
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That it requests that Officers evaluate the retention and recruitment of Civil Enforcement Officers to ensure a robust and resilient workforce to provide an appropriate level of resource and promote safe and appropriate parking. 2. That Officers be requested to ensure adequate resourcing of parking enforcement to reduce inappropriate parking around schools. 	Cabinet – 10 December 2024	Accepted	<p>Response from Portfolio Holder received at the O&S Board meeting on 3 February 2025 :</p> <p>http://ced-pri-cms-02.ced.local/documents/s55808/responses%20from%20Cabinet.pdf</p>

		<p>The O&S Board recommend to Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That any Resident Card offering is made fully accessible to all those who are not digitally enabled. 2. That there should be an application process for the card with a small financial contribution for the cost of processing and that the card should be a valuable offer that residents are willing to pay a small cost for, so that it can be sustainable in terms of administrative costs. 3. That any charge levied for the card should be the same regardless of the format and that consideration should be given to concessions for disadvantaged groups. 	Cabinet – 10 December 2024	Partially accepted	<p>Responses provided to the Cabinet meeting on 5 February</p> <p>://ced-pri-cms-02.ced.local/documents/s55921/Appendix%20a%20-%20Portfolio%20Holder%20Responses%20to%20Budget%20Scrutiny.pdf</p> <p>Response from Portfolio Holder received at the O&S Board meeting on 3 February 2025 :</p> <p>http://ced-pri-cms-02.ced.local/documents/s55808/responses%20from%20Cabinet.pdf</p> <p>Note: the residents card offer did not progress as part of the budget</p>
Recommendations from Board meeting – 9 December 2024					
23 78	Pay and Reward Progress Update	RESOLVED that Cabinet be recommended to approve option 2 of the proposed process flowchart (Appendix 1 of the report) and the commencement of collective consultation under s188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 ('TULRCA'), which is a statutory obligation where an employer is proposing to dismiss 20 or more employees.	Cabinet - 10 December 2024	Accepted	Negotiations with the pay and reward progress have continued and a new offer had been made to the unions. A ballot was now taking place with the recognised trade unions and an outcome was expected by the end of June 2025. This report was brought to O&S Board and Cabinet

79	Housing Delivery Council Newbuild Housing and Acquisition Strategy (CNHAS) update and Harbour Sail acquisition	RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend that Cabinet support the recommendations as set out in the Cabinet report: Housing Delivery Council Newbuild Housing and Acquisition Strategy CNHAS update and Harbour Sail a.pdf	Cabinet - 10 December 2024	Accepted	The recommendation from Cabinet has not been put before Council because the purchase of Harbour Sail has not proceeded. This was due to timing of the purchase which affected the ability to use the grant for the purchase (which without this grant the scheme was no longer financially viable) and that title restrictions could not be altered to allow flexibility of tenure that was required. The grant has been reallocated to other property acquisitions.
81	BCP Council Libraries – Update on Library Strategy Development	RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend that Cabinet support the recommendations as set out in the Cabinet report: BCP Council Libraries Update on Library Strategy Development.pdf	Cabinet - 10 December 2024	Accepted	The Library strategy is expected to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and Cabinet in August and September 2025
Recommendations from Board meeting – 6 January 2025					
90	Devolution	Recommended to the Leader that: a: The Leader arranges an emergency Full Council Meeting at the earliest opportunity to enable a vote of ALL of the available options b: An evidence-based piece of work be undertaken on the pros and cons of a devolution arrangement with both the Solent deal AND Wessex deal, including exploring a public referendum for BCP residents.	Leader of the Council	Partially accepted	Full Council meeting was arranged for 15 January 2025. The Council meeting considered the options of both the Solent deal and the Wessex deal, further information was brought to the Council meeting and Council voted to participate in the priority programme and to move forward with the Wessex proposal.
Recommendations from Board meeting – 13 January 2025 – No recommendations made at this meeting					
Recommendations from Board meeting – 3 February 2025					

106.	Council Budget Monitoring 2024/25 at Quarter 3	RESOLVED that the O&S Board recommend to the Audit and Governance Committee that it instigate an investigation on the Carters Quay development.	Audit and Governance Committee 27 February 2025	Accepted	Update provided to the A&G Committee at its meeting on 29 May. Chief Executive agreed that a report of the governance and process could be produced for the 24 July. It was also agreed to circulate by email the updated provided by the Director, Investment and Development together with the advice previously provided by the Monitoring Officer. Carters Quay - Update.pdf A further report will be take to Cabinet
Recommendations from Board meeting – 4 March 2025					
115.	Community Governance Review – Draft Recommendations	RESOLVED: that the O&S Board Recommend to Cabinet that the draft recommendations of the Task and Finish Group relating to proposals for Burton and Winkton (A), Hum (B), Highcliffe & Walkford (C) and Christchurch Town (D) be recommended to Council, for approval for publication and consultation, without amendment.	Cabinet date – 5 March 2025	Accepted	Consultation progressed with these proposals. The Consultation closed 22 June 2025. The Working group are processing the outcome of the consultation and a report will be brought back to the October Cabinet meeting.
		RESOLVED: That the O&S Board recommend to Cabinet that the draft recommendations of the Task and Finish Group relating to Broadstone (F) and Poole Town (J) be recommended to Council, for approval for publication and consultation, without amendment.		Accepted	
		RESOLVED that the Board recommend to Cabinet that that the recommendation for Bournemouth (K) not be forwarded to Council.		Rejected	Cabinet felt that it was important to consult on all areas including (k) Bournemouth Town and therefore supported the recommendations as set out by the task and finish group and did not support recommendation 3 as submitted by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

		RESOLVED that the Board recommend to Cabinet that the draft recommendations of the Task and Finish Group relating to Southbourne (I)) be recommended to Council, for approval for publication and consultation, without amendment.		Accepted	
		RESOLVED that the O&S Board recommend to Cabinet that the draft recommendations of the Task and Finish Group relating to Boscombe and Pokesdown (H) be recommended to Council, for approval for publication and consultation, without amendment.		Accepted	
		RESOVLED that the O&S Board recommend to Cabinet that the draft recommendations of the Task and Finish Group relating to Throop and Holdenhurst (E) be recommended to Council, for approval for publication and consultation, without amendment.		Accepted	
		RESOLVED that the O&S Board recommend to Cabinet that the draft recommendations of the Task and Finish Group relating to Redhill and Northbourne (G) be recommended to Council, for approval for publication and consultation, without amendment		Accepted	

116.	Bournemouth Development Company LLP Business Plan	RESOLVED that the O&S Board recommend to Cabinet that a decision to extend the Winter Gardens site 'Option Execution Date' is deferred by Cabinet until the new BDC Partnerships Business Plan has been approved by Cabinet.	Cabinet – 5 March 2025	Rejected	The Cabinet did amend a recommendation as follows: Agrees the principle of an extension of the Winter Gardens site "Option Execution Date", with details to be agreed to be delegated to the Chief Operations Officer acting in consultation with the Leader of the Council, or until Cabinet have had the opportunity to review a revised partnership business plan including the site development plan for the revised Winter Gardens scheme." It was not able to agree a deferment of this decision as this would stop progress on the Winter Gardens development.
117.	Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	RESOLVED That the Board recommended to Cabinet: 1. That the spending priorities for Strategic CIL as set out in Option 2 of the paper over the period 2024/25 to 2029/30 be agreed provided CIL income is as forecast; and 2. That the report be updated annually for Cabinet and Council.	Cabinet – 5 March 2025	Accepted	Accepted by Cabinet and spending priorities agreed for 2024/25 to 2029/30 for CIL.
Recommendations from Board meeting – 12 May 2025					
11.	Blue Badge Update	The Chair requested that the matter also be raised with the Local Government Association particularly regarding the cost of administering the Blue Badge scheme and the limitations of the current data system	Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customer, Communication and Culture	Unknown	Update on this issue awaited – no deadline date

12.	Arts and Culture Funding	<p>Recommended to Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the O&S Board recognise the value of the NPOs funded by BCP to Health and well-being youth and the local economy and urge Cabinet to protect the funding BCP currently provides. 2. That Cabinet endorse the work that's been done with schools by the NPOs and recommends that Cabinet take action to encourage all schools to take part. 3. To explore whether it would be a benefit for a Councillor to be appointed as a member of the Board on any or all of the NPO organisations, and 4. That it ensures that the arts by sea festival goes ahead next year. 	Cabinet – 13 May 2025	Accepted	<p>1: The cultural funding remains in the MTFP so there is no change in that position as of the moment.</p> <p>2: The Portfolio Holder is working with the Cultural Hub to encourage this.</p> <p>3: The Portfolio Holder has spoken to the NPO and they respectfully suggested that this would not be helpful. The Portfolio Holder agreed with this especially as they would likely be a PH and the Portfolio Holder already had very close links with all of them.</p> <p>4: We are planning for ABTS next year and awaiting funding news from ACE.</p>
Recommendations from Board meeting – 9 June 2025					
22.	Bournemouth Air Festival	The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed with the recommendation that Cabinet agrees to Option 4 as set out in the report, which acknowledges the ongoing process for new events to come forward and stops any further work on an Air Festival for 2026 onwards.	Cabinet – 18 June 2025	Accepted	Recommendation accepted and confirmed that further work on the Air Festival for 2026 had been discontinued.
23.	Bournemouth Development Company - Winter Gardens Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Overview and Scrutiny Board supported the following recommendations to Cabinet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (c) Cabinet approves the BDC Partnership Business Plan for 2025 – 2030. (c) Cabinet confirms the extension of the Site Option Execution Date to September 2028, allowing Muse as the Private Sector Partner in the BDC to fund the first stage of work on the new Winter Gardens scheme, resulting in a new Site Development Plan. (c) Cabinet approves proceeding on the understanding that public parking will not be included in a new scheme design. 2. The Overview and Scrutiny Board welcomed the development of the Town Centre Vision for Bournemouth and requested to scrutinise the regeneration visions for the 3 Towns in the BCP Area as these are redeveloped. 	Cabinet – 18 June 2025	Accepted	The development plans are due to come forward for consideration in December 2025 and it was proposed by the Leader that these would go to full Council.

		<p>3. The Overview and Scrutiny Board welcomed the development of the Town Centre Vision for Bournemouth and requested to scrutinise the regeneration visions for the 3 Towns in the BCP Area as these are redeveloped.</p>		Accepted – update provided	<p>We are developing the narrative across the three towns identifying key strengths and uniqueness to build upon the vision set out in the Corporate Strategy : vibrant places, where healthy people and nature flourish, with a thriving economy in a healthy natural environment. To support this we've made good progress by the establishment of a Citizen's Panel and the Growth Board. The Citizen's Panel comprises of residents with a focus on the town centre which is helping to provide insight into how residents feel and engage within the space. The Growth Board is a newly established steering group which is comprised of representatives from key sectors within the BCP conurbation including Business Improvement District, education, manufacturing, Starts up and the volunteering sector. These perspectives are helping to shape our vision for BCP as a place which can thrive, for residents to feel civic pride and a destination for visitors to enjoy. The conversation at the O&S focussed on how Winter Gardens fits into the wider context of the Town Centre and committee members asked for that to form part of any proposals from BDC. There is an existing Town Centre Vision which forms part of the Local Plan, and the intention is for BDC to review this to support a future planning application, ensuring it reflects the nature of the development proposals in the absence of a formal planning policy framework.</p>
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24.	Leisure Services Presentation and Discussion	The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommended that Cabinet be urged to put in place an "Access to Leisure" scheme across the whole BCP area as soon as possible, recognising that people in Poole have lost this facility and with particular emphasis on ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities	Cabinet – 18 June 2025	Accepted – update from Portfolio Holder Provided	The Portfolio holder has asked that officers explore options around a renewed access to leisure facility and bring forward options, including but not limited to; how that would be managed, financial implications, and meeting the recommendation as requested by the Overview and scrutiny board.
Recommendations from Board meeting – 15 July 2025					
31.	Enhancement to Pay and Reward Offer	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Board supported the following recommendations to Council within the Cabinet report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Agree the additional costs associated with enhancing the proposed Pay and Reward offer. b) Agree the additional savings proposals outlined in Appendix 1 to ensure the cost implications of the proposal remain consistent with the February 2025 endorsed Medium Term Financial Plan. c) Agrees the details of the enhanced offer shown in Appendix 4 and 5 that will form the basis of the signed collective agreement with our recognised trade unions. d) Approves the recommended implementation date of 1 December 2025. 	Cabinet – 16 July	Accepted	Agreed by Council on 22 July 2025. Work underway to achieve implementation for December 2025.
32.	Scrutiny of Budget Related Cabinet reports – MTFP update report	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Board endorsed the work of Members and Officers around SEND as set out in recommendation C of the report as follows:</p> <p>In respect of the SEND deficit, note the update and acknowledges the action taken by the Leader and the Director of Finance</p>	Cabinet - 16 July	Accepted	
Recommendations from Board meeting - 22 September 2025					
39.	Residents Card	RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board do not support the recommendation as outlined in the report as the Board did not feel that the Cabinet report included sufficient financial details and details of the scheme offers to enable it to make an informed decision. The Board recommend to Cabinet that the report is deferred to allow details of	Cabinet – 1 October	Rejected	Updates were made to the report and the recommendation prior to consideration by Cabinet.

		the financial modelling that has been done to be added, including a cost/benefit analysis and a sensitivity analysis. Once this additional information is included in the report, it should then be brought back to the O&S Board before being taken to Cabinet for decision.			
Recommendations from Board meeting – 30 September 2025					
47.	Community Governance Review – Final Recommendations	All Recommendations as set out within the Cabinet report were supported by the Board: (a) the Task and Finish Group community governance review final recommendations, as set out in paragraphs 49, 62, 74, 92, 104, 117, 128, 140, 152, 166 and 181 of this report be approved; (b) the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make all necessary reorganisation of community governance orders to implement the changes agreed by Council; (c) the Task and Finish Group continue to consider the transfer of civic and ceremonial assets, statutory services and precept requirements for year 1, for each new parish, on the basis of minimal transfer and precept, and a report be presented to full Council in due course.	Cabinet – 1 October	Accepted	The recommendations of Cabinet were referred to Council on 14 October. The Recommendations of Cabinet were agreed by full Council
Recommendations from Board meeting - 20 October 2025					
56.	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update	The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that as part of the Budget setting process. consideration be given to utilising receipts from the existing surplus asset disposal programme for 2026/27 to address some of the repairs and maintenance of publicly facing assets.	Cabinet – 29 October	Unknown	Recommendations reported – response awaited from Cabinet Deadline for response 29 December 2025
57.	BCP Council Libraries Draft Library Strategy	1. The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that as part of the Library Strategy it looks to maintain staffed hours in libraries, especially in the afternoon period, as open access is rolled out further in the future. 2. The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that the Library Service put together a list of smaller neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Bids to put to Councillors and Neighbourhood Forums immediately upon the opening of future CIL rounds.	Cabinet - 29 October	Unknown	Recommendations reported – response awaited from Cabinet Deadline for response 29 December 2025.

		3. That the O&S Board support the recommendations as set out in the Cabinet report.			
Recommendations from Board – 17 November 2025 – No recommendations made at this meeting					
Recommendations from Board – 8 December 2025					
79.	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update	RESOLVED that the O&S Board advise Cabinet of its support for all recommendations as outlined in the Cabinet report.	Cabinet – 17 December	Accepted	Cabinet noted the support for the recommendations within the report.
Recommendations from Board – 5 January 2026					
87.	Regeneration Progress Report	That the Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that, to enable effective lobbying of Government in the future, the draft of the BCP Growth Plan be shared with O&S Board Members when available and that Overview and Scrutiny be embedded in the plan's development and approval process.	Cabinet – 14 January	Accepted	Extract from Cabinet minutes: The Leader thanked Councillor Salmon and the Board for bringing their recommendation to Cabinet and advised that she was minded to accept the recommendation and that a formal response would be provided to the Board.

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Minute number	Item	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Benefit	Updates
Actions from Board meeting – 12 May 2025				
10.	BCP Complaints Policy	RESOLVED that the Board further examine the role of councillors in the complaints process, particularly in relation to ward issues and casework.	To ensure the effectiveness of both the Councils complaints process and work of Ward Councillors	Work underway - Cllr S Aitkenhead as rapporteur
Actions from Board meeting – 22 September 2025				
38.	Commercial Operations	Portfolio Holder to provide an update on the current situation in 6 months-time with a view to scheduling further scrutiny when appropriate.	To monitor and receive updates on this area of the Council	Update due to the Board in March.
Actions from Board meeting – 20 October 2025				
57.	BCP Council Library – Draft Library Strategy	A potential item be included on the O&S work programme on a review of income generation opportunities within the library service, including commercialisation options and partnership models.	TBC	
Actions from Board meeting – 5 January 2026				
87.	Regeneration Progress Report	That a small group be convened including Cllrs J Beesley, P Canavan and K Salmon to scope draft Key Lines of Enquiry on a number of the issues raised for future scrutiny in preparation of the O&S Work Programming process.	To ensure that the issues raised are given due consideration and ensure that the work planning process can continue.	

ENVIRONEMENT AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

UPDATED: 14.01.26

Minute number	Item	Recommendation made *items remain for monitoring until implementation is complete or committee agree to remove.	Recommended to *name of receiving body/ Officer, and date received	Outcome *accepted/ partially accepted/ rejected/ unknown.	Implementation updates
Recommendations from Committee – 15 May 2024					
8	Improvement of the environment in Poole Park through a trial closure of a park entrance to motor traffic	Cabinet refer the matter to Full Council for decision.	Cabinet, 22 May 2024	Rejected	<p>Extract from Cabinet minutes:</p> <p>'Cabinet members questioned the benefit of taking the report to full council for further debate and felt that the decision should be made.'</p> <p>Decision made: RESOLVED that Cabinet: - (a) Agrees that the current trial closure, of the Whitecliff entrance and exit point to motor vehicles, is made permanent in Poole Park. (b) Agrees that current arrangements are retained, and motor vehicles can still access Poole Park and its facilities.'</p>
Recommendations from Committee – 11 September 2024					
15	Plant-based and reduced meat and dairy diets: discussion paper	<p>RESOLVED that</p> <p>a. the Environment & Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the information presented in the discussion paper and gave their views on possible approaches Cabinet may wish to take in relation to the promotion of plant-based and reduced meat and dairy diets. These proposals will then be subject to further evidence-gathering and consultation.</p> <p>b. To support the treaty and do more work outside the committee on the position statement.</p> <p>c. The draft position statement be brought back to the Committee for further consideration with information</p>	Portfolio Holder and Officers	Accepted	A revised position statement with measurable objectives was returned to the committee for further scrutiny in October 2025.

		about how it can be measured against SMART objectives in order for the Council to be more ambitious and positive on this issue			
Recommendations from Committee – 20 November 2024 – No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Committee – 26 February 2025					
38	Climate Action Annual Report 2023/24	RESOLVED that a) The Committee propose to the Portfolio Holder that on the front page of the BCP Greenhouse Gas Emissions Dashboard an additional box is added to highlight the context of any carbon reduction relevant to the annual carbon reduction target b) Embedded carbon cost to be included in the calculation and displayed on the dashboard where available.	Portfolio Holder	Unknown - seek update	
39	Housing Strategy Review	RESOLVED that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet that that the Housing Strategy Steering Group be comprised of one member from each political group and one unaligned member.	Cabinet, 2 April 2025	Accepted	<p>Extract from Cabinet minutes:</p> <p>‘The Portfolio Holder thanked the Environment and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their thorough debate at the Committee and expressed support for their recommendation.’</p> <p>Decision made: RESOLVED that Cabinet: - (a) Approved the Revised Housing Strategy Delivery Plan at appendix B; (b) Approved the extension of the current Housing Strategy Period to 2027; (c) Approved the governance structure as set out in paragraphs 7-11 of the report; and (d) Approved that the steering group being formed be made up of 1 member of each Political group and 1 unaligned member.</p>
Recommendations from Committee – 2 April 2025					
49	Recommendations from the Safer	Recommendations to Cabinet	Cabinet date, 26 November 25	Unknown	Awaiting response from Portfolio Holder

	Accommodation Strategy Working Group	<p>1. That as part of the Safe Accommodation Strategy development, officers consider an awareness campaign and/or guidance materials on the different types of financial support that are available to support those fleeing domestic abuse, in particular in relation to different types of housing tenure (e.g. shared tenancies, joint mortgages), in order to break down a significant barrier to survivors accessing support to end their abuse.</p> <p>2. That the engagement plan for the Safe Accommodation Strategy should ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are heard and reflected within the Strategy.</p> <p>3. That an all councillor briefing session be added to the Safe Accommodation Strategy engagement plan, to ensure members are adequately informed about the strategy and able to contribute views, and to enable them to fulfil their role within the community by communicating the benefits of the Safe Accommodation Strategy to residents.</p> <p>4. a) that the provision of safe accommodation and associated commissioning process be reviewed, b) that scrutiny members be invited to review and input into this review, prior to the commencement of commissioning, through an additional meeting of this working group.</p> <p>5. That the use of temporary accommodation be continuously reviewed and specific KPIs be established for monitoring the success of the new safe accommodation model, including occupancy rates, length of stay, outcomes for survivors (e.g., successful move-on to permanent housing), and survivor satisfaction. These KPIs should be reviewed regularly by the relevant scrutiny committee to ensure accountability and transparency.</p> <p>6. That Cabinet, with the support of the council's Corporate Management Board, be requested to take a</p>			
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		view on forthcoming decisions that may be of significant or contentious public impact, regardless of decision-making thresholds, and an all councillor briefing be held before any such decisions are made, to enable all councillors, and particularly ward councillors, to be properly informed.			
Recommendations from Committee – 14 May 2025 – No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Committee – 9 July 2025					
17	Local Area Energy Plan	It is RECOMMENDED that: 1) The recommendation as outlined in the report be approved by Cabinet. 2) Cabinet add as an external stakeholder, the community to be represented in all stakeholder engagement, including any panels, meetings or focus groups.	Cabinet	Partially accepted	Cabinet approved the recommendations in the report and so accepted recommendation 1 from O&S. Cabinet were silent on recommendation 2 from O&S – seek an update.
18	Email and Document Storage Retention – Impact Analysis on Costs and Environmental Factors & Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED to cabinet that: as per Option (B), the Committee supports the continuation of activity already underway, as part of the Councils Data and Innovation Programme, to re-assess and profile Microsoft 365 end-user licensing requirements, moving colleagues to lower-costs licenses where appropriate.	Cabinet	Unknown	Cabinet did not address this recommendation at the meeting The committee may wish to seek an update on this recommendation response, although the recommendation itself shows support for continued work within the council and so would require noting by Cabinet and not consideration.
Recommendations from Committee – 8 October 2025					
26	Plant-based and reduced meat and dairy diets: draft position statement and action plan	RESOLVED that: a) All mentions of the word vegan be replaced with Plant-Based throughout the paper. b) Switching the target from 20% for plant-based concessions to 25%. c) That Council adopt the position statements and strategy for plant based diets in BCP Council with the amendments above.	Received by Cabinet, 29 October 2025. Then deferred by Cabinet for consideration at 26 November 2025 meeting	Unknown	Awaiting response from Portfolio Holder

Recommendations from Committee – 19 November 2025					
	Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council 2026-2036	<p>RESOLVED that the committee supported the recommendations as set out in the report to Cabinet including Option 1 regarding the removal of current separate kerbside battery collections but requested an additional point be included in respect of this option to read:</p> <p>(ii) and to develop a convenient battery recycling scheme with local businesses to create more easily accessible drop off points</p> <p>and in addition, requested the strategy at appendix 1 be amended to include the following: -</p> <p>(a) Paragraph 5.1 of Appendix 1 'A Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-2028' be amended to include '<i>and incineration</i>' so that the paragraph reads '<i>5.1 Tendering waste disposal contracts that embed the waste hierarchy and minimise the use of landfill and incineration</i>'; and</p> <p>(b) Paragraph 5.3 of Appendix 1 'A Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-2028' be amended to include '<i>whilst also considering the carbon footprint of the type of disposal</i>' so that the paragraph reads '<i>5.3 Prioritising waste site proximity where possible, so waste travels only as far as it needs to and reduces the significant carbon impact of transporting waste whilst also considering the carbon footprint of the type of disposal</i>'.</p>	Cabinet 17 December 2025	Partially accepted	<p>Extract from Cabinet minutes:</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder thanked the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration of the report and their recommendations. In relation to this the Portfolio Holder advised that he felt the additional recommendation of (ii) was not necessary as people would be signposted to available organisations, and that this would include those who offered a postal collection of batteries which would assist those unable to access those in shops. In addition, the Portfolio Holder advised that any shops selling batteries were required to provide a collection of used batteries.</p> <p>Further to this the Portfolio Holder advised that the recommendations raised in relation to paragraph 5.1 and 5.3 would be included within the tendering priorities and that he was happy to accept both of those recommendations.</p> <p>The seconder advised that they were also content with these.</p>
Recommendations from Committee – 25 February 2026					
Recommendations from Committee – 20 May 2026					
Recommendations from Committee – 15 July 2026					

Recommendations from Committee – 9 September 2026					
Recommendations from Committee – 18 November 2026					
Recommendations from Committee – 24 February 2026					

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Minute number	Item	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Benefit	Updates
No current agreed actions				

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

UPDATED: 14.01.26

Minute number	Item	Recommendation made <small>*items remain for monitoring until implementation is complete or committee agree to remove.</small>	Recommended to <small>*name of receiving body/ Officer, and date received</small>	Outcome <small>*accepted/ partially accepted/ rejected/ unknown.</small>	Implementation updates
Recommendations from Committee – 24 July 2024					
10	Child Exploitation Working Group Findings Report	<p>RESOLVED that the Committee RECOMMEND to Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That partnership working be promoted to ensure increased communication around the issues highlighted with parents, schools, children and youth services. That earlier age-appropriate education be implemented within schools across BCP regarding the risks associated with exploitation, drugs and the dangers of carrying weapons. 	Cabinet, 2 October 2024	Partially accepted	<p>Extract from 2.10.24 Cabinet minutes:</p> <p>'The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills spoke in support of the recommendations whilst highlighting with regards to recommendation 2 as set out above that BCP couldn't dictate the curriculum but can certainly look at ways to support it.</p> <p>The Leader advised that the Cabinet would take the matter away and go back to the Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.'</p> <p>Update given by Portfolio Holder to O&S Committee at 26.11.24 meeting. Extract minute:</p> <p>'The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People provided a verbal update which included:</p> <p>An update on the outstanding Cabinet recommendation from previous meetings related to knife crime and drug/alcohol use in schools. The Education Improvement Service collaborated with police and community groups to gather data on school programs addressing these issues, but challenges remained in obtaining detailed information.</p>

					<p>OFSTED had recommended that schools incorporate local safeguarding issues, such as knife crime, into their curriculum. There are current resources available for Personal, Social, Health, and Economic education, with additional materials being sourced from providers attending conferences. The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People highlighted that he also found free resources online through organisations like the DfE.</p> <p>In response to the Cabinet recommendations around earlier age-appropriate education. There was a need to assess existing educational initiatives related to this at both primary and secondary levels regarding knife crime awareness.</p> <p>Advised of upcoming events including webinars and community events focused on knife crime and related issues.'</p>
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14 **Recommendations from Committee – 19 September 2024** – No recommendations made at this meeting.

Recommendations from Committee – [26 November 2024](#)

36	Linwood Special School SEND Post 16 Provision at Ted Webster	<p>It was RESOLVED that Cabinet be recommended to approve (a) in the report:</p> <p>Cabinet approves the scheme to develop a satellite of Linwood School hosted at the former Ted Webster Children's Centre providing a total of 60 Post 16 places including the associated capital investment necessary to develop the scheme as contained in Appendix 1 (Exempt). The scheme is fully funded from the council's grant allocation of High Needs Provision Capital and will progress in line with the project programme set out at paragraph 12</p>	Cabinet, 10 December 2024	Accepted	Cabinet agreed to the recommendations in the report, as endorsed by O&S.
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Recommendations from Committee –28 January 2025 – No recommendations made at this meeting.

Recommendations from Committee – [11 March 2025](#)

69	SEND Improvement Update	<p>It was Proposed, Seconded and RECOMMENDED to better assess the impact on children, young people and families of any potential budget overspend in the SEND service budget, the Committee recommends that Cabinet requests a report be provided to Cabinet by June 2025 which outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the likely overspend in the budget which areas have been identified to overspend the options to ensure the budget limit is met an appraisal of the impact on children and families of these factors 	Cabinet, 2 April 2025	Accepted	Cabinet requested a report on 'SEND Budget Pressures' as recommended by the O&S committee. The report was considered by Cabinet at the 16 July 2025 meeting. Cabinet noted the report.
Recommendations from Committee – 10 June 2025					
11	Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-26	RESOLVED that the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorse the Youth Justice Plan so that Cabinet can recommend its approval to the Full Council.	Cabinet, 26 November 2025	Accepted	<p>Youth Justice Plan approved by Cabinet for recommendation to Council.</p> <p>Youth Justice Plan approved by Council.</p>
12	Housing for Care Experienced Young People	It was Proposed, Seconded and RECOMMENDED that the Committee seeks assurance that the new Joint Housing protocol has been successfully agreed and is working effectively to ensure our Care Experienced Young People are seeing an improved service and are in receipt of timely advice and safe housing that suits their individual needs and hopes for the future.	Officers	Unknown, but Officers were in support of the recommendation in the meeting.	Seek update
Recommendations from Committee – 15 September 2025 - No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Committee – 25 November 2025					
9	Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions	<p>Comment to Cabinet:</p> <p>The committee agreed to make Cabinet aware that the Committee appreciates the detrimental impact of school exclusions, which were highlighted in the report, and recognises the work that is underway to address this. The committee agreed that through this work the council's primary focus is improved outcomes for the children of BCP but that this work will also likely bring budgetary savings such as:</p>	Cabinet, 26 November 2025	Not applicable	The Cabinet thanked the committee for its work on this. Note: the constitution requires no response from Cabinet to comments from O&S.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in exclusions and associated costs (e.g. transport, AP placements, tribunal processes) • Improved outcomes for vulnerable pupils, reducing future demand on social care, youth justice, and post-16 support service • A reduction in the need for unregistered and costly AP as more needs are met by schools 			
10	Home to School Transport	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to endorse the recommendation within the report to Cabinet, this being that Cabinet:</p> <p>‘Agree to tender an external provider to deliver a transformation project over three years with a total cost of £1.5 million funded by the flexible use of capital receipts to deliver service improvements and by the end of the project on-going savings in SEND school transport projected at £3 million (net of additional resource requirement)’</p>	Cabinet, 26 November 2025.	Accepted	<p>Report recommendations agreed by Cabinet for recommendation to Council.</p> <p>Report recommendations agreed by Council.</p>

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Recommendations from Committee – 27 January 2026

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Recommendations from Committee – 10 March 2026

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Recommendations from Committee – 26 March 2026

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Recommendations from Committee – 16 June 2026

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Recommendations from Committee – 14 September 2026

Recommendations from Committee – 24 November 2026					
Recommendations from Committee – 26 January 2027					
Recommendations from Committee – 9 March 2027					

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Minute number	Item	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Benefit	Updates
28 January 2025				
49	Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People Sufficiency Report Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People Sufficiency Report.pdf	<p>Decision Made: The officers agreed to share the final governance and quality assurance framework with the Committee once agreed and signed off as final.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p> <p>The Committee agreed to continue discussions outside the meeting regarding the best ways to address the barriers identified in the report and to reach an agreement on how the Committee will receive that information.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p>		To be discussed with CS and Chair in catch up meeting
11 March 2025				
67	Children and Young People's Partnership Plan 2025-2030 Children and Young Peoples Partnership Plan 2025-2030.pdf	<p>Decision Made: It was agreed that the KPIs for this would be shared with the Committee.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p>		<u>CS Nov Update</u> KPIs still to be signed off by the partnership. Will be shared once agreed.
69	SEND Improvement Update SEND Improvement Update.pdf	<p>Decision made: The officers agreed to share the full review of the DSG finances as well as the SEND improvement board's response to the review.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p> <p>The Committee requested an update on the ongoing work regarding education outside of school and home</p>		

Minute number	Item	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Benefit	Updates
		education and asked that it be shared with the Committee. Action – Officers aware		
15 September 2025				
25	Alternative Provision Improvement Plan Alternative Provision Improvement Plan Final.pdf	Decision Made: The Committee discussed the routes into AP, including exclusions and EHCPs, and officers agreed to provide further data on this breakdown. Action – Officers aware		CS Nov Update New SEND & AP Plan in place.

HEALTH & ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

UPDATED: 14.01.26

Minute number	Item	Recommendation made *items remain for monitoring until implementation is complete or committee agree to remove.	Recommended to *name of receiving body/ Officer, and date received	Outcome *accepted/ partially accepted/ rejected/ unknown.	Implementation updates
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 20 May 2024					
11	Data Working Group Final Report	<p>The Committee recommend to the O&S Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that a similar [data] toolkit be developed for all O&S committees to reflect the relevant data and policy landscape within the remit of these committees. This to be added to the O&S Action Plan. that the Data Use Toolkit be highlighted within the O&S annual report to Council. 	Overview and Scrutiny Board (16 July 2024).	Recommendations accepted.	<p>Toolkit development for all O&S committees has been added to the O&S Action Plan.</p> <p>Toolkit for the Children's O&S Committee is near completion. All others are yet to start and will be developed when resources allow.</p> <p>The Data Use Toolkit was highlighted within the 2023/24 O&S annual report to Council. (Update by O&S Specialist, 24/4/25)</p>
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 15 July 2024					
21	Adult Social Care Business Transformation Case	<p>The Committee recommend that Cabinet recommends that Council:</p> <p>a) Approves the business case for a new adult social care transformation delivery model to improve outcomes for residents and to achieve financial efficiencies and savings enabled by investment.</p> <p>b) Agrees to the establishment of a formal transformation programme; 'Fulfilled Lives'.</p> <p>c) Agrees to the proposed investment of £2.9M, with Corporate Management Board being provided 6-monthly stage reviews on</p>	Cabinet (17 July 24) and Council (23 July 24)	Recommendations partially accepted at both Cabinet and Council	<p>The final decision of Council was different from the committee recommendation as follows:</p> <p>Resolved that Council:</p> <p>(a) Approves in principle the business case for a new adult social care transformation delivery model to improve outcomes for residents and to achieve financial efficiencies and savings enabled by investment of up to 2.9M;</p> <p>(b) Agrees to the establishment of a formal transformation programme; 'Fulfilled Lives';</p> <p>(c) Agrees to an initial 12-month investment of 1.79M, with an interim report to Cabinet on progress of the design phase in January</p>

		<p>the progress of the transformation programme.</p> <p>d) Invites the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide regular scrutiny of progress towards benefits and sustainable change. In particular, the Committee be invited to review the progress against the four priority areas of the Fulfilled Lives programme and the risks and opportunities of data with ASC transformation</p>			<p>2025 and a full report by July 2025, with recommendations for further investment; and</p> <p>(d) Invites the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide regular scrutiny of progress towards benefits and sustainable change. In particular the Committee be invited to review the progress against the four priority areas of the Fulfilled Lives programme and the risks and opportunities of data with ASC transformation.</p> <p>Implementation update required on a)-c) above.</p> <p>Implementation update on d) above:</p> <p>The Health & ASC O&S Committee now receives regular reports on the Fulfilled Lives programme to provide opportunity for ongoing scrutiny of the transformation delivery. (Update by O&S Specialist, 24/4/25)</p>
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 24 September 2024 – No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 2 December 2024					
46	Health and Social Care for the Homeless	<p>The Committee recommend that Cabinet:</p> <p>Discuss the issues caused by a lack of funding for rough sleepers with no local connection and those without an identified priority need with a view to developing solutions in partnership with other local authorities and key stakeholders such as the Integrated Care Board and relevant ministers to create a robust system that does not fail our most vulnerable or unfairly place the responsibility for caring for these people on local particular local authorities, with a view to getting something in place before the new strategy.</p>	Cabinet (10 December 2024)	<p>Response unknown – recommendation received by Cabinet with advice that it would be considered at a future meeting of the Cabinet.</p>	<p>Update required. Committee may wish to seek a response from relevant Portfolio Holder back into committee.</p>

47	Transforming Urgent and Emergency Care Services	<p>The Committee recommend that Cabinet recommends to Council:</p> <p>a) Notes the summary of the diagnostic review, including improved outcomes for residents and financial benefits for the Council.</p> <p>b) Notes that under the draft Partnership Agreement with Dorset health and care partners, anticipated benefits are significantly in excess of costs to the Council.</p> <p>c) Delegates to the Corporate Director for Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, the Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Finance, authority to enter into the Partnership Agreement to undertake the proposed transformation programme.</p>	Cabinet (10 December 2024) and Council (10 December 2024)	Recommendations accepted at both Cabinet and Council	
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 3 March 2025					
61	Adult Social Care Strategy 2025-28	<p>The Committee recommend to Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the inclusion of some clear targets ideally linked to the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) within the Adult Social Care Strategy; and the inclusion of an overview of how to better integrate performance and activity data with finance data in the Adult Social Care Strategy. 	Cabinet (2 April 2025)	Response unknown – recommendations 'welcomed' by Cabinet but no clear response given.	<p>The final decision of Cabinet did not reflect the recommendations made by the committee, and was as follows:</p> <p>'Resolved that the new ASC Strategy 2025-28 is linked to the Corporate Vision and supports corporate priorities under 'Our People and Communities.'</p> <p>Update required. Committee may wish to seek a response from relevant Portfolio Holder back into committee.</p>
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 19 May 2025 No recommendations made at this meeting.					
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 14 July 2025					

20	Adult Social Care Fulfilled Lives Transformation Programme	The HASC O&S Committee: 1. Supports the recommendation to Cabinet that Council approves the request for the release of the remaining £1.11m funding that was previously agreed to allow the Fulfilled Lives Programme to reach completion and realisation of the benefits; and 2. Continues to monitor this four-year programme in particular around self-directed support and support at home that will enable people to stay independent.	Cabinet 26 July 2025	Accepted	Cabinet and Council approved the release of the remaining £1.1m as outlined at part 1 of the recommendation.
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 23 September 2025					
30	Get Dorset & BCP Working Plan - GD&BCPWP	The Committee RECOMMENDS that: 1) The recommendations as outlined in the report be approved by Cabinet. 2) That Cabinet agree for the Get Dorset & BCP Working Plan to return to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee at an appropriate stage for further scrutiny, to enable Members to review its delivery, assess its impact in supporting individuals to return to work, and consider whether intended outcomes are being achieved.	Cabinet 1 October 2025	Accepted	Report recommendations agreed by Council.
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 1 December 2025					
44	FutureCare Programme – Mid Programme Review	RESOLVED that the Committee requests the programme return to its next meeting on 2 March 2026 with detailed financial and impact data to scrutinise.	Officers	Accepted	Coming back to Committee on 2 March with further information requested.
Recommendations from Committee meeting – 2 March 2026					

Recommendations from Committee meeting – 19 May 2026

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Recommendations from Committee meeting – 20 July 2026

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Recommendations from Committee meeting – 22 September 2026

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Recommendations from Committee meeting – 30 November 2026

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Recommendations from Committee meeting – 1 March 2027

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OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

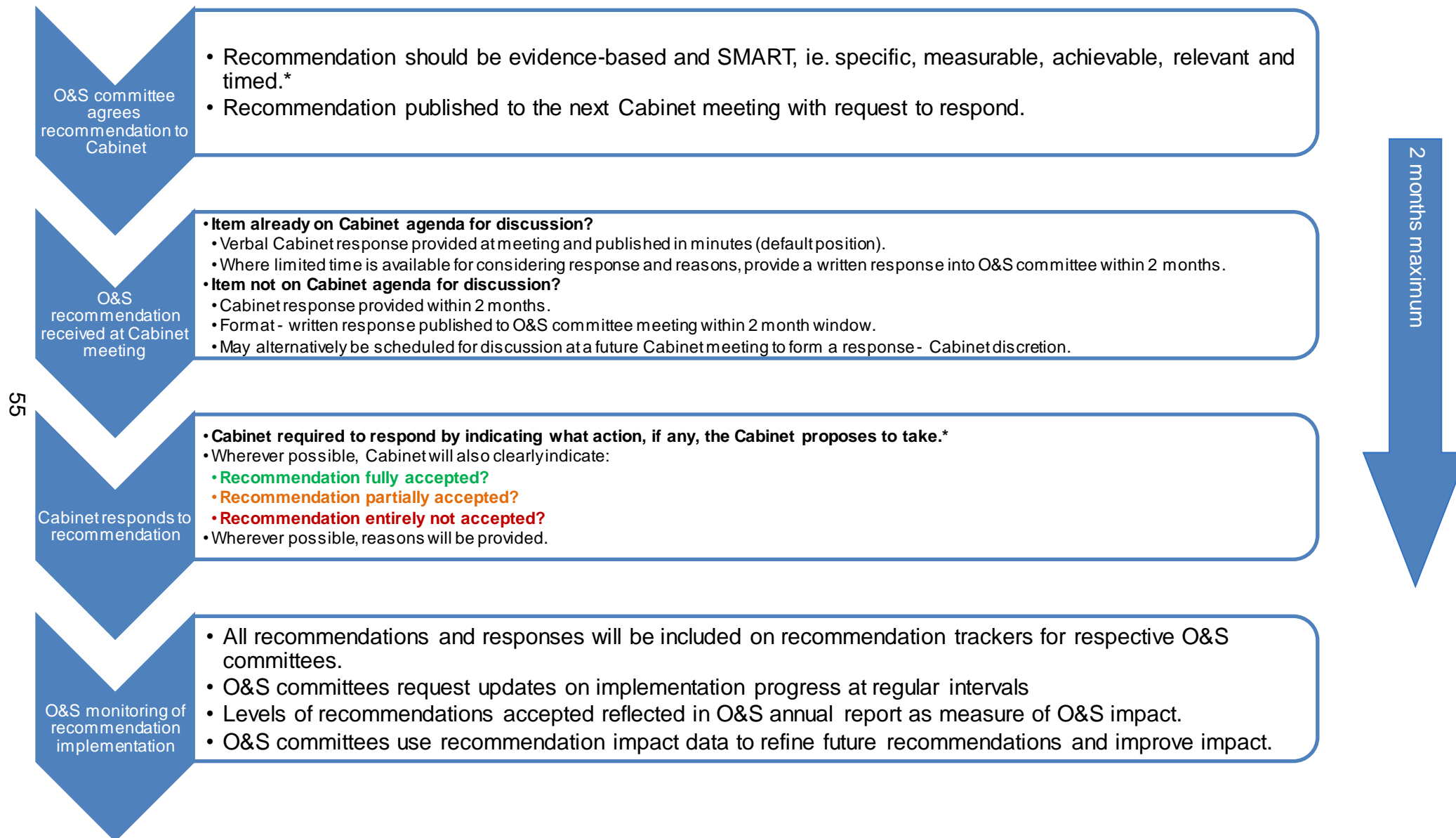
Minute number	Item	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Benefit	Updates
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 25 September 2023				
20	National Suicide Prevention Strategy	Decision Made: The Board was advised that Public Health was unsure of the amount which would be allocated to the BCP area, as the closing dates for bids had not yet happened, however bids were being worked on and once any funding was known, the Committee could be informed. Action – Public Health aware		
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 15 July 24				
	Adult Social Care Transformation Business Case	Decision Made: That key risks and Key Performance Indicators be included in future reports regarding the Transformation Programme Action – Officers aware	To enable the Committee to have this information when scrutinising	
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 24 September 24				
34.	Adult Social Care Budget Presentation	Decision made: In response to a query regarding the activities and outcomes of the Live Well Dorset programme, the Committee was advised that it had managed to reach those living in the most deprived areas of BCP and that access could potentially be provided to the dashboard for the Committee to see the output. Action: to be considered further		
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 3 March 25				

Minute number	Item	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Benefit	Updates
59.	The Transformation of UHD Hospitals	Decision Made: That the Director of Adult Social Care be the contact for any Cllrs wishing to visit the new facilities ACTION – Director and Cllrs aware.		
64.	Work Plan	Decision Made: As requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the Committee will monitor the proposed increase of block booked beds for long-term care and that an update on progress against this be provided at an appropriate time. ACTION – added to the work plan with no date yet identified.		An update requested under budget presentation in September 2025
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 19 May 25				
11	FutureCare Programme Update	Decision Made: That the Committee receive data regarding bed capacity and workforce numbers at an appropriate time. Action – Officers aware Decision Made: That the Committee receive data around benefits tracking and monitoring to be reported to a meeting at a future date. Action – Officers aware and added to the work plan Decision Made: That the Committee receive further information regarding capacity within secondary care to fulfil the future need. Action – Officers aware		
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 14 July 25				
20.	Adult Social Care Fulfilled Lives Transformation Programme	Decision Made: That the Committee receive quantitative data about the impact in future reports.		

Minute number	Item	Action* *Items remain until action completed.	Benefit	Updates
		Action – Officers aware		
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 23 September 25				
31.	Tricuro: Business Plan Review and Objectives 2025-26	<p>Decision Made: The Committee requested data on service capacity, particularly at the Moordown centre. Officers confirmed that capacity data is available via dashboards and would be circulated to the Committee.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p> <p>Decision made: The Committee was advised of the officer's commitment to ongoing engagement and agreed that progress updates should be provided between formal planning cycles to support continued collaboration and oversight</p> <p>Action – Officers aware</p>		
Actions arising from Committee meeting – 1 December 2025				
44.	FutureCare Programme – Mid Programme Review	<p>Decision Made: The importance of tracking savings through to tangible outcomes, such as reduced home care hours and improved reablement was highlighted, and the Chair requested detailed data analysis at a future meeting.</p> <p>Action – added to work plan for 2 March 2026</p>	To enable the Committee to fully scrutinise the impact of the programme in terms of tangible outcomes and savings	Coming back to Committee on 2 March 2026.
45.	Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) Update	<p>Decision Made: The Committee requested the programme DiS dashboard be shared with them to consider further.</p> <p>Action – Officers aware.</p>		

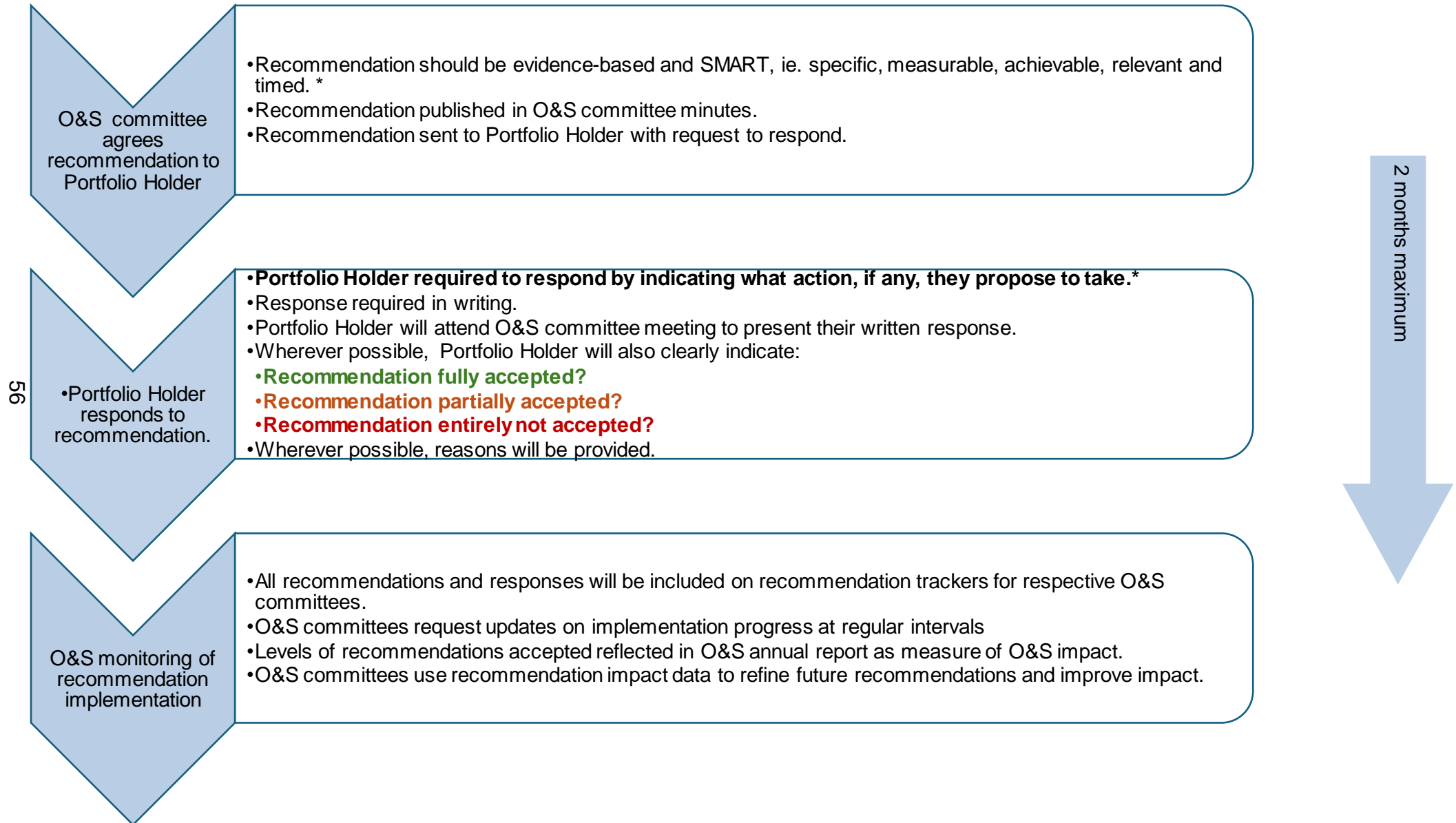
O&S Recommendations / Executive response process

Cabinet process:



* [Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils, combined authorities and combined county authorities - GOV.UK](#)

Portfolio Holder process



Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Report subject:	Housing for Care Experienced Young People
Meeting date:	27 January 2026
Status:	Public Report
Executive Summary:	<p>This report updates the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on arrangements to support Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) as they move toward independent living. It responds to the committee's recommendation in June 2025; that the Committee seeks assurance that the new Joint Housing protocol has been successfully agreed and is working effectively to ensure our Care Experienced Young People are seeing an improved service and are in receipt of timely advice and safe housing that suits their individual needs and hopes for the future.</p> <p>It evidences the effectiveness of the Joint Housing Protocol review in improving partnership working, reducing homelessness, and ensuring priority access to housing options such as Staying Put, Supported Lodgings, Specialist Supported Housing, and independent accommodation.</p> <p>Governance has been strengthened through the BCP Youth Homelessness Board, embedding strategic oversight and accountability. Young people's voices have shaped improvements to housing information, pathway clarity, and pre- and post-move support, while specialist and supported housing commissioning continues to provide tailored assistance for those with higher needs.</p> <p>Support for planning independence is integrated across pathways, with recommissioned services to be focused upon enhancing life skills and resilience. Despite progress, challenges remain due to local housing market pressures and affordability, requiring continued learning from reviews and lived experience alongside implementation of the forthcoming Children's Wellbeing and Skills Bill to secure positive outcomes for CEYP.</p>

Recommendations:	<p>Members are asked to note the content of the report.</p> <p>Members are asked to consider how future updates of this area of work might be considered for scrutiny.</p>
Reason for recommendations:	The Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested an update on the arrangements in place to ensure effective working protocol is in place to plan for, support and provide housing options for Care Experienced Young People. This report responds to that request.
Portfolio Holder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Kieron Wilson - Portfolio Holder for Homes & Regulation • Councillor Richard Burton - Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Service Directors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelly Deane - Director of Housing and Communities • Juliette Blake - Director of Children's Social Care • Rachel Gravett - Director for Commissioning, Resources and Quality
Report Authors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shan Searle - Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People • Ben Tomlin - Head of Strategic Housing & Partnerships • Sarah Langdale - Head of Children's Commissioning
Wards:	Council wide
Classification:	For Noting

Background

1. Children's Overview and Scrutiny requested an update on the arrangements in place to support Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) plan for housing independence, including the support and choices available and how young people's feedback influences the arrangements. This report responds to that request.
2. The housing market in the BCP area faces significant pressures that affect all residents, including Care Experienced Young People. Demand for affordable housing consistently outstrips supply, with limited availability of one-bedroom properties in both the social and private sectors and rising rental costs. Affordability remains a critical barrier, particularly for young people on lower incomes or benefits, as private rents often exceed Local Housing Allowance rates. These market conditions create competition for suitable homes, lengthen waiting times for social & private housing options, and increase reliance on temporary or shared accommodation.
3. While the Council prioritises, Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) within its allocation policies for all housing typologies, these systemic challenges mean that even with additional priority, securing stable and affordable housing can be difficult. The lack of low-cost home ownership pathways and limited supported housing

capacity further compound these issues, making early planning and partnership working essential to prevent homelessness and promote sustainable independence.

4. Housing & Children's Services alongside other partner agencies and young people have been working to review and update the arrangements.

Joint Housing & CEYP Protocol

5. The Council has developed a comprehensive approach to supporting Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) as they transition to independent living. Central to this is the updated Joint Housing Protocol (Appendix A), which provides a clear framework for collaboration between Housing and Children's Services.
6. The Protocol is designed to prevent homelessness among Care Experienced Young People and ensure smooth transitions to independent living. The protocol is underpinned by key legislation, including the Housing Act 1996 (Parts 6 & 7), the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Children Act 1989, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, and the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It sets out clear roles, responsibilities, and referral pathways, ensuring Care Experienced Young People are treated as a priority group in housing allocations and receive timely, coordinated support.
7. A review of the protocol took place in 2025 and collaborative plans for implementation of the updated protocol significantly improved partnership working and operational clarity within the two services, demonstrating proposed efficacy. By establishing single points of contact, dedicated roles and embedding joint planning through pathway meetings, services have observed reduced instances of homelessness and improved housing outcomes for care experienced young people.
8. The protocol also supports compliance with statutory guidance and recent regulations, such as the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Care Leavers) (England) Regulations 2025, which ensure Care Experienced Young People cannot be excluded from housing schemes due to local connection rules. This collaborative approach strengthens corporate parenting responsibilities and promotes stability for young people leaving care.
9. A Specialist Youth Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) reviewed the protocol against best practice and statutory code of guidance. They praised how the voices of young people have shaped the protocol and the clear commitment to continue learning from lived experience through the delivery of the protocol.
10. The option for Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) to remain involved post-18 as advocates is a strong feature as is joint Housing and Children's Social Care oversight for situations where a young person is at risk of losing accommodation. There is a proactive approach ahead of the Children's Wellbeing and Skills Bill.
11. The revised protocol was approved in January 2026 with joint training around implementation already begun.
12. The most notable change for young people will be the joint housing assessment itself, no longer is a stand-alone process, but now integrated within the young person's Child In Care Review that occurs closest to their 17th birthday. This prevents the young person from having to tell their story multiple times, it allows the housing

services and other relevant partners to get a fuller more holistic understanding of background and support needs more seamlessly.

13. Importantly, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) remain involved with the young person post 18 years if their housing situation remains unresolved.

Summary of Key Changes:

14. Expanded Scope and Terminology

The updated protocol explicitly includes Adult Services as a core partner, reflecting a broader cross-council commitment.

15. Recognition of Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic

The new protocol formally recognises care experience as a protected characteristic, emphasizing the need to address discrimination and disadvantage faced by care experienced young people and to empower their voices in service planning.

16. Enhanced Accommodation Planning and Risk Assessment

The updated protocol introduces detailed guidance on House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) placements, including risk assessments and contingency planning. It also strengthens the role of the Accommodation Planning Panel, adding operational decision-making and tracking mechanisms for oversight and strategic commissioning.

17. Intentionality Test and Homelessness Decisions

No longer makes intentionally homeless decisions for care experienced young people, anticipating legislative changes and ensuring that intentionality is not a barrier to support.

18. Performance Monitoring and Data Use

There is a new section on performance data review, with quarterly and monthly monitoring of homelessness applications, tenancy breakdowns, and outcomes for young people. This data is used to inform service delivery, commissioning, and continuous improvement.

19. Wider Partnership and Co-production

The updated protocol commits to a wider partnership approach, including voluntary and community sector involvement, and embeds regular consultation and co-production with care experienced young people to shape future practice and protocol revisions.

20. Extended emergency accommodation offer

When individuals over 21 become homeless, Children's Services provide emergency relief pending a full assessment. Initial trials show this approach is low cost, low risk, and requires no extra resources.

Children's Wellbeing and Skills Bill – Housing Protocols for Care Leavers

21. The forthcoming Children's Wellbeing and Skills Bill introduces several key provisions that will strengthen housing protocols for Care Experienced Young People. Whilst many are already embedded in current practice, the updated protocol will ensure BCP implement practice ahead of the requirement, strengthening this assurance and compliance.

22. Care Experienced Young People under 25 will no longer be deemed “intentionally homeless,” ensuring they cannot be refused housing support on grounds of fault. This change reinforces their entitlement to secure accommodation. The Council has not made such decisions for many years.
23. Local authorities will have a legal duty to assess and provide “Staying Close” arrangements where needed. This includes tailored move-on housing and ongoing support to promote stability after leaving care.
24. The Bill mandates that every local authority’s Local Offer for Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) must include clear information on housing support, alongside education, employment, and health services. This ensures consistency and transparency across different areas.
25. Corporate parenting responsibilities will be broadened to include housing departments and other public bodies, embedding joint accountability for housing outcomes and homelessness prevention.
26. These measures will underpin joint housing protocols by creating enforceable standards, improving coordination between services, and guaranteeing Care Experienced Young People receive priority and continuity in housing support.
27. Key developments with the BCP updated protocol includes formal dispute resolution mechanisms, enhanced training and support for staff, and improved monitoring of outcomes. These changes aim to ensure consistency across our offer and strengthens the safety net for vulnerable young people.
28. Support for planning independence is embedded throughout housing pathways. This includes proactive joint assessments, pathway planning, and regular visits by social workers or personal advisors. The recommissioning of housing-related support services will further enhance preparation for independent living, ensuring young people have the skills, confidence, and stability needed to thrive.
29. To remain effective, the protocol will evolve alongside policy and resource changes. Continued prioritisation of feedback from young peoples experiences, early intervention and housing planning, trauma-informed approaches, and data-driven reviews will improve housing stability.

Young Peoples Feedback on housing experiences

30. The voice of young people is integral to shaping the protocol, housing policy and practice. Feedback has highlighted gaps in information, unclear housing pathways, and inconsistent communication, which can lead to stress and unsuitable placements. Young people have also expressed concerns about inadequate preparation for independence and challenges with grants for setting up home. In response, both services are committed to providing clearer, accessible information, improving pre- and post-move support, and embedding trauma-informed approaches in service delivery.
31. Young people shared a range of feedback of their housing experiences to ensure new arrangements could be considered to improve their move to greater housing independence.
32. Some Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) find housing terms and processes confusing. Current information is not sufficiently clear or accessible, leading to stress

and misunderstanding. Whilst feedback also identified some housing offers were felt to be inconsistent and poorly communicated, young people often felt pressured to accept unsuitable accommodation often due to limited choices of housing options.

33. In response, updated clear, consistent, and accessible information on housing options and processes will be provided as part of the new protocol implementation. The updated protocol ensures that conversations regarding housing will be integrated into independent pathway planning.
34. Many young people feel unprepared for living on their own, as important skills like budgeting, setting up utilities, and managing a home are often not taught thoroughly. The tenancy training provided through AQA does not suit everyone's needs. In response, Housing and Children's Services are exploring new ways to help young people get ready for adulthood, such as developing drop-in workshops rather than sticking to the old formal methods. They also hope that having Housing Officers involved in Looked After Children's Reviews at age 17 will make sure each young person's pathway plan reflects their progress toward independent living, ensuring support is offered in a truly person-centred way.
35. The transition to independence causes high stress and affects mental health. Young people want clarity, consistency, and better communication. The support before and after moving, with proactive planning and communication will be considered as part of the recommissioning of the housing related support pathway for young people. Young people can access support from their personal advisor, with dedicated housing related support also available should they require it.
36. Embedding continuous learning from reviews, (including Serious Case Reviews) and the lived experiences of young people is critical to shaping housing policy and practice. Their feedback ensures that the protocols remain responsive to real challenges, promotes co-production in decision-making, and strengthens accountability across services—ultimately leading to better housing outcomes and smoother transitions to independence.

Housing Options Pathways for Care Experienced Young People

37. Providing a range of housing options and choices for Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) is challenging and often difficult to achieve due to the market conditions. However local policies and the local strategic housing approach which prioritises CEYP for accommodation means access to supported housing, shared living arrangements, independent flats, and access to social or private rented housing is achieved. Housing pathways are needs-led and designed to avoid crisis, with additional priority awarded to CEYP in social housing allocations.
38. The updated protocol ensures priority access to housing options and coordinated planning between Housing and Children's Services. Housing pathways are designed to be needs-led, avoiding crisis placements and promoting stability through early intervention and joint assessments. These pathways include a range of options tailored to individual circumstances, from highly supported environments to independent living arrangements.
39. One of the most successful options is Staying Put, which enables young people to remain in their foster home beyond the age of 18. This arrangement provides continuity and stability during a critical transition period, maintaining trusted relationships and reducing the risk of homelessness. Staying Put allows Care

Experienced Young People additional time to develop essential life skills—such as budgeting and household management—while benefiting from ongoing support. Evidence shows that this approach leads to improved outcomes in education, employment, and mental health compared to abrupt moves into unsupported accommodation.

40. Other housing pathways include Supported Lodgings, where young people live with a host family or individual offering light-touch support; Specialist Supported Housing, commissioned by the Council for those with higher support needs; and Independent Flats, often with floating support for those ready for solo living. Shared living arrangements and access to the private rented sector also form part of the offer, although affordability and supply remain significant challenges.
41. To complement these options, the Council commissions specialist and supported housing services that provide tailored housing-related support, including budgeting advice, education and employment assistance, and emotional support. These services are subject to robust contract monitoring and compliance checks to ensure quality and safety. Recent regulatory changes, such as mandatory Ofsted registration for providers of supported accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds, have strengthened oversight and improved standards.
42. Support for planning independence is embedded throughout these pathways. Proactive joint assessments, pathway planning, and regular visits by social workers or personal advisors ensure young people have the skills, confidence, and stability needed to thrive. The recommissioning of housing-related support services will further enhance preparation for independent living.

43. Comparison of Housing Options for Care Experienced Young People

Housing Option	Description	Key Benefits
Staying Put	Remain in foster placement beyond 18	Stability, trusted relationships, gradual independence
Supported Lodgings	18 yrs plus - Live with a host family or individual with light-touch support	Community integration, semi-independent living
Specialist Supported Housing	Commissioned services offering tailored housing-related support	Intensive support for complex needs, safeguarding assurance
Independent Flats, social or private rent	Self-contained accommodation with floating support	Promotes independence, suitable for those ready for solo living
Shared Living / HMOs	Shared accommodation with other young people, with support	Affordable option, social interaction, step towards independence
Private Rented Sector	Market housing accessed with financial and housing support	Wider choice, but affordability and security challenges

Youth Homelessness Board for BCP

44. Youth homelessness in Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole spans housing, family support, education, mental health, substance use, youth justice, employment, and complex needs. Multiple agencies are involved, creating risks of duplication, gaps in provision, and inefficient resource use without coordinated leadership.
45. A cross-sector BCP Youth Homelessness Board (YHB) launches in January 2026, sponsored by HRH Prince of Wales's Homewards programme, led by an experienced independent chair, to provide strategic oversight, set priorities, monitor progress, and hold partners accountable, including commitments under the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. It will ensure young people's voices shape decisions and embed shared ways of working across sectors.
46. The YHB will improve coordination, efficiency, and outcomes for vulnerable young people—particularly those with care experience—while strengthening prevention through integrated early help and housing interventions. By fostering collaboration and shared accountability, the Board will drive systemic change and improve life chances across BCP.

Specialist and Supported Housing Strategy

47. To meet the needs of Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) requiring higher levels of support in accommodation, the Council commissions specialist and supported housing through a range of experienced Housing Support providers.
48. A Supported & Specialist Housing Strategy will be considered by Cabinet later this year, this will provide a ten-year commitment to developing specialist housing and commissioning appropriate support services to meet the needs of residents.
49. This is the first such strategy for BCP Council and outlines the projected requirements of a range of resident groups, including Care Experienced Young People, ensuring access to appropriate accommodation and support models that promote independence and community integration. Priorities within the strategy include a focus on Regulatory oversight, housing standards and quality; Co-commissioning; strengthen evaluation and housing delivery.
50. Delivery of the strategy will expect to achieve the following outcomes for young people:
 - Improved housing choice and accessibility for vulnerable groups;
 - Compliance with national standards and licensing requirements, ensuring quality of accommodation and safeguarding vulnerable individuals.
 - Better integration of housing and support services, reducing reliance on institutional care and promoting independence.
 - Enhanced pathways for prevention and move-on, reducing homelessness and improving wellbeing.

Housing Outcomes

51. In the past 12 months, 20% of all social housing allocations to one bedroom properties have been prioritised for Care Experienced Young People (CEYP), with priority for properties agreed jointly between services and the young person as part of their housing planning process.

52. Supported Housing commissioned for young people prioritises Care Experienced Young People (CEYP). Over two thirds of all bedspaces are currently occupied by Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) representing over 40 young people, where dedicated person-centred support is provided alongside accommodation, which can include budgeting advice, help with accessing education or employment, and emotional support. It acts as a stepping stone, reducing the risk of homelessness and promoting positive outcomes during a critical stage of life.
53. Despite improved coordination and housing pathway planning for many young people, Care Experienced Young People's experiences of homelessness remains high. On average 16 young people become homeless or threatened with homelessness each month, with around a quarter as a result of a looked after placement ending. Other notable reasons for homelessness included eviction or abandonment of supported housing and tenancy breakdown. It is expected that embedding the changes to the updated protocol will see this reduce. Instances of Care Experienced Young People rough sleeping continue to be extremely rare.
54. Despite a high rate of homelessness, at time of writing there is one Care Experienced Young Person in their own self contained temporary housing provided by the Council following their homelessness. This position has significantly improved following the recent collaboration in reviewing the protocol.

Summary of financial implications

55. Due to the variety of arrangements by which accommodation for Care Experienced Young People is provided, the financial envelop by which supported housing services are provided is prescribed within block gross contracts. Any temporary accommodation requirements are provided for within the overarching Housing Temporary Accommodation Budget.
56. Housing quality assurance standards are not impacted by the financial resources available to procure the accommodation. The Council ensures it has sufficient resources to discharge its statutory powers with the Housing service directorate.

Summary of legal implications

57. The Council has powers under a range of different housing related legislation to ensure the quality of accommodation provided to Care Experienced Young People is good. There is little evidence to suggest the quality of accommodation provided is not of an acceptable standard requiring enforcement.
58. Teams are trained to identify and respond to any complaints relating to housing legal duties owed to Care Experienced Young People, with practice demonstrated the Council providing support over the statutory minimum.

Summary of human resources implications

Not applicable

Summary of environmental impact

59. Poor quality housing can lead to increased energy consumption due to inadequate heating or insulation. It also often results in impacts on someone's mental and or physical health and safety. Responses to complaints are managed promptly, regular inspections and contract review meetings provide assurance of those standards.

Summary of public health implications

60. Research reveals that Care Experienced Young People encounter higher rates of mental health issues and poorer overall health outcomes compared to their peers. This encompasses elevated risks of mental health disorders, substandard physical health, and greater involvement in crime and unemployment. While many challenges may arise from the circumstances leading to their becoming looked after or during their time in care, the transition to independent living is identified as a critical juncture with significant implications for their overall well-being. Many Care-Experienced Young People lack robust personal support networks, resulting in feelings of isolation and loneliness. Consequently, securing and maintaining stable accommodation can be more challenging due to limited financial or social support. Homelessness or residing in unsuitable accommodations poses a risk to mental health and elevates the likelihood of poor health outcomes.

Summary of equality implications

61. Care Experienced Young People are more likely to face significant equality implications if accommodated in poor quality housing. Specifically experiencing health inequalities, including mental health or chronic illness if standards are not adequate. Poor housing will exacerbate feelings of instability and stress, making it harder to achieve educational and or employment success.

Summary of risk assessment

62. The environmental, health and equality implications discussed above require specific mitigation for care experienced young people when in resettling into accommodation. The provision of housing related support including that from a PA or other relevant partner, manages these risks and helps navigate and access bespoke support available for people, which is embedded within joint working housing plans agreed with a young person at their joint housing assessment.



Joint housing protocol for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People

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Directors' Joint Foreword

This joint protocol sets out how BCP Council will work together to ensure that the housing needs of care experienced young people can be met in a planned and co-ordinated way. It aims to ensure that care experienced young people have access to the right homes and right support at the right time as they transition into adulthood.

Leaving care can be a worrying and uncertain time. BCP Council are committed to ensuring that young people leaving care should receive the same level of support that any young person would expect from a good parent. This joint protocol places care experienced young people at the heart of our work and outlines our commitments as corporate parents to ensure a seamless move towards independence.

Housing is a key foundation for a successful move into adulthood. BCP Council is committed to ensuring that young people leaving care have safe, secure and suitable accommodation with a smooth and well-planned transition. We understand that the journey from care into independence requires co-ordinated support underpinned by person-centred values.

Through effective pathway planning BCP are committed to preventing homelessness from occurring for care experienced young people, and where it does, we will ensure that it is rare, brief and unrepeated.

Through the adoption of this joint protocol, we are committed to working together to ensure that every young person leaving care has the opportunity to live a healthy, happy and fulfilling life.

Kelly Deane	Juliette Blake	Betty Butlin
Director of Housing & Public Protection	Director of Childrens Social Care	Director of Adult Care

1.0 Introduction and Overview

- 1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to set out how BCP Council, Children's Services, Adult Services and Housing Services will work together to provide effective, streamlined, consistent and co-ordinated accommodation and support planning for Care Experienced Young People, from 17 years.
- 1.2 A "care leaver" is legally defined as a young person aged 16-25 who has been in the care of the local authority at some point since their 14th birthday, including a period on or after their 16th birthday. This includes those who were in care immediately before being placed under a Special Guardianship Order, according to the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

Care leavers in BCP have requested to be referred to as Care Experienced Young People, as such this is the terminology that will be used within this document.

- 1.3 BCP Council's Corporate Parenting Strategy: Brighter Futures for Our Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People (2023-2026) sets out our commitment and shared aspiration to support young people in their transition to adulthood. It is recognised that robust support and safe, suitable, and stable accommodation is fundamental to achieving this and sets out the expectation that the council will be committed to finding creative ways to allow children to remain in their communities.
- 1.4 Both Children's Services and Strategic Housing & Partnerships have a responsibility towards the practical application of this Protocol within their relevant services. The responsible senior leads are the Director for Corporate Parenting and Permanence in Children's Services and the Director for Housing and Public Protection, and they have overall responsibility for the implementation of this Protocol, with oversight from the Corporate Parenting Board and the Youth Homelessness Board.
- 1.5 The Youth Homelessness Board will review this Protocol annually and agree any changes, informed by feedback from young people, staff, learning from our work with individual young people and data which is provided to the Corporate Parenting Board and the Youth Homelessness Board on a quarterly basis

2.0 Protocol Aims

- 2.1 This protocol aims to support a successful transition to adulthood and independent living, as young people take the important developmental step of managing their own homes and living independently.
- 2.2 The following principles underpin this joint protocol:
 - Recognition that young people leaving care have varying needs and independent living skills.
 - Reduce the number of moves young people experience
 - Ensure well planned moves prior to care leaver's 18th birthday and 28 days before each accommodation move.
 - Increase choice and assessment of young people's needs
 - Reduce homeless applications through early intervention and prevention and through effective transition planning and ongoing support
 - Ensure early planning of support and accommodation options
 - Young people leaving care are provided with as much information, choice and control as possible over where they live
 - Young people leaving care are supported to reflect and learn from mistakes and are given more than one opportunity to succeed in securing and maintaining a home
 - Support is flexible and responsive, jointly provided by council departments to meet individual needs
- 2.3 The protocol aims to:

- Set out our commitment to developing services (our Local Offer) for young people leaving care
- Clarifies the roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies within the legislative framework
- Ensures that all officers understand the importance of joint working alongside the role of partner organisations in achieving positive outcomes
- Prevent homelessness amongst care experienced young people, upon leaving care and thereafter at key transition points
- Supports young people leaving care to become responsible and successful tenants

Recognises the diverse and individual needs of young people leaving care

- 2.4 This Protocol should be considered alongside the Accommodation Planning Panel Terms of Reference, the BCP CEYP Support and Accommodation Offer, and the BCP [Leaving Care and Transition](#) Procedures. Professionals using this protocol should also refer to [The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations \(2010\)](#) and [Care Planning Procedures](#). And [The Children Act Guidance and Regulations \(volume 3\)](#).
- 2.5 For young people who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and who meet eligibility criteria under the Care Act (2014), refer to the Preparing for Adulthood Team within Adult Services to ensure the young person has the right expertise within their network. Adult Services work together to meet the needs of care leavers who have additional needs. ([Preparing for Adulthood Team - BCP Council](#))
- 2.6 This protocol has been informed by the views and experiences of young people through a series of workshops. The ongoing review and development of services is essential to meet the emerging needs of our young people. The annual review of the protocol will continue to be informed by the lived experience of our young people, collated through a variety of methods both directly and indirectly. Young people's feedback will be gathered on a quarterly basis and will be gathered through various mediums such as on-line and face to face.

3.0 Legislative Framework

- 3.1 The introduction of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and related initiatives sought to strengthen the Children Act 1989 and provided an opportunity for local authorities to review the services provided to Care Experienced Young People transitioning to adulthood. The following legislation and guidance emphasise the need for joint working between BCP's Housing, Children's and Adults Services, and other statutory, voluntary and private sector partners in preventing and tackling homelessness and meeting housing and support needs more effectively:
- Housing Act 1996 – [Part 6](#) and [Part 7](#), as amended by the [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#)
 - Section 1 of the [Homelessness Act 2002](#)
 - [Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities](#)
 - [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)

- Section 2 of the [Local Government Act 2000](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children Act 2004](#)
- Care Act 2014
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Joint Housing Protocols for Care Leavers: Good Practice Advice](#)
- [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- [Local Government Association Corporate Parenting Resource Pack](#)
- [Applying Corporate Parenting Principles to Looked After Children and Care Leavers: statutory guidance for local authorities](#)
- [Care Experience Matters: a guide to how prisons, probation and local authorities can work together to support people with care experience in custody and on probation](#)

3.2 BCP Council recognises care experience as a protected characteristic. This recognition acknowledges that care leavers often face discrimination and disadvantage in various areas of life, as such this protocol must recognise the specific challenges and vulnerabilities faced by care leavers, empower care experienced young people to share their views and work to level the playing field ensuring care leavers have equal opportunities to access safe and comfortable housing.

4.0 Eligibility

4.1 This Protocol applies to all young people that meet the criteria listed below. There are specific statutory functions that apply, which each partner must abide by:

- Care Leavers who are aged 16-25 and previously a Child in Care as defined by the Children Act. This includes eligible, relevant and former relevant Care Leavers.
- Care Leavers in custody.
- Care Leavers from BCP residing outside of the area.
- Care Leavers from outside of BCP, living within the BCP area (subject to eligibility under the [Homelessness Code of Guidance](#))
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking care experienced young people who have leave to remain in the UK

More information around Care Leaver status can be found under [Leaving Care and Transitions](#).

5.0 Suitability of Accommodation

5.1 This Protocol recognises the need to ensure that young people are placed in suitable and safe accommodation.

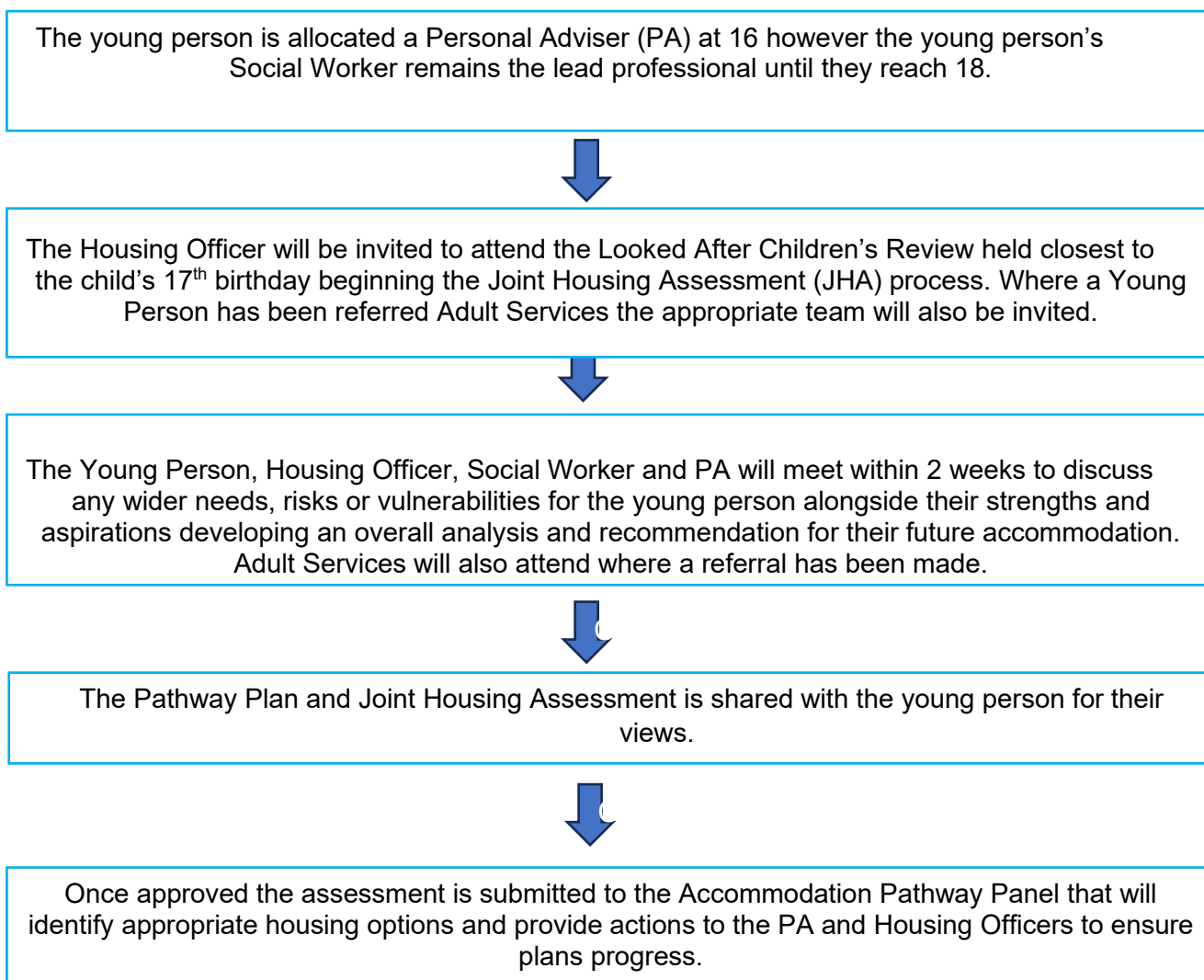
5.2 Pathway Plans and the Joint Housing Assessment shall inform the individual appropriate accommodation pathway for a young person. The multi-agency Accommodation Planning Panel facilitates this process as a single access point for professionals to gain joint

agreement and approval for the most appropriate accommodation pathway for a young person in need of accommodation and support.

- 5.3 The young person's voice is central to the success of their accommodation pathway; this is heard through the Joint Housing Assessment and Pathway Plan which reflect their needs and wishes.
- 5.4 The BCP CEYP Support and Accommodation Offer (Appendix 2) sets out the options which are available to young people. There is also an Accommodation Brochure (Appendix 3) for professionals to use when discussing options with young people.
- 5.5 BCP recognise that many Care Leavers will not wish to or may not have the necessary skills to live independently by the time they leave care. We also recognise that many young people may no longer wish to reside in foster care (Staying Put). We are committed to offering a range of accommodation options that can provide appropriate support to meet varying needs. This aligns with BCP's Corporate Parenting strategy: Brighter Futures for Our Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People (2023-2026).
- 5.6 BCP recognises that the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation is not appropriate for young people. BCP has access to a range of emergency accommodation services and whilst acknowledging that temporary and emergency accommodation is not ideal, when used Bed and Breakfast accommodation will be as a last resort, on a short-term basis, and agreed at Director level in both Housing and Children's Services. BCP Council are committed to making this safe for the young person whilst new plans can be made with them using immediate bespoke wrap around support.
- 5.7 A House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) is defined as a property occupied by three or more people from two or more households who share amenities such as a kitchen, bathroom, or toilet. This would include occupying a room in a shared house, living in a building that has been converted into multiple flats but do not have their own kitchen or bathroom facilities. Supported living accommodation is often considered an HMO as facilities are shared with other residents. In order to ensure the placement is both suitable and sustainable the teams will seek to match the young person with other suitable residents, although it may not be possible to create perfect matches due to pressure on the availability of accommodation. Whilst HMOs can offer Young People appropriate accommodation options and can address concerns of isolation as well as support needs identified, sharing communal spaces with other residents may present a risk. To mitigate this a risk assessment will be completed in advance of any placement and mitigations will be put in place where necessary, together with a contingency plan should issues arise. The young person will also be provided with safety advice by their PA about living in an HMO. The frequency of visits should be increased during their initial months to ensure they are safe, and their needs met.

6.0 Implementation & Development

- 6.1 Operational Flow Chart



- 6.2 The workflow above enables the multi- agency team around the young person to contribute to the assessment of their housing needs. The Pathway Plan scrutinised within the Looked After Child Review sets out the young person's needs and actions to be taken by the multiagency team to support the young people to develop in their independence and achieve their aspiration without them needing to retell their story.
- 6.3 Usually, a young person will cease to have an Independent Reviewing Officer (IROs), post 18 years, however IROs are responsible for reviewing the Pathway Plan and ensuring that the young person's support and accommodation needs once they leave care are being planned for and acted upon appropriately and without delay. As such if there are concerns that a young person's pathway plan is not progressing and the young person consents, the IRO will remain involved to provide oversight and advocacy.
- 6.4 The Pathway Plan and Joint Housing Assessment, sets out the support and accommodation needs of the young person and may make recommendations about how these needs will be met by services. Accommodation Planning Panel (APP) will provide a

slot for PAs and Housing Officers to discuss where it has not been possible to agree a housing solution and the panel will provide expertise and final oversight for these young people.

- 6.5 To prevent opportunities from being missed where the agreed option is private rented the affordability assessment must be completed by housing within 2 working days of a property being identified.
- 6.6 Where there has been a change of circumstances for a young person who has already had a JHA, a review or updated assessment will need to be completed to reflect their current situation. Significant changes include a young person becoming homeless, a young person being given notice on their property, a change in the young person's needs and new or emerging safeguarding concerns impacted by their housing situation.
- 6.7 It is recognised that some young people including those choosing to remain in staying put arrangements may not require a Joint Housing Assessment until a later point, in these circumstances PAs should make a referral to housing at the earliest opportunity to begin the process.
- 6.8 Contingency planning is essential to mitigate risk of accommodation breakdowns and to avoid homelessness. Early review and support planning provides the opportunity for professionals to review and change the accommodation pathway and support plans with a young person as needed. Contingency plans should be considered as part of the Joint Housing Assessment. Any changes will be documented within the young person's Pathway Plan.
- 6.9 According to Children and Social Work Act 2017, a "corporate parent" refers to the collective responsibility of the council, its members, employees, and partner agencies to ensure the best possible care and safeguarding for children in their care or leaving care. Essentially, it means the council takes on the role of a parent, with all its duties and responsibilities, for these children.
- 6.10 In practice this means our work with young people will uphold the following principles:
- **Collective Responsibility:**
Corporate parenting is not the responsibility of just one department or person, but of the entire council.
 - **Statutory Duty:**
Every member and employee of the council has a legal obligation to act in the best interests of the children, as a good parent would.
 - **Beyond Basic Needs:**
Corporate parenting goes beyond basic care; it involves promoting the child's well-being, encouraging them to reach their potential, and preparing them for independent living.
- 6.11 Housing and Children's Services will provide quarterly training to ensure the protocol is understood and embedded by all staff. The training will be trauma informed supporting

our workforce to recognise the additional Adverse Childhood Experiences of Care Experienced Young People and ways to adapt our communication and processes to support them to have views heard.

7.0 Accommodation Planning Panel

- 7.1 The Accommodation Planning Panel is a multi-agency meeting in which relevant professionals consider recommendations for a young person's accommodation and support pathway. Key representatives who can make operational decisions attend from Children's Commissioning, CEYP Service, Strategic Housing & Partnerships (including Commissioning), and the In-House Fostering Accommodation Support Team. Where relevant, other agencies such as Adult Services, Transitions Team, Health, Probation, etc will attend as required.
- 7.2 The Accommodation Planning Panel will consider available accommodation to meet our young people's needs outlined in the Joint Housing Assessment and where appropriate match the young person with available provision. The panel will be supported by a tracker enabling the panel to track the progress of agreed action, identify emerging needs and forecast future demand to support strategic commissioning.
- 7.3 The PA will keep the young person informed about the panel process and confirm the outcome of the panel's discussion around their accommodation plan.
- 7.4 In the event that a young person is not satisfied with the outcome of the Accommodation Planning Panel, the young person can appeal.

8.0 Additional Support to Care Experienced Young People

- 8.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires Children's Services to publish a Local Offer for Care Leavers, outlining services and support available. BCP Council's [Local Offer Updated Document .docx](#) is available online for Care Leavers and provides information on housing, financial and support services, accommodation options, planning and agencies to contact in the event of homelessness. Care Leavers may also be entitled to a discount on their Council Tax and further information can be found [here](#).
- 8.2 BCP has dedicated Support and Inclusion Officers for CEYP who work alongside other services to provide and co-ordinate support for young people in a range of accommodation options, helping to co-ordinate accommodation moves in a planned way and supporting other professionals to proactively address and mitigate against tenancies at risk, enabling young people to sustain their accommodation and preventing future risk of homelessness.

- 8.3 The use of the AQA model to evidence progress of young people enables informed assessment and planning to underpin any accommodation and support pathway agreed at Accommodation and planning panel.
- 8.4 A dedicated CEYP Housing Options Officer works closely with social workers, PAs and the Accommodation Support Team to carry out Joint Housing Assessments with young people. The Joint Housing Assessment identifies the appropriate housing and support pathway to meet the young person's needs when they leave care. This Housing Officer is a member of the Accommodation Planning Panel and acts as a 'champion' to support Housing and Children's Services colleagues in relation to Housing legislation, guidance and the CEYP Support and Accommodation Offer.
- 8.5 BCP recognises the need to support our Care Leavers in their aspirations and to achieve in life. BCP offers additional financial support to Care Leavers who require accommodation whilst completing higher education, as set out in the Local Offer for Young Adults Leaving Our Care.
- 8.6 There is a robust process in place with Revenue & Benefits to access Discretionary Housing Payments on behalf of CEYP in need of financial support to secure and sustain tenancies. All staff are prompted through the protocol training and local processes to ensure early review and intervention is key to ensure that care leavers can sustain their accommodation, and this includes financial viability and sustainability. The Accommodation Planning Panel considers these as part of the accommodation pathway discussion for every young person.

9.0 Support to Prepare for Independent Living

- 9.1 As corporate parents, we are dedicated to ensuring that our young people progress into adulthood in a planned and supported way. This includes equipping them with the skills to manage their own homes, care for themselves, maintain daily routines, engage with their communities, and pursue employment or further education. This transition is one of the most significant in any young person's life. It is our duty to ensure that young people leaving care feel well-prepared, optimistic about their future, and confident that we will continue to support them as young adults.
- 9.2 Preparing children for independence is a developmental process that takes time, and we recognise that all young people mature at different rates. As they approach the age of 18, our corporate parenting commitment is to provide the support, resources, and nurture needed to help them move into adulthood in the strongest possible position, guided by their Pathway Plan. We are equally clear that our responsibilities do not end at 18. Our young people can and should return to us for support whenever they need it.
- 9.3 To prepare young people leaving care for their first move into independent living, we must consider their emotional resilience, financial literacy, and practical independence skills. These are essential to help them maintain a tenancy and become confident, responsible adults in our communities.
- 9.4 The young person's Social Worker, alongside their Personal Advisor, will assess within a multi-agency team whether the young person is ready to take on a tenancy

of their own. This assessment will be documented in their Pathway Plan and will identify any additional support required as the young person approaches 17 years and 6 months. The assessment will also consider any potential barriers or concerns related to the young person's transition to adulthood and will clearly outline their post-18 plan.

- 9.5 Contingency planning is also essential to reduce the risk of accommodation breakdowns and prevent homelessness. Through strategic oversight within Children's Social Care, we will identify any young people who may be vulnerable to homelessness and apply additional management scrutiny to their Pathway Plans.
- 9.6 Financial support through a 'setting up allowance' to cover deposits and initial rent payments until benefits and bills are in place. In addition Council Tax will be covered up to the age of 25. Further support includes:
- Essential household items and personalisation support to help young people decorate and furnish their homes, fostering a sense of ownership and pride.
 - Independence skills development, delivered by trusted adults such as foster carers or commissioned services. This includes budgeting, managing bills, shopping, meal preparation, and home maintenance.
 - Semi-independent living placements for those assessed as ready before age 18, with tailored support focused on preparing for full independence and tenancy management.
 - Dedicated housing support from Personal Advisors and Housing Options Officer, who will guide care leavers through housing registration, applications, and bidding processes.
 - Pre- Tenancy Training Workshops

10.0 Moving to Independent Accommodation

- 10.1 Where an independent tenancy for a young person has been agreed as part of their accommodation pathway the PA and Housing officer will consider the skills, vulnerabilities and needs of the young person. It is unlikely that a young person will be able to access their own tenancy whilst they are under the age of 18 however where it is deemed necessary the support and legal arrangements will be agreed at panel and put in place.
- 10.2 When it is identified that a young person is ready to move onto the next stage of their accommodation pathway this will be planned with the young person, PA, Housing Officer and any other agencies involved, to ensure a move is successful and the young person receives the support they need with the move and thereafter in their accommodation.
- 10.3 Where the assessment recommends social housing, they will be supported to register and a priority banding will be awarded as per the [BCP Council Housing Allocations Policy](#) for care experienced young people. In some cases, owing to the level of needs and risks where it is deemed necessary by the CEYP team and Housing Options, a young person may be awarded a direct let. Please see the CEYP Support and Accommodation Offer document (Appendix 2) for more information.

- 10.4 Where the assessment recommends private rented accommodation the young person will be assisted with advice and guidance around affordability as well as support with upfront payments such as bonds or rent in advance payments. Please see the CEYP Support and Accommodation Offer document (Appendix 2) for more information.
- 10.5 The young person will continue to receive support when they move into their own accommodation. Their support will be delivered through their PA, Young Person Floating Support, and where required 'Always There' carers and an enhanced housing management service where they are a BCP Homes tenant. The levels of support will vary in line with what the young person needs and will include other stakeholders for specialist support. The support package will be reviewed by the PA with the young person and continue as necessary until it is agreed with the young person it is no longer needed.

11.0 Responding to Care Experience Young People Leaving Custody

- 11.1 BCP recognises the need to ensure appropriate pre-release planning is in place for young people who are due to be released from custody, to ensure a smooth transition into safe and suitable accommodation.
- 11.2 When a young person is sentenced to custody, the Pathway Plan will be updated to reflect the significant change. This is the first stage of pre-release planning regardless of the duration of sentencing. Efforts should be made by housing options officers from the offset to gather information alongside the young person's views to allow for sufficient time to plan and explore the likelihood of the options, for example, friends and family, in addition to supported or social housing.
- 11.3 Personal Advisors will be a key link for the young person in assessing the suitability of proposed arrangements including safety planning and potential impact on other householders. Conversations with Housing Options should be included in pre-release planning.
- 11.4 Before a young person is released (at least fifty-six days prior to release), the Personal Advisor should coordinate discussions between Housing Options and the appropriate prison/probation officer to identify accommodation needs early and ensure there is a clear accommodation plan in place. If all efforts to plan a smooth exit from custody are unsuccessful, a Duty to Refer (DTR) must be made to the local housing authority to prevent homelessness and ensure appropriate support is in place.
- 11.5 Both Probation Services and the Youth Justice Service also play a key role in pre-release planning and coordination. This includes contributing to the young person's resettlement plan and ensuring that housing needs are identified and addressed in advance of release.
- 11.6 A Joint Housing Assessment will be undertaken with the young person, their PA, allocated Housing Officer and their Probation or Youth Justice Officer. This will identify the young person's accommodation and support needs to inform the recommended accommodation pathway for agreement at the Accommodation Planning Panel. The young person's Pathway Plan and Personal Housing Plan will reflect the recommendations.

- 11.4 Where a Joint Housing Assessment and Pathway Plan were completed prior to the period of custody, these will be reviewed and updated with any necessary changes to reflect the young person's current needs and to inform a review discussion at the Accommodation Planning Panel.

12.0 Care Experienced Young People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

- 12.1 BCP Council has a duty under both Homelessness legislation and as a corporate parent to ensure the best interests of the young person are accounted for, encourage the young person to express their wishes and feelings and to promote high aspirations and seek the best outcomes for Care Leavers. Further information can be found in [Chapter 22 of the Homelessness code of guidance](#).
- 12.2 Former relevant Care Leavers aged between 18 and 25 (defined under the Children's Act (Leaving Care) who are owed a service by BCP Council may present at Strategic Housing & Partnerships if they are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Housing duty staff will carry out an assessment to determine homelessness. As a care leaver, the young person may be able to get assistance from the CEYP Team, depending on their circumstances. The Housing duty worker will make the young person aware of this and request consent for their circumstances to be shared with their PA. If consent is given, Strategic Housing & Partnerships will work in conjunction with the PA to review their accommodation plan and identify suitable accommodation or work to prevent homelessness.
- 12.3 As this would be a significant change of circumstances a renewed Joint Housing Assessment should take place.
- 12.4 Prevention work will include collaborative working alongside council agencies (such as the CEYP team, Strategic Housing & Partnerships) to:
- Provide support to help sustain a tenancy, including specialist services
 - Consider use of Discretionary Housing Payments / Children's Services funding to address rent arrears or use alternative Payment Arrangements to enable Universal Credit (UC) housing costs to be paid direct to landlords
 - Liaise with the young person's PA, landlord and other agencies to help address concerns.
- 12.6 Accommodation options within BCP's commissioned services will be considered in the first instance, to prevent a housing crisis. In some instances, it may not be possible for the panel to identify accommodation within existing services for young people in a planned way; in which case joint work and consultation with the Strategic Housing & Partnerships will be undertaken to determine appropriate, safe accommodation.
- 12.7 Strategic Housing & Partnerships will consider whether there is a duty owed to the young person under Part 7 of the 1996 Act to secure interim accommodation. Strategic Housing & Partnerships will consult with the young person's PA to discuss suitability and vulnerabilities of young people before making an offer of temporary accommodation.

- 12.8 When prevention or relief duties are triggered a Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) for the young person will be developed. Strategic Housing & Partnerships will align this with the young person's Pathway Plan and accommodation pathway plan, therefore discussing and sharing information about the Housing Plan with their PA. The PA will be included in ongoing reviews of the PHP for the young person.
- 12.9 If Strategic Housing & Partnerships places a young person in temporary accommodation in an emergency, additional support services will be put in place and reviewed thereafter at the Accommodation Planning Panel, along with an updated accommodation plan.
- 12.10 Strategic Housing & Partnerships must be aware of their duties to Care Experienced Young People and their priority need status in relation to the needs and experiences of Care Leavers. The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill intends to disapply the Intentionality Test for all Care Experienced Young People in scope of corporate parenting duties. In practice BCP do not make intentionally homeless decisions for care experienced young people and have not done so since 2023. It is therefore critical that Housing and Children's Services work together to ensure Care Experienced Young People have the correct support to prevent them from becoming homeless. PA's should provide information that assists towards decisions about the suitability of accommodation, and in the event of a high risk tenancy breakdown (that would ordinarily have been subject to an Intentional Decision), Heads of Service in both Housing and Childrens must continue to have oversight and sign off of new accommodation plans, considering any gaps in support need and agreeing the suitability of the next placement.
- 12.11 Whilst housing have a duty to offer appropriate provision to a Young Person the Young Person has the right to decline. If this occurs, prior to the discharge of any homelessness duties, the Housing Options Officer will write to the young person outlining the impact of their decision and the PA will support the young person to understand the offer and their rights. The offer will be held open for a reasonable period to allow the young person time to consider their decision and access advocacy support further assist them to understand their rights. Young people should be encouraged to accept an offer and exercise their right to a statutory review if they disagree with the suitability of any offer made to them under homelessness legislation.
- 12.12 Rough sleeping - Joint working between children's services, housing options and the local rough sleeping outreach services delivered by St Mungo's, will ensure that necessary steps are taken to identify care leavers sleeping rough and support them into suitable and sustainable accommodation with the required level of support. If through outreach St Mungo's identify a care experienced young person sleeping rough contact will be made with Housing Options to arrange for a joint assessment. Where the individual sleeping rough is from another local authority area, contact will be established with the parent authority (with the customer's consent) by their Housing Options Officer. Where there is a safeguarding concern, consent is not required but contact should be made via the local authority leaving care service to the parent authority. Where appropriate and safe to do so a supported reconnection will take place.

13.0 Duty to Refer

- 13.1 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places duties on local housing authorities to intervene at an early stage to prevent homelessness and provide homelessness services to all those who are eligible. The 'duty to refer' responsibility helps to ensure that services are working together effectively to prevent homelessness by ensuring that peoples' housing needs are considered when they come into contact with public authorities. All Duty to Refers are received by Strategic Housing & Partnerships within BCP Council.
- 13.2 A duty to refer should only be made for a care experienced young person where they require homelessness intervention and are not already open to Strategic Housing & Partnerships and don't have in place an accommodation and support pathway agreed through the accommodation planning panel.
- 13.3 Early review and support planning is detailed within the Accommodation Planning Panel documents and provides the opportunity for professionals to review and change the accommodation pathway and support plans with a young person as needed to prevent homelessness.
- 13.4 Where there is an immediate and unplanned loss of accommodation a duty to refer may have to be made and the young person's accommodation pathway reviewed and updated at the Accommodation Planning Panel as a result.
- 13.5 When a young person approaches a service outside of Housing and is at risk of homelessness, the service should ascertain details regarding their circumstances and consider, with appropriate consent, as to whether a Duty to Refer needs to be completed. The service should ensure that the young person is fully aware of the purpose of the duty to refer and gives consent to share and submit the required information.
- 13.6 Strategic Housing & Partnerships will ensure that the young person is made aware of the next step in the process and that a joint assessment will be carried out or an existing one reviewed with their social worker/personal advisor to agree the next course of action to be taken. This could include prevention work, a re-referral into the Accommodation Panel or further work by Housing to consider whether there is a duty owed to the young person, under Homelessness legislation.
- 13.7 Information on Duty to Refers received will be shared at the Accommodation Planning Panel for further action to be taken as necessary. For information and guidance on the Duty to Refer please access the government legislation via the link [A Guide to the Duty to Refer](#).

14.0 Care Experienced Young People living outside of BCP

- 14.1 In some instances, it may be beneficial or in line with the wishes and feelings of the young person, to remain or move to another local authority area. Reasons for moving out of area or remaining out of area are dependent on individual circumstances but examples include their care placement was out of area, family connections to another area or to attend education or employment.

- 14.2 If a young person wishes to remain in an area outside of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, planning is essential to secure appropriate accommodation and support to meet their needs. For all young people aged 17 and over cases should be presented at the Accommodation Planning Panel at the earliest opportunity where this has been identified through their Pathway Plan to ensure that the social worker / PA can make enquires as to housing options in the area alongside discussions with the Leaving Care Teams of both LAs.

15.0 Support for 21-25 year olds

- 15.1 If a care experienced young person becomes homeless at the age of eighteen, nineteen or twenty, they will automatically be viewed as being a priority need. If a care leaver becomes homeless at the age of 21 or over, they will be assessed to determine whether they are considered vulnerable under homelessness legislation. BCP Council applies a local commitment to support care leavers up to the age of 25 and Children's Services will step in support with immediate homelessness where this is assessed to be appropriate.

16.0 Care Experienced Young people from outside BCP

- 16.1 The Homelessness Reduction Act placed additional duties on local authorities to respond to housing needs of Care Leavers who live outside of the local authority that looked after them (or parent authority). The parent authority will owe the care leaver a duty as a former relevant young person and they will retain a local connection to their parent authority until their 21st birthday.
- 16.2 In addition, a Care Leaver can also have a local connection to the local authority where they were resident for a continuous period of 2 years, provided at least some of that time was when they were under the age of 16.
- 16.3 If a care leaver living in the BCP area, but away from the 'parent' authority presents as homeless, Strategic Housing & Partnerships will assess their circumstances and, if consent is given, contact the personal advisor from their parent authority to ensure the young person is aware of the Offer for care leavers in their 'parent' authority. If temporary accommodation is required, Strategic Housing & Partnerships will conduct an assessment of need around accommodation and support. If requested, BCP's CEYP team may be able to assist with duty tasks to help support the young person (i.e. arranging transport, monies, etc).
- 16.4 If the Care Leaver is found to not have a local connection to the BCP area, Strategic Housing & Partnerships will consider how to best support the care leaver, including consideration of short-term temporary accommodation, alongside discussion with the parent authority and relevant personal adviser.

17.0 Escalation

- 17.1 Where Housing Officers and PA's do not agree on the recommendations from the Joint Housing Assessment, they should request review at Accommodation Planning Panel for oversight and support.
- 17.2 Where there is disagreement between professionals about the needs and risks of the young person and what action should be taken the Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole (BCP) Multi-agency Escalation Procedure will be followed. ([Escalation Policy](#))
- 17.3 Pathway Plans and Joint Housing Assessments are undertaken collaboratively with young people and their views are paramount and should be clearly recorded. If, however, a young person is not in agreement with the recommended outcomes and this cannot be resolved, they can make a complaint under BCP's Complaints Procedures. There is a statutory process for young people to make a complaint and further information can be found [here](#).
- 17.4 In the event of a young person or their representative disagreeing with the outcome of a Housing decision under the Housing Act 1996 then the statutory appeal process will apply. What the applicant and/or their representative must do and by when is set out in the decision letter they receive. The young person's PA will support them with this process.
- 17.5 All Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People are entitled to receive independent advocacy. It is the responsibility of the social worker or PA to ensure this is offered and make a referral for advocacy support through ART. Advocacy should be discussed throughout the JHA process to ensure young people are aware of their entitlement to this support.

18. Monitoring and Implementation

- 18.1 This protocol will be reviewed annually by the Youth Homelessness Board. Children's Services and Strategic Housing & Partnerships will jointly oversee the monitoring, evaluation, and review of the protocol. If there are changes to legislation, policy, or roles and responsibilities, the protocol will be updated and agreed upon by all relevant parties.
- 18.2 Organisations, and services working in line with this protocol are encouraged to provide feedback, which will be used together with performance data and service user feedback to:
 - Improve service delivery
 - Inform future commissioning decisions
 - Support strategic planning across BCP

The protocol will also help gather evidence on key issues such as:

- The number of care leavers at risk of homelessness.
- Tenancy breakdowns amongst care leavers.

This data will support the development of new services or the remodelling of existing ones. Data will be drawn from the Housing Performance Dashboard, which contributes to

the Homelessness Case Level Information Classification (HCLIC) quarterly statistics and annual HCLIC Care Leaver tables.

- 18.3 Performance Data Review: The following performance data will be reviewed quarterly via the Youth Homelessness Board, as well as through monthly internal Performance Monitoring reviews:
- Number of homeless applications from care leavers
 - Number of applicants where last settled accommodation was a looked after placement
 - Households owed a prevention duty (including reasons for loss/threat of loss of last settled home)
 - Households owed a relief duty (including reasons for loss/threat of loss of last settled home)
 - Reasons for the end of prevention and relief duties
 - Accommodation secured at the end of each duty
 - Decisions on duty owed at the end of the relief stage
 - Reasons for the end of the main homelessness duty
 - Number of care leavers placed in unsuitable accommodation
 - Number of rough sleepers identified who are care experienced, broken down by age
- 18.4 To ensure the protocol is embedded across services, the following training and implementation activities will take place:
- Face-to-face and virtual training sessions covering statutory duties and key responsibilities across Housing Options and Children's Services
 - Inclusion of the protocol in induction training for all relevant staff
 - Team meeting briefings across all relevant service areas
 - Service events to promote awareness and understanding
 - The protocol will be made publicly available online for young people, officers, and partner agencies
 - An easy read accessible version of this protocol will be developed and made available for young people
- 18.5 We will use the data to provide insights to inform and update our protocol and associated processes. This includes identifying areas of strength and those requiring improvement, ensuring that our approach remains responsive and effective.
- 18.6 We are committed to embedding a culture of learning and reflection, where feedback directly shapes practice. Crucially, we will incorporate the voices and lived experiences of care experienced young people throughout this process, ensuring their perspectives are central to any changes made. This will be achieved through regular consultation, feedback sessions, and co-production opportunities, enabling young people to influence the services that support them.

19 Wider Partnership Approach

- 19.1 BCP is committed to working in partnership to prevent homelessness and this is reflected in both our well-established Homelessness Delivery Board, Homelessness Partnership and Forum and the recently relaunched Youth Homelessness Board. We recognise the importance of a partnership approach in preventing homelessness and developing effective and sustainable pathways out of homelessness. As such we recognise the importance of working collaboratively with our wider partners, including housing providers and voluntary and community sector, to improve our understanding of the needs of care experienced young people and to both further develop and improve our offer and support.
- 19.2 We will take into account the views of wider partners when reviewing this protocol and work to strengthen our wider approach to the prevention of homelessness for care experienced young people through tenancy sustainment, targeted pre-eviction interventions and crisis prevention.



Report subject	Invest to Save Budgets in the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)
Meeting date	27 January 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report responds to the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee's second set of KLOEs on High Needs Block (HNB) "invest-to-save" activity. It distinguishes: (i) initiatives funded from HNB (which impact the in-year position unless offset by savings) and (ii) initiatives funded from the General Fund or external grants (which do not worsen the HNB position but can drive service improvement and future cost avoidance). It summarises delivery to date (including sufficiency expansion and early-years interventions), the emerging impact, the approach to measuring cost avoidance, and the new initiatives now in development.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Overview and Scrutiny:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.) Note the current High Needs Block (HNB) position and the impact and cost avoidance of the initiatives implemented to date including the increased supply of specialist places, the early years inclusion model (Dingley's Promise) and the positive impact of the Portage Service. b.) Endorse the invest-to-save programme and the establishment of the High Needs Block Deficit Recovery Plan Board, including its role in approving a benefits-measurement framework to evidence cost avoidance and prevent double-counting across initiatives. c.) Support the progression of the following priority initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitalisation of High Needs funding processes (integrated with the SCM upgrade) • Synergy Case Management (SCM) upgrade to go-live (target May–June 2026) • Pre-EHCP targeted funding model (subject to affordability and governance)
Reason for recommendations	To support overview and scrutiny committee's role in testing and challenging the High Needs Block position and to ensure that BCP Council is learning from best practice elsewhere.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton – Children and young People
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley – Director of Children's Services
Report Authors	Lisa Linscott, Director of Education and Skills
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	Decision

1. Background

- 1.1 In November 2025, the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report in response to identified key lines of enquiry (KLOE) to better understand the wider context of the Council's High Needs deficit and identify potential strategies for improvement. The report included benchmarking information and provided details of the work undertaken by children's services in seeking to manage the budget position. For ease of reference, details of the questions raised in the key lines of enquiry are contained in **Appendix 1**. Detailed responses to the KLOE are set out in Children's Overview and Scrutiny report – see link in background papers.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Following the Committee's consideration of the November report, further details are requested of the invest to save initiatives that have been tried or are underway to help mitigate the growth in the DSG high needs expenditure. Subsequently, the Committee raise a further 4 KLOE as follows:

1. **What invest to save initiatives have been put in place over the past three years?**
Specifically, members have requested that responses clearly state which of the three defined categories each piece of work falls under.
 - **'Invest to save'** is defined as targeted upfront investment from council revenue or high needs block funds to secure sustained revenue or high needs block savings either in the short or longer term (alongside improved outcomes for children and young people).
 - **'Invest to cost avoid'** is defined as targeted upfront investment from council revenue or high needs block funds that will mitigate future expense to one or both of these funding streams, most likely in the longer term.
 - **'Grant funding'** outside of the high needs block funding is funding secured from either the Department for Education (DfE) or other foundations to support specific projects or initiatives that align with Children's Services objectives. These objectives may have a positive long term financial benefit, but the funding may have been sourced primarily for the delivery of improved services for children and young people rather than specifically as measure to make savings.
2. **What evidence do we have of the impact that these have had? Please provide as much financial detail as possible?**
3. **Are there new invest to save initiatives being developed, if so, what are they?**
4. **What will be requested in the 2026/27 council budget to support invest to save work?**

3. Current Status

- 3.1 It should also be noted that terms of reference for a new governance board for oversight of the High Needs Block Deficit Recovery Plan have been established, and the inaugural meeting of the board takes place in January 2026. The board will enable improved stakeholder confidence, clear actions to improve financial sustainability and systematic risk mitigation. The new Deficit Recovery Plan will be discussed and signed off via that board. The DfE have allocated an adviser to support the work to become financially stable, who will start their support in January 2026.

4. Key Lines of Enquiry – Invest to Save and Evidence

- 4.1 ***What invest to save initiatives have been put in place over the past three years?***

The Council has implemented a range of initiatives that influence expenditure in different ways. Broadly, these fall into two categories:

- (i) **Initiatives funded from the High Needs Block (HNB):** These draw directly on the DSG High Needs allocation, which means any upfront investment immediately affects the in-year position and contributes to the accumulated deficit unless offset by savings. The initiatives set out in **Table 1** have been delivered or substantially progressed since 2023. Each is categorised as invest-to-cost-avoid. The table identifies cost avoidance of just under £10.7m as a result of the

increased supply of specialist school places, the impact of Dingley's Promise and the work of the Portage Service.

- (ii) **Initiatives funded from outside the High Needs Block (General Fund or external grants):** These include grant-funded transformation programmes and schools block transfers. Because these resources are ring-fenced and additional to the DSG High Needs allocation, they do not worsen the High Needs deficit. Their purpose is service improvement—such as inclusion strategies or early intervention and while they may lead to future cost avoidance, they do not directly reduce the current deficit. Details of initiatives funded outside the High Needs block are provided in Appendix 2.

Table 1: Cost Avoidance initiatives implemented since 2023

	Places and Children	Impact	Cost Avoided £000
SEND Sufficiency Programme of Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 182 specialist primary places delivered 113 specialist secondary/Post 16 places 295 total specialist places delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of EHCPs in mainstream increased from 39.8% (Feb 2025) to 41.4% (Sept 2025); INMSS proportion reduced from 11.3% (Sept 2024) to 10.8% (Sept 2025). 	10,032
Dingley's Promise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 135 referrals and placed 33 children (31 with no prior Early Years education), Delivered outreach for 86 children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 children remaining on SEN Support, 2 undergoing assessment (EHCNA), 7 with established EHCPs, At least 12 children transitioning successfully into mainstream settings with SEN Support 	564pa
Portage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 121 children transitioned to school (average annual number of children who benefited from the Portage Service based across two academic 2 years) Portage Services contribute to improved readiness, fewer placement breakdowns, and stronger inclusion within early years settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of children supported by Portage who moved successfully into mainstream rose from 64% to 66%, Transitions into specialist placements reduced from 24% to 22% These trends indicate Portage's role in preventing escalation into higher-cost pathways at Reception and Year 1, and in supporting more children to enter mainstream provision with effective strategies already embedded. 	94pa
Total Costs Avoided			10,690

4.2 What evidence do we have of the impact that these have had?

- 4.3 **SEND Sufficiency Programme of Expansion:** Delivering a sustainable SEND Sufficiency Strategy carries significant financial considerations, both in terms of immediate investment and long-term cost management. In responding to our sufficiency challenges, the Council has delivered an additional 295 specialist school places by working with local school leaders to agree to co-locate specialist provisions in mainstream schools. This approach helps to make the best use of the school estate by utilising surplus accommodation in schools thereby sustaining schools experiencing falling rolls.

- 4.4 Proposals delivered include resourced provisions, satellite locations and mainstream plus link provision for Year 7 children. The majority of places created are for children with autism though they also include places for children with speech, language and communication needs and social emotional and mental health needs. The new Resourced Provisions are helping to provide alternative pathways for children with an Education and Health Care Plan to access the support they need in a mainstream setting. This will help ensure that more children remain in mainstream provision which is an important part of creating a sustainable and balanced pattern of provision. Table 2 below sets out the total number of places

delivered by phase. The table also shows the number of places in pipeline. Pipeline places are those which are in the commissioning process and are made up of projects that are part of the current commissioning round. Subsequent commissioning rounds are in development and details of these are contained in this report – *Per Pupil Capital (Replaces Free School Funding)*..

Table 2: Specialist Place Provision – Number of Places Delivered and, in the pipeline,

	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total	Total EY/Primary Split	Total Secondary P16 Split
Specialist School Places Delivered	46	49	140	60		295	182	113
Places in pipeline				96	128	224	224	
Total Delivered/ In Pipeline	46	49	140	156	128	519	406	113

- 4.5 **Sufficiency-led Cost Avoidance:** Investing in inclusive mainstream provision and local specialist capacity helps to reduce long-term reliance on costly alternatives. The table below sets out the estimated cost avoidance based on the specialist places delivered and in the pipeline. In respect of places delivered, the average costs of independent maintained provision (£64k per place) have been compared with the average costs of local specialist provision (£26k per place). This delivers an average per place avoidance of £38k per specialist place delivered. If we apply this cost difference to all specialist places already commissioned and delivered across the programme, there is a total cost avoidance of £10m with an opportunity for a further avoidance of costs totalling £8.5m.

Table 3: Cost Avoidance of Places Delivered and in the Pipeline

	22/23 £ 000	23/24 £ 000	24/25 £ 000	25/26 £ 000	26/27 £ 000	Total £ 000
Cost Avoidance Places Delivered	1,748	684	5,320	2,280		10,032
Costs Avoidance Places in pipeline				3,648	4,864	8,512
Cost Avoidance Range						18,544

Notes:

- **Capital Implications - Expanding** and adapting the local school estate to meet rising demand requires capital funding. Projects involve adaptations, refurbishment and a mix of major and minor capital works in schools. The council recently submitted details of capital investment to the DfE as part of its annual high needs capital assurance return.
- Places commissioned at Autism Unlimited have been excluded from this calculation.

- 4.6 **Per Pupil Capital (Replaces Free School Funding):** In December 2025, the Department for Education cancelled 18 special free school projects nationally, including BCP's approved special free school. Instead of a new build, the Council will now receive per-pupil capital funding to create equivalent specialist places within existing school settings. This approach provides greater local control but the funding available is not sufficient to construct a standalone special school and places greater emphasis on partnership working with schools able to take on expansions or host new specialist provision. Depending on the level of refurbishment required to ensure learning environments are fit for purpose, the additional £9m capital allocation provides scope for approximately 180 places and has the potential to generate around £6m in cost avoidance through reduced reliance on more costly out-of-area placements.
- 4.7 Crucially, the additional investment will help to deliver a core part of our wider SEND and AP transformation, including investment to increase the supply of specialist and Alternative Provision. Details are contained in the updated Capital Strategy, which together set out how investment will be deployed across the school estate. Delivering a robust AP and SEND Sufficiency commissioning round is underway and we are already working closely with school leaders and corporate colleagues to identify suitable sites. Early engagement with headteachers is essential to ensuring the next commissioning round delivers the right mix of high-quality specialist and AP places, and its timescales remain aligned to the overall AP delivery programme.
- 4.8 **Dingley's Promise:** Dingley's Promise Bournemouth opened in April 2024 to support children aged 0–5 with emerging or established SEND who are unable to access their early education entitlement or are at risk of placement breakdown. The centre offers short-term “transitional” placements (typically up to two terms), longer-term placements where needed, and specialist family outreach (navigation, practical support, and SEND parenting guidance). From April 2024 to June 2025, the service received

135 referrals and placed 33 children (of which 31 children with no prior Early Years education). Dingley's Promise also provided outreach support for 86 children including social & emotional support, SEND-specific learning & development, and support for admissions/transition. Outcomes to July 2025 show:

- 8 children remaining on SEN Support,
- 2 undergoing assessment (EHCNA), and 7 with established EHCPs,
- At least 12 children transitioning successfully into mainstream settings with SEN Support, indicating earlier, proportionate support and strengthened multi-agency working ahead of Reception transition.

4.9 **Cost avoidance:** Early evidence suggests material cost avoidance where children transition to mainstream with SEN Support rather than specialist placements. Based on 12 mainstream transitions and cost comparisons of specialist place provision verses mainstream SEND support (£47k per child), the Dingley's Promise model helps to deliver cost avoidance in the region of £564k). Work is underway to monitor and record impacts with more certainty though this can be complex given that the impact of services tend to overlap. The model has strong feedback from parents and expansion to Poole (Sept 2025) and Christchurch (site from Jan 2026) is designed to extend reach and reduce inequity of access across BCP. This means scope for further avoidance of costs in the region of £1m per annum.

4.10 **Portage Service:** Portage continues to operate as BCP's early-intervention home-visiting model for pre-school children with emerging or significant developmental needs. The service provides structured play-based teaching, modelling for parents, and practical strategies to support communication, attention, social development and self-regulation. This early work strengthens family confidence, reduces reliance on multiple agencies, and stabilises early years placements by equipping both families and providers with the tools needed to meet needs at an early stage. Evidence from Autumn 2024 to Autumn 2025 shows a positive shift in transition outcomes:

- The proportion of children supported by Portage who moved successfully into mainstream rose from 64% to 66%,
- Transitions into specialist placements reduced from 24% to 22%.
- 121 children transitioned to school, with Portage support contributing to improved readiness, fewer placement breakdowns, and stronger inclusion within early years settings (figures are the average of the last two academic years).

4.11 While our data are limited, it is indicative of the role of the Portage Service in preventing escalation into higher-cost pathways at Reception and Year 1, and in supporting more children to enter mainstream provision with effective strategies already embedded.

4.12 **Cost avoidance:** Portage works intensively at an early stage to build communication, play, social-emotional development and self-regulation, enabling more children to start school with the skills and confidence they need to succeed. Families report increased capability and reduced reliance on multiple agencies, and early years settings benefit from strategies that help maintain placements and strengthen inclusion. These improvements are already reflected in transition data, with more children supported by Portage moving into mainstream settings rather than specialist provision.

4.13 While the full cost avoidance delivered by Portage is difficult to quantify with precision, the service provides significant and wide-ranging benefits for young children and their families. Using the specialist vs mainstream cost differential, we can currently evidence cost avoidance for two children whose outcomes indicate they would likely have transitioned into specialist placements without Portage support. This equates to approximately £94,000 in avoided annual costs. While this is only a partial measure of Portage's true impact, we are actively developing a more robust approach to evidencing cost avoidance so that future reporting more fully reflects the value the service delivers. The key considerations below help to identify the overlaps with other services and providers across the partnership.

Key considerations:

- **Attribution:** Portage's impact overlaps with Dingley's Promise, SALT, Health Visiting and specialist early years input, so savings need to be attributed once and against an agreed counterfactual.

- **Data maturity:** Current measurement relies on placement outcomes; more detailed longitudinal tracking will strengthen future reporting.
- **Context:** Portage reduces escalation and supports early inclusion but cannot by itself counteract the wider national growth in complex need.

4.14 *Are there new invest to save initiatives being developed? If so, what are they?*

The Council is progressing several invest-to-save initiatives to mitigate High Needs pressures by intervening earlier, improving mainstream inclusion, and digitising processes to cut error, delay and duplication. Details of invest to save initiatives are explored below. The first three initiatives are being developed to create the infrastructure and routes that will generate future savings. The remaining two initiatives (the AP three-tier model & Panel and the Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) toolkit) are in design/delivery to stabilise placements and reduce escalation. At this stage, there is no robust, auditable cost-avoidance figure to claim for these five projects; measurement frameworks will be established so that quarterly, evidenced figures can be reported as each initiative moves from design to delivery.

- a) Digitisation of High Needs Funding Processes
- b) Synergy Case Management (SCM) System Upgrade Project
- c) A Pre-EHCP Targeted Funding Model
- d) Alternative Provision (AP) three-tier model & AP Panel
- e) Ordinarily Available Provision toolkit & Graduated Approach

a.) Digitalisation of High Needs Funding Processes: The Council is initiating a digital transformation project to modernise and streamline the current High Needs funding process. At present, the process is heavily manual, involving multiple stages, paper-based forms, and fragmented workflows. This complexity increases the risk of duplication, errors, and delays, while consuming significant staff time.

The new digital solution will:

- **Automate key steps** in the funding application and approval process, reducing administrative burden.
- **Introduce a single, integrated platform** for case management, ensuring data consistency and real-time tracking.
- **Embed validation checks** to minimise errors and improve compliance with statutory timelines.
- **Provide dashboards and reporting tools** for better oversight, enabling quicker decision-making and transparency.

By replacing manual processes with a digital system, the Council aims to improve efficiency, reduce risk, and create capacity for staff to focus on strategic work rather than repetitive tasks. This initiative is expected to deliver long-term cost avoidance and improved service quality. It will be imperative that this work integrates fully with the Synergy Case Management System (SCM) upgrade and continues post the Commissioning Transformation Project closure date of March 2026 to ensure that cost avoidance benefits are fully realised.

b.) Synergy Case Management (SCM) System Upgrade Project: The Synergy to SCM migration project is a major digital-transformation initiative designed to bring the SEND service onto a modern, fully integrated case management system that supports statutory functions, improves data quality, and enables more efficient and joined-up ways of working. The new SCM system will deliver a single child record across services, integrate with key systems such as Mosaic, support parent and professional portals, automate manual processes, and improve reporting through enhanced Power BI capability, enabling smarter decision-making and more timely interventions. Although the project remains challenging particularly around data-migration readiness, capacity pressures within SEND, and the need for a change freeze current milestones indicate that a May–June 2026 go-live remains achievable with continued focus on resourcing, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative delivery. Overall, the migration represents a critical enabler for improving statutory performance, strengthening financial tracking, and enhancing the quality and consistency of SEND case management across BCP.

c.) Pre-EHCP Targeted Funding Model: The Council is developing a new initiative to deliver early-stage savings and longer-term cost avoidance. This model will provide a co-produced route to provide timely, targeted support for children with emerging or lower level SEND needs within mainstream settings, without requiring a full EHCP assessment. It will offer schools access to additional resources

such as specialist input, equipment, or short-term interventions based on clear criteria and evidence of need. The approach will be co-produced with schools and parent/carers representatives to promote inclusion, reduce delays, and ensure needs are met earlier and more effectively. This will help to reduce demand and alleviate cost pressures on an invest to save basis.

This will enable a higher level of support than the current delegated schools notional SEN budget. Schools report that the delegated notional budget is often stretched across multiple pupils, leaving schools unable to fund intensive support for children at risk of escalation. The pre-EHCP model bridges this gap by injecting targeted resources at the right time, reducing pressure on statutory processes and the High Needs Block. Details of how the additional funding differs is explored as below.

What schools deliver with their delegated SEND notional budget? Every mainstream school receives a notional SEN budget as part of its core funding. This funding is designed for schools to meet needs that can reasonably be accommodated within their own resources and staffing. This is intended to cover:

- Universal and targeted support within the graduated approach (e.g., differentiated teaching, classroom strategies, small group interventions).
- Low-cost, high incidence needs such as mild learning difficulties or speech and language support.
- Provision up to the nationally expected threshold (often the first £6,000 of additional support for a pupil with SEND before an EHCP is considered).

What the pre-EHCP targeted funding model will deliver in addition? The new model is not a replacement for delegated budgets, but an additional, strategic layer of support aimed at preventing escalation to statutory EHCPs. It will:

- Provide access to specialist input (e.g. specialist training, modelling, advice, guidance for a specific issue or cohort).
- Offer short-term, high-impact interventions for children with emerging or complex needs that exceed the £6,000 threshold but do not yet require an EHCP.
- Supply equipment or resources that enable innovation.
- Operate under clear criteria and governance, ensuring funding is targeted where early intervention will reduce long-term costs (e.g., avoiding specialist placement or tribunal escalation).
- Be co-produced with schools and parent/carers representatives, aligning with best practice and complementing the graduated approach.

Why this matters: The new developing model must complement existing funding responsibilities rather than duplicate them. This means clear governance and criteria will be essential to ensure the funding is used for targeted interventions that genuinely reduce escalation to statutory EHCPs and associated high-cost provision.

What is the likely cost to the high needs block: Using the same costed model as has been used in Southampton, the model would cost £1.5M per year.

Next Steps: The next step is to engage partners and review best practice in other local authorities as part of early phase development work. This is scheduled for early 2026, with proposals expected to be presented to the High Needs Block Deficit Recovery Plan Board and then council governance approvals later in the year.

d.) Alternative Provision (AP) three-tier model & AP Panel: This work is in the design and implementation phase, building a clearer three-tier AP model and a strengthened AP Panel to support earlier intervention and more consistent decision-making. It is creating structured routes back into mainstream and ensuring AP is used only when necessary and for the shortest appropriate time. The model is designed to reduce reliance on high-cost alternative provision and improve reintegration outcomes, ensuring that children who can be supported in mainstream are identified and transitioned sooner. Cost avoidance will be realised through reduced use of high-cost AP placements and shorter AP durations; full modelling will be completed once the new system is embedded and data is available. The work necessary to deliver this is funded from the DfE's SEND Intervention Fund at a cost of £143k.

e.) Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) Toolkit & Graduated Approach: The toolkit is now in delivery and will provide consistent guidance on what mainstream settings should ordinarily provide and strengthening use of the Graduated Response. **Importantly, the toolkit will** support earlier intervention, improve staff confidence, and help schools to better meet needs without escalation to

statutory processes. The toolkit is expected to reduce demand for EHCP assessments and specialist placements over time; mechanisms to measure this impact are being developed. This work is being funded by the DfE's SEND Intervention Fund at a cost of £215k.

4.15 ***What will be requested in the 2026/27 council budget to support invest to save work?***

Subject to detailed business cases and governance through the new HNB Deficit Recovery Plan Board (inaugural January 2026), the following resourcing requests are anticipated for 2026/27 - 2027/28:

- Pre-EHCP targeted funding model (HNB): develop, pilot and evaluate in-year.
- Inclusion Advisors (HNB): potentially scale up the pilot to deliver SEND reform requirements
- Three-tier AP model (HNB): delivery of the model is to be costed up in order to establish spend to cost avoid figures.
- Educational Psychology Service growth (Council revenue funded): to align with need and SEND reform requirements.

5. Summary of financial implications

5.1 The November Scrutiny report included DfE draft benchmarking information only and the KLOE requested that benchmarking information be included again within this report. The final benchmarking information for 2025/26 DSG high needs budgets is set out in Appendix 3. It shows that BCP Council's overall spending is high compared nationally and with statistical neighbours. Note that BCP Council is overspending this budget significantly. The benchmarking shows high BCP spending in non-state schools (in the private and charitable sectors) and in services for alternative provision (for those unable to attend school due to exclusion, medical needs or other reasons). Expenditure in these two areas is also projected to be over budget with BCP costs likely to be moving further ahead of other authorities. The budget for state provision was shown to be at average levels in the benchmarking analysis, but the yearend projection at quarter three is for higher costs.

5.2 The Government's November 2025 Budget Statement:

- Confirmed that the DSG statutory Override, which keeps the accumulated deficit out of the general fund, will stay in place until the end of the March 2028.
- Set out that from 2028/29 central government support to councils for SEND will be at a level that means that further deficits need not accrue. Funding for that in 2028/29 will be absorbed within the overall government budget, not the core schools budget.
- Noted that budgets from 2028/29 onwards will be confirmed in the 2027 Spending Review
- Indicated that further detail on support for LAs with historic and accruing deficits, up to 2028/29, and conditions for accessing such support, will be set out in the Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2025.
- Indicated that further detail on SEND policy changes will be set out in the Schools White Paper, expected in early 2026.

5.3 A joint letter from the DfE and NHS England on 15 December 2025 noted that support provided to local authorities will be linked to assurance that they are taking steps to make a new system a reality, in conjunction with government confirming the detail of SEND reform. Best practice and case studies from previous programmes are being disseminated, with a focus on efficient spending, such as from Safety Valve and Delivering Better Value, and providing all local authorities with SEND and financial advisers to help consider how these learnings can be applied. These advisers will also play a key role in supporting the preparations for reform, reviewing data, embedding best practice and driving progress toward the delivery of high-quality, inclusive services for children and young people.

5.4 Provided with the above letter was an early version of a maturity assessment tool for local area partnerships to assess the maturity of current practice, and plan the changes needed to strengthen the local system. This will be an integral part of the local SEND reform plan.

5.5 The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement received on 17 December 2025 did not set out how local authorities with large deficits are to be supported, as indicated in the November Budget Statement, but that further information will be provided later in the process.

5.6 The DSG Settlement, received also on 17 December 2025, announced that the high needs national formula (NFF) to allocate funding to authorities has been suspended for 2026/27 with no increase in

funding to be provided. Relatively small changes to allocations will be made in summer 2026 to reflect pupil movements between local authorities, and to adjust funding that is to be passed on to schools. The funding gap for 2026/27 was already set to grow and this DfE approach will widen it further unless further financial support becomes available in-year.

- 5.7 The quarter three budget monitoring report for February 2026 Cabinet includes the projection of an overspend of £15.5m on high needs expenditure with an accumulated DSG deficit of £183.6m for March 2026 after taking account of other DSG variances. An estimate of the high needs funding gap for 2026/27 is £95.7m with the overall position set out in the table below.

Table 4: Summary position for dedicated schools grant 2025 to 2027

Dedicated Schools Grant	£m
Accumulated deficit 1 April 2025	113.3
Prior year additional funding – early years	(1.9)
Budgeted high needs funding shortfall 2025-26	57.5
High needs funding reduction 2025-26	0.5
High needs forecast overspend 2025-26	15.5
Variances for other funding blocks	(1.3)
Projected accumulated deficit 31 March 2026	183.6
Projected high needs funding gap 2026/27	95.7
Projected accumulated deficit 31 March 2027	279.3

6. Summary of legal implications

- 6.1 Relevant legislation includes the assessment and (if applicable) relevant plan implementation process in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and related Code of Practice (the Statutory Obligations).
- 6.2 A failure to meet the statutory obligations could result in relevant claims being made, the consequences of which could result in legal proceedings and damage to the council's reputation.
- 6.3 It should be noted that the DfE White Paper on SEND reform will be a further key driver of any investment opportunities. The DfE continue to consult with families until mid-January and therefore the reforms are not expected to be published until after the consultation responses have been gathered and analysed. This is too late to inform the budget for 2026/27.

7. Summary of human resources implications

- 7.1 There are HR resource implications arising from the initiatives outlined in this report. Specifically, recruitment will be required for roles such as Inclusion Advisors and additional capacity within SEND services to deliver new models and improvements. All recruitment activity will be managed through standard HR processes and within the funding identified for these initiatives, ensuring compliance with council policies and budgetary controls.

8. Summary of sustainability impact

- 8.1 The recommendations in this report do not have any direct environmental or sustainability implications. However, initiatives that reduce reliance on out-of-area placements and associated transport may contribute to lower carbon emissions over time.

9. Summary of public health implications

- 9.1 While the recommendations in this report do not directly change public health services, there is an indirect impact because financial pressures on the High Needs Block can affect the ability to deliver timely, integrated support for children and young people with SEND. Delays or gaps in provision can lead to poorer health outcomes, particularly for those with complex needs requiring coordinated education, health, and care input.

- 9.2 This risk is managed through the SEND Local Area Partnership, which brings together the Council, NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), and other partners under shared governance. The partnership ensures:
- Joint commissioning arrangements for therapies and health-related services.
 - Integrated planning to align education, health, and social care resources.
 - Escalation routes through the SEND Improvement Board and High Needs Block Deficit Recovery Plan Board to monitor impact and agree mitigations.
- 9.3 By maintaining strong partnership governance and shared accountability, the local area aims to protect health-related elements of EHCPs and ensure statutory duties are met despite financial constraints

10. Summary of equality implications

- 10.1 There are no recommendations in this report that have any equality implications

11. Summary of risk assessment

- 11.1 There is an ongoing risk from the DSG accumulated deficit on the financial stability of the council.

Background papers

- Children's Overview and Scrutiny November 2025 [KLOE Report O&S High Needs Budget November 2025.docx](#)

Appendices

- Appendix 1: KLOE Raised by Overview and Scrutiny in November 2025
- Appendix 2: Initiatives that deliver savings and efficiencies to the general fund 2025
- Appendix 3: Benchmarking 2025/26 DSG - High Needs Block Budgets

The Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked the following questions which were answered in the November 2025 committee meeting:

Scrutiny Topic: Benchmarking our High Needs Block spend and strategic direction against similar LA comparators to help understand the wider context and find possible solutions. The scrutiny focused on comparing the council's DSG deficit and strategies with other local authorities, understanding what has worked elsewhere, and identifying funding streams and external advice to improve outcomes. Key data requests included benchmarking budgets, trends in EHCPs and exclusions, high needs place creation, and evaluating the effectiveness of measures taken.

Detailed responses to these questions can be found in the Children's Overview and Scrutiny report given in November 2025 - [KLOE Report O&S High Needs Budget November 2025.docx](#)

General Fund Activity

Initiative	Type	Funding source	Delivery status	Financial/evidence note
Appeals & Early Dispute Resolution (IPSEA training, mediation, Tribunal Officers)	Cost avoid	General Fund/HNB (staffing & training)	Embedded	50% reduction in solicitors; ~£95k relates to cost avoidance to the general fund ; ~30% cases settled pre-Tribunal.
Workforce development (EHCCO permanency >93%, induction & training, restructure)	Efficiency	General Fund/HNB	Embedded	Reduced agency reliance; supports timeliness/compliance; enables process efficiencies. Workforce: EHCCO permanency >93% reduces agency premium costs, stabilises casework, and supports timeliness and compliance.
EHCP process efficiency (AI writer, improved parent comms/Local Offer, panels)	Efficiency	HNB/Service budgets	In delivery	Improves timeliness/quality; reduces complaints and adverse decisions. EHCP timeliness: local timeliness is tracking above national (national 46.4% within 20 weeks), with variability driven by partner capacity; efficiency tooling expected to sustain improvements.
Local places for local children reducing journey times and distances and individual costs of travel.	Efficiency	General Fund		Reduces unit costs of transport expenditure over time. See sufficiency information in table 1
SEND Admissions redesign: a fair, transparent placement system (4 phases; implementation from April 2026) to reduce inappropriate placements and long-term reliance on AP/EOTAS (invest to cost-avoid).	Efficiency	General Fund	In delivery	Redesigning SEND admissions creates a fairer, more transparent process that ensures children are placed in settings that best meet their needs. It also streamlines applications, speeds up decisions, and improves collaboration between families, schools, and local authorities. The redesign improves outcomes for children by ensuring quicker, fairer placements that better match their needs. It also reduces stress for families and strengthens collaboration between schools and the local authority. A more efficient process can lower administrative costs, reduce duplication, and minimize expensive tribunal cases. Better planning and data from the new system also help optimise resource allocation, avoiding unnecessary placements and transport costs.

The Innovation Fund was funded by a school block transfer into the High Needs Block in 2024/25 and 2025/26, totalling £1.2M. It was proposed at the time as being 'invest to save,' but is not an investment from council or high needs block funds and therefore should be seen as 'grant funding'. The agreement with schools (via Head Teacher Forum and Schools Forum) was for the funding to be used to focus on three key areas:

1. £550,000 for provision of additional specialist outreach support for mainstream schools. This is in the process of being delivered.
2. £270,000 for a pilot of three inclusion lead posts to work with an identified group of mainstream schools to trial their impact over the next year. Two inclusion leads are due to start in January with a third starting in April. The impact of their work will be monitored and evaluated, and if effective this is a model that could be scaled up. The role is designed to deliver longer-term cost avoidance by supporting schools to have the skill and capacity to meet needs earlier within mainstream settings.
3. £380,000 to deliver training and development support to mainstream schools as set out in original proposals and enabling schools to choose which option would be more impactful for them in supporting their pupils with high needs. This is in the process of being delivered.

Funding was secured from the DfE to support the improvement of SEND Services by addressing specific areas for improvement noted in the Ofsted CQC report of 2021 and subsequent statutory direction. This includes new investment to support schools in creating inclusive environments that meet the needs of all children and young people. Investment of just under £600,000 was secured in August 2025 and the funding is released in three tranches once evidence has been provided of the spend against the associated action plan. The DfE does not require evidence of savings or cost mitigations from the spend and therefore this funding is 'grant funding' to deliver the necessary service transformation; however, it is anticipated that a longer-term benefit of the funding will be cost avoidance due to children's needs being met at an earlier stage. Details of how this funding is being used have been provided in the original KLOE.

Benchmarking 2025/26 DSG - High Needs Block Budgets

2025-26 Budget LA Table (Net) £ per capita																
Statistical Neighbours																
DSG Deficit / Surplus position at 31 March 2025		A														B
		INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL BUDGETS (ISB)- commissioned places from high needs block	Top-up funding – maintained schools	Top-up funding – academies, free schools and colleges	Total top up state schools	Top-up and other funding – non-maintained and independent providers	Additional high needs targeted funding for mainstream schools and academies	SEN support services	Hospital education services	Other alternative provision services	Support for inclusion	Special schools and PRUs in financial difficulty	PFI/BSF costs at special schools, AP/PRUs and Post 16 institutions only	Direct payments (SEN and disability)	Therapies and other health related services	CENTRAL SPEND TOTAL
	ENGLAND - Average (mean)	£181	£225	£253	£478	£217	£6	£44	£5	£29	£20	£0	£1	£3	£7	£810
	ENGLAND - Average (median)	£171	£208	£230		£208	£0	£40	£2	£20	£14	£0	£0	£0	£2	£778
	ENGLAND - Maximum	£1,100	£816	£593		£623	£96	£145	£46	£224	£150	£28	£29	£37	£85	£1,298
	ENGLAND - Minimum	£72	£1	£15		£0	£0	£0	£0	£-2	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£427
	Statistical Neighbours Median	£170	£180	£288		£227	£3	£49	£0	£34	£17	£0	£0	£3	£10	£819
	Maximum	£215	£344	£593		£525	£36	£77	£15	£172	£91	£1	£0	£8	£12	£1,261
	Minimum	£129	£27	£78		£70	£0	£13	£0	£0	£3	£0	£0	£0	£0	£676
Large deficit	839 BCP	£203	£191	£288	£479	£525	£7	£49	£1	£172	£17	£0	£0	£0	£11	£1,261
No deficit	822 Bedford Borough	£129	£116	£341	£457	£119	£36	£77	£15	£24	£17	£0	£0	£0	£9	£754
No Deficit	882 Southend-on-Sea	£213	£27	£427	£454	£70	£0	£49	£2	£21	£91	£0	£0	£8	£10	£706
Large deficit	886 Kent	£215	£325	£155	£480	£248	£7	£13	£0	£34	£21	£0	£0	£4	£11	£819
Large deficit	878 Devon	£140	£180	£212	£392	£352	£7	£43	£5	£67	£3	£0	£0	£2	£2	£874
No deficit	826 Milton Keynes	£184	£344	£201	£545	£113	£5	£33	£0	£0	£15	£0	£0	£0	£0	£712
Medium deficit	303 Bexley	£210	£64	£593	£657	£93	£1	£70	£0	£23	£8	£0	£0	£5	£6	£864
Large deficit	938 West Sussex	£146	£312	£78	£390	£454	£0	£62	£1	£127	£7	£1	£0	£0	£11	£1,053
Large deficit	926 Norfolk	£170	£208	£330	£538	£355	£0	£45	£0	£51	£47	£0	£0	£4	£10	£1,050
No deficit	845 East Sussex	£162	£72	£207	£279	£227	£3	£63	£0	£15	£73	£0	£0	£6	£9	£676
No deficit	881 Essex	£151	£90	£295	£385	£144	£0	£33	£0	£79	£33	£0	£0	£3	£12	£689
	Narrative	BCP around average	BCP generally at average for state provision			BCP very high	BCP average	BCP average	BCP has majority in ISB places (Quay School)	BCP very high	BCP average	Small niche budgets			BCP average	BCP close to national maximum spend per capita
																BCP is High Spend Overall

Pupil Divisors Used: Total population aged between 0-19.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Family Hubs Working Group final report
Meeting date	27 January 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a Family Hubs Working Group to better understand and review progress of the implementation of Family Hubs in BCP.</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the output of the working group, including suggested recommendations.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that the Committee:</p> <p>1. Notes and supports the findings and recommendations of the Family Hubs Working Group as set out at Appendix A to this report.</p>
Reason for recommendations	To follow due process and formalise the findings and recommendations arising from the deep dive on Family Hubs, undertaken by the working group on behalf of the full O&S committee.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Corporate Director for Children's Services
Report Authors	Lindsay Marshall, Scrutiny Specialist
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to commission a Family Hubs Working Group at its meeting on 26 November 2024.
2. The Working Group details, methodology, findings and recommendations are set out in Appendix A to this report.

Options Appraisal

3. The Committee is asked to note and support the findings and recommendations of the Working Group as set out in Appendix A. The committee can also amend or reject the recommendations. Any recommendations proposed by the Working Group within its report require the support of the parent O&S committee to advance as formal recommendations from O&S.

Summary of financial implications

4. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Summary of legal implications

5. There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Summary of human resources implications

6. There are no direct human resources implications associated with this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

7. There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

Summary of public health implications

8. There are no public health implications associated with this report.

Summary of equality implications

11. There are no equality implications associated with this report.

Summary of risk assessment

12. There are no direct risks associated with this report.

Background papers

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A – Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Working Group – Family Hubs – Findings and Recommendations

Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Working Group – Family Hubs - Findings

Working Group Details, Findings and Recommendations	
Group Membership	Councillors Olivia Brown, Emily Harman, Peter Cooper, Sandra Mackrow
Methodology	<p>23 April 2025 - Working Group visits to two Family Hubs – Poole Old Town & Kinson and West Howe.</p> <p>9 September 2025 - Working Group meeting with Pippa Emerson, Head of Service, Early Help and Targeted Intervention.</p> <p>Various working group meetings with Democratic Services to scope approach to visits and meetings, reflect on visit and agree findings.</p>
Key Lines of Enquiry	
<p>The scope of the enquiry was set out by O&S councillors as follows:</p> <p>The government has helped to fund Family Hubs across local authorities in the UK, BCP has been a part of this initiative and is part way through the journey.</p> <p>The work done so far has been brought to committee for scrutiny, however, due to the size, ongoing nature, and scope of this project, the committee would like to work with the team further to understand how Family Hubs are progressing.</p> <p>As a committee we wish to understand how the roll out of Family Hubs has gone. We also want to know what is working and what is not and as stakeholders what, if anything, we can help with or be part of to ensure that Family Hubs in BCP are providing the best Early Help that they can. The group would like to speak to front line staff in Family Hubs and a manager responsible for the Family Hubs service.</p>	

Working group findings

The Working Group is encouraged by the thoughtful development of Family Hubs and the dedication of the staff leading them. It is clear that considerable effort has gone into creating a supportive and responsive environment for families, which was a central concern at the outset.

Community engagement is a visible strength, with hubs actively working to connect with parents, carers, and local organisations. The group recognises the importance of continuing to explore how these efforts can be made more effective and inclusive, and how they reflect the evolving needs of the communities they are serving. Clearer measurement of effectiveness would be beneficial, supported by improved data collection and feedback mechanisms.

Staff wellbeing has also been a key theme. The commitment of staff is evident, and there is a shared interest in ensuring that wellbeing is supported in a way that is meaningful and sustainable. The group has reflected on a range of ideas to support staff, including practical actions and the importance of listening to staff feedback.

Ongoing Engagement:

The Working Group would welcome regular engagement with Family Hub teams, framed as open and constructive discussions and visits rather than anything more formal or that would impact on workload. These conversations are seen as a valuable opportunity to share learning, understand challenges, and support continuous, collaborative improvement.

Recommendations

The Working Group recommends that Officers:

1. Continue to build on the strong foundations of community engagement, with a focus on inclusivity and responsiveness.
2. Explore ways to support staff wellbeing that are informed by staff experiences and feedback.
3. Develop clear measures of effectiveness relating to Family Hubs, with key performance indicators focused on reach, inclusivity and responsiveness to evolving community needs, supported by improved data collection and feedback.

Note - These recommendations are directed to Head of Service, Early Help and Targeted Intervention, and Director of Children's Social Care.

The Working Group recommends that Cabinet:

4. Notes the scrutiny that has been undertaken on Family Hubs and the working group's finding of the strong staff commitment to community engagement.
5. Endorses continued support for Family Hubs, with future priorities to include investment in staff capacity, professional development and enhanced tools to evidence impact.

The Working Group recommends that the Children's Services O&S Committee:

6. Establishes regular, informal dialogue between the Committee and Family Hub teams to maintain transparency and shared understanding. This to be done annually by named rapporteurs and included on the committee's work programme. Agreed rapporteurs to maintain links to Family Hubs through independent visits and highlight any significant progress/ red flags to committee as arising to assist other committee members with understanding where any further scrutiny may be valuable.

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Report subject	Children's Services Capital Strategy Report 2026-2029
Meeting date	27 January 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report sets out the Education and Skills Capital Programme for the period 2026/27– 2028/29. The report summarises available capital funding totalling £34.9 million and provides an indicative programme of investment of £33.5 million set against key budget headings aligned to improvement priorities across the service. The planned expenditure of available capital is set out in this report and shows a balanced budget.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: agrees the capital programme as set out in the report, including the budget allocations set against the capital funding available for the period 2026/27.
Reason for recommendations	Utilising investment in the school estate to discharge the council's statutory duties to deliver good estate management and secure sufficiency of places aligned to the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, SEND Sufficiency Strategy, Belonging and Improvement Strategy and DSG Recovery Plan.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People, Education and Skills)
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley (Director of Children, Young People, Education & Skills)
Report Authors	Tanya Smith - Head of Service Place Planning and Admissions Jason Moors – Schools Capital Programme Manager Anna Fresolone – Finance Manager Charleen Putman – Capital Accountant
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. The Council's Constitution sets out the budget and policy framework. The Council is required to calculate budget requirements for each financial year and to set a balanced budget. The Capital Programme supports the delivery of the Council's strategic Asset Management Plan and is consistent with the Medium-Term Financial Plan and with Children's Services strategic plans for the provision of sufficient and well-maintained education infrastructure.

2. Capital expenditure is defined as spending that creates an asset for the Council i.e. buildings, vehicles and equipment and spending on non-current assets i.e. buildings not owned by the council (academy schools where the trust holds the freehold) and the award of capital grants and funding agreements.
3. The current capital programme was approved by Council in March 2025 and set out the priorities for the period of 2025/26 – 2027/28. The updated programme for the period 2026/27 – 2028/29 provides an update on the progress previously approved budget headings and schemes and new proposals for investment summarised under strategic headings.
4. Academies, Free Schools, and Voluntary Aided Schools are directly allocated condition funding through the Department for Education (DfE), so maintenance works in these types of establishments are not part of this capital programme. The Council funds sufficiency works at Academies and Free Schools (as well as at maintained schools) in order to ensure there are sufficient school places, and sufficient and suitable provision for SEND.
5. **Sources of Estimated Capital Funding:** The estimated capital funding sources available for the 2026/27 Capital Programme, including slippage from the schemes agreed in the 2025/26 capital strategy are contained in Table 1. Including the estimated allocations for future years, the total amount of capital available for the financial years 2026-29 is £34.9 million. This is made up of the following sources of funding:
 - **Basic Need Grant Funding:** Basic need funding is allocated to fund the supply of new school places. The total available in this plan period is £0.88 million.
 - **School Condition Allocation (SCA):** Funding of £5.88m supports the work necessary to maintain the school estate.
 - **SEND High Needs Provision Capital:** The Council's high needs provision capital is estimated at £27.68 million. This is grant funding provided to councils for the purpose of increasing the supply of specialist places and promoting inclusion.
 - **Section 106 Contributions:** Funds have been received from developers for expansion of school places to mitigate school place pressures created by new housing developments totalling £0.51 million.

Table 1: Sources of Estimated Capital Funding

	2025/26 (estimated carry forward)	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
Basic Need	876	0	0	0	876
Schools Condition Allocation*	4,040	595	613	631	5,879
High Needs Provision Capital**	15,681	4,000	4,000	4,000	27,681
Section 106 Contributions	508	0	0	0	508
Total Funding Received	21,105	4,595	4,613	4,631	34,944

**Funding for SCA is estimated based on current data and previous allocations. The DfE has guaranteed SCA funding for the next 10 years.*

***The DfE has not committed capital funding for High Needs Provision Capital Allocations in future years so it is not possible to provide an accurate estimate. A nominal figure has been included in the table, which is below the levels of funding received in the previous 3 financial years.*

Issues

6. **Capital Programme 2026/27 – 2028/29:** For ease of reporting, the proposed capital programme for the period 2026/27 – 2028/29 comprises schemes grouped under two headings as follows:
 - **Schemes under Pre-Approved Budget Headings:** These include carried forward amounts from schemes with prior approval that are currently in progress for the period 2025/26 – 2026/28.
 - **New schemes requiring Approval:** details of schemes and priority budget allocations requiring approval necessary to maintain the school estate, deliver new school places and expand access to childcare.

7. **Budget Headings with Prior Approval:** Budget headings with prior approval are set out in the table below along with commentary for each. Details of individual schemes are detailed in **Appendices 2 and 3**. Spending for these schemes is profiled across financial years 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Table 2: Budget Headings with Prior Approval –Schemes in development aligned under previous budget headings approved.

Headline Budget	2026/27	2027/28	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Basic Need Surveys	50	50	100
Basic Need Total	50	50	100
Planned Repairs and Maintenance	1,790	200	1,990
Urgent Works	100	100	200
Condition Surveys	50	50	100
Climate Change/Low Carbon	550	50	600
School Condition Allocation Total	2,490	400	2,890
SEND Advanced Design Fees	200	200	400
SEND Adaptations: Access	70	100	170
Specialist Places 0-19 (Round 2)	3,875	300	4,175
High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Total	4,145	600	4,745
Total Budgets with Prior Approval	6,685	1,050	7,735

- **Planned Repairs and Maintenance:** A summary of priority repairs and maintenance works carried out and planned in the maintained school estate is set out at **Appendix 2**. This work was informed by analysis of up-to-date condition data and subsequent consultations with school leaders.
- **Urgent Works:** The Urgent Works budget is essential to ensure that we are able to react responsively to unforeseeable condition or health and safety issues that arise in maintained schools and are beyond the resources of the school to resolve. In 2025/26, Urgent Works funding was used to responsively repair structural defects that arose at Somerford Primary School, ensuring that the health and safety of pupils at the site was not jeopardised.
- **Condition Surveys:** Condition surveys will continue to be carried out for maintained schools every five years in line with the DfE's Good Estate Management guidance. 6 maintained school sites were surveyed in 2025/26.
- **Climate Change:** This budget contributes to the Council's carbon emission reduction targets and to the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy by using capital funding to install carbon reducing systems that benefit schools and pupils. In 2025/26 projects have been funded at maintained schools to install energy efficient LED Lighting and efficient heating control systems.
- **SEND Advanced Design Fees:** To progress surveys and feasibility works required to develop viable and affordable schemes that have been identified as having the potential to substantially address BCP SEND sufficiency needs with respect to Specialist Places and Alternative Provision places both within school settings and surplus corporate sites. Budgetary approval for any schemes developed in this way will be sought in line with BCP Financial Regulations.
- **SEND Adaptations - Access:** To support the admission of children with complex needs into mainstream or specialist settings who otherwise may require nonlocal or higher cost provision. Note: The fund is not available to support reasonable adjustments to school premises in line with normal duties and responsibilities contained in the Equality Act 2010.

- **Specialist Places 0-19 (Round 2): Specialist Places - Round 2:** To respond to our sufficiency challenges, the Council has worked with local school leaders to agree to co-locate specialist provisions in mainstream schools, soliciting expressions of interest and approving projects through the SEND Programme Board as set out in the Capital Strategy 2025-28. This approach helps to make the best use of the school estate by utilising surplus accommodation in schools thereby sustaining schools experiencing falling rolls. Proposals include resourced provisions, satellite locations and a mainstream plus link provision for Year 7 children. Capital funding will support the development of appropriately sized accommodation and suitable facilities to meet the needs of the children that are placed there. A list of approved projects funded from the £8.3m allocation agreed in the Capital Strategy 2025-28 is included at **Appendix 3** with governance arrangements for the capital projects and specific project details set out at **Appendix 4**. A total of 200 places is being created at approximately £19,375 Per place; this is substantially below the national benchmark of £22,890 for SEND places in refurbished accommodation. A summary of projects that have addressed the shortage in SEND Places that have been completed or closed in the 2025/26 financial year is included at **Appendix 5**.
- **Pipeline Projects:** Work continues to deliver additional specialist places working with our special schools and with our wider mixed economy of schools and providers within the market. There are a number of pipeline projects that are in the development stages. Details of progress will continue to be reported to the SEND Programme Board for appropriate oversight and scrutiny. Any financial approvals will be sought in line with Financial Regulations.

8. **New Schemes Requiring Approval:** Proposed budget headings requiring approval are listed in Table 3 below. This identifies investment of £25.9 million in the next 3 years. A commentary for each of the headline budgets is set out below.

Table 3: Proposed New Schemes for Capital Programme 2026/27– 2028/29

Headline Budget	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Planned Repairs and Maintenance	500	1,000	1,450	2,950
Total School Condition Allocation	500	1,000	1,450	2,950
Specialist & Alternative Provision Places**	2,000	4,900	7,000	13,900
Per-pupil Capital (Replaces Free-School Funding) +	500	2,000	7,500	9,000
Total Specialist Provision Capital	2,500	6,900	14,500	22,900
Total Commitment Proposed	3,000	7,900	15,950	25,850

*The unspent allocation for Specialist and Alternative Provision Places agreed in the Capital Strategy 2025-28 has been re-profiled to deliver the emerging updated SEND and Alternative Provision Sufficiency Strategy

+ Several potential schemes are in the development pipeline at different stages with detail needed before they are brought forward for formal approval. Therefore, future expenditure is profiled based on high-level cost and programme estimates.

9. **Planned Repairs and Maintenance:** Investment is proposed to address identified condition and suitability issues and areas of compliance. In 2026/27 investment is proposed at Mudeford Infant School and Christchurch Learning Centre based on recent condition survey data indicating priority condition works necessary to maintain a safe learning environment and a breakdown of these costs by school is included at **Appendix 1**. Spending is profiled for future years based on existing condition data and the schedule of planned condition surveys.
10. **Specialist and Alternative Provision (AP) Places:** The current SEND Sufficiency Strategy was established with a two-year horizon, focusing on immediate priorities for expanding provision, improving outcomes, and addressing rising demand for EHCPs. As we approach the end of this cycle, a refreshed strategic plan is in progress. The updated strategy will sustain progress and respond to evolving needs, particularly across the secondary phase, increase availability of local post-16 pathways and develop our alternative provision. This means that capital investment in this updated capital programme will support the delivery of an updated SEND and Alternative Provision Sufficiency Strategy. The focus of the updated strategy will further help to create the

right conditions for the creation of specialist and alternative provision places by pursuing system wide changes that bring together the activity across the service. For example, this could include investment to adapt existing primary and secondary school facilities to create specialist resource bases, or to develop dedicated spaces within alternative provision settings that support therapeutic interventions and vocational pathways for post-16 learners. The strategy involves:

- **Primary Phase:** The development of specialist and alternative provision places across the primary phase to meet increased need including development of the three-tier model of alternative provision. The new model will help provide the right support at the right time enabling our local school partners to intervene earlier, de-escalate need and promote inclusion in mainstream schools. The three-tier model helps to provide informal and more formal models of provision along a continuum aligned to the needs of children and enabling smooth and swift transition back into mainstream schools. The actions necessary to develop the model is set out in the AP Delivery Plan which has been developed by the AP Working Group comprising stakeholders from across the partnership.
- **Secondary Phase Approach:** The creation of secondary phase mainstream pathways that are responsive, inclusive, and sustainable. Work is underway with academy trusts and partner schools to discuss innovative models of provision and co-design solutions that draw on shared expertise and actively apply the three-tier model of alternative provision to resolve sufficiency issues. Capital investment will be brought forward for approval of schemes in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- **Developing Our Post-14 and Post-16 Offer:** The development of a cohesive local offer providing flexible pathways of provision helping more young people remain in mainstream settings. This requires investment in sites and the development of local partnerships and commissioned services. Continued collaboration is essential to align services, identify gaps, and shape a more integrated and responsive offer that meets the diverse needs of young people.
- **Development of Education Provision in Surplus Corporate Sites:** Children's Services continue to assess properties that have been declared surplus by service areas for the purpose of maximising opportunities to increase the supply of specialist places. A range of site locations will be investigated, including those offered by local school partners in order to maximise the use of the school estate and help sustain schools in a falling rolls context. These are estimated to provide between 120-300 places.

11. **Per Pupil Capital (Replaces Free School Funding):** Per Pupil Capital (Replaces Free School Funding): In December 2025, the Department for Education cancelled 18 special free school projects, including the already approved Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole special free school. These projects will no longer proceed under the original free school model and instead, BCP Council has been informed that it will receive a per-pupil capital allocation to deliver equivalent provision within existing school settings. The funding received does not enable us to build a new provision with an equivalent number of places so this reduces our options. The change is intended to enable Local Authorities to expand specialist SEND places through mainstream and specialist settings more quickly than a centrally delivered project, but there are challenges in finding partner schools who are able to expand provisions or offer new sustainable specialist places in line with Local Authority needs. This approach also presents specific challenges, including identifying suitable sites within existing school estates (with appropriate space, access, and adjacencies), securing and sustaining the specialist workforce and leadership capacity required to run high-quality provision, and ensuring revenue funding and commissioning models align with the pattern of growth. There are further practical considerations around safeguarding, specialist adaptations (e.g., sensory, therapeutic and hygiene facilities), and ICT infrastructure; establishing clear governance and partnership arrangements with host schools; and ensuring geographic balance to minimise travel and transport pressure for families.

12. **School Rebuilding Programme:** BCP Council is working with DfE to deliver the 2 projects approved as part of the School Rebuilding Programme (SRP) in 2022. The two projects are detailed as follows:

- Winchelsea School began the feasibility stage of the SRP project in July 2025. The DfE is anticipated to report the results of the feasibility study in April 2026, which will provide details on the scope, design and programme of the project.
- Somerford Primary School began the pre-feasibility stage of the SRP project in September 2025. The DfE is anticipated to report the results of the feasibility study in 2026, which will provide details on the scope, design and programme of the project.

13. **Summary Position:** Table 4 shows the balance of grant funding remaining taking account of total estimated capital funding, the cost of pre-approved schemes and schemes for approval as contained in this report. Importantly, Table 4 includes funds received from developers for expansion of school places to mitigate the pressures of new housing. It is proposed that the available capital will be allocated to schemes which meet the criteria of the Section 106 agreement and appropriate approvals will be sought when schemes are brought forward.

Table 4: Balance of Capital Grant Funding at 2026/27 – 2028/29

	Basic Need £,000	SCA £,000	High Needs £,000	CIL £,000	Total £,000
Estimated Allocation	876	5,879	27,681	508	34,944
Pre-Approved Schemes	100	2,890	4,745	0	7,735
New Schemes Requiring Approval	0	2,950	22,900	0	25,850
Total Investment	100	5,840	27,645	0	33,585
Grant Funding Remaining*	776	39	36	508	1,359

**Grant Funding Remaining: This includes funding necessary to support the development of works and schemes following receipt of updated information and data about the needs of the school estate. This includes admissions data on in year pressures for places and updated condition and works surveys.*

Summary of financial implications

14. This report sets out the financial position in respect of the spending of grant funding allocated to the Local Authority by the Department for Education.
15. The report also sets out S106 funding that has been received from developers to meet sufficiency need. All schemes proposing to use S106 funding will be taken to Capital Briefing Board in consultation for Corporate Finance to ensure that the conditions of the agreement are met with respect to the use and location of the project.

Summary of legal implications

16. This report sets out the current position of the capital programme. The contracts and funding agreements that Children's Services enters into as client for the projects that form part of the capital programme will be drafted and signed in conjunction with Legal Services. Capital funding is allocated to projects in line with the published terms and conditions.
17. Changes to the admissions policies of schools and academies that are expanding SEND places in Resourced Provisions or Satellite Sites require a significant change application to be undertaken. Where the responsible body is an academy trust, this application needs to be approved by the Department for Education's Southwest Regions Group and SEND Sufficiency colleagues will work closely with Academy Trusts to support this process. Where BCP Council is the responsible body, significant change approval will be sought from Cabinet.

Summary of human resources implications

18. The commissioning of Children's Services capital projects rests principally with staff under the Education and Skills directorate. This includes client-side project management. Technical project management is provided by or commissioned through the Council's Facilities Management Team. The ongoing staffing of schools and academies is the responsibility of governing bodies and academy boards, with day-to-day professional leadership and management provided by

headteachers and school staff. During the delivery phase of a capital programme additional technical staff, such as surveyors and designers, may be required: such costs are generally capitalised.

Summary of sustainability impact

19. Any new project will take account of sustainability at the design stage as set out above. A discrete budget has been set aside to fund condition works to the maintained school estate more sustainable.
20. Any new buildings constructed at Winchelsea School and Somerford Primary School as part of the DfE's SRP schemes will be designed on the principles of net zero carbon, substantially reducing the emissions in the maintained school estate.

Summary of public health implications

21. Children with special educational needs and disabilities often have associated health needs, in some cases lifelong medical needs. The health needs of children will be taken into account as part of the options appraisal and design works for any project. This would include, for example, the provision of hygiene and first aid rooms. The provision of outdoor play space and facilities for physical education will be considered as part of any project in line DfE Building Bulletin design guidance, as will the promotion of walking and cycling to school by the provision of appropriate facilities. An approach to SEND which enables more children to attend a school in their local community will reduce journey times and distances and potentially reduce emissions.
22. Condition works projects and projects to fund the creation of SEND places in existing schools address historic issues of building non-compliance with respect to fire regulations, ventilation and carbon efficiency, leading to a net improvement in health

Summary of equality implications

23. All proposed capital projects will be developed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Policy. Children with SEND often have a range of disadvantages, such as economic deprivation. Better SEND provision is a means of mitigating these disadvantages and enabling children to achieve more. Some types of SEND affect either boys or girls disproportionately. Proposals for new SEND accommodation will help to address any such disadvantage. An equalities impact assessment conversation screening tool has been completed and sent to panel to the EQIA Panel for review and discussion.

Summary of risk assessment

24. This report sets out recommendations for budgetary approval for a number of schemes that will require further definition before final costs are known both as part of the SEND Sufficiency strategy and Planned Repairs and Maintenance Plan. The main risks and mitigations provided at **Appendix 6**.

Recommendation

25. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees the capital programme as set out in the report, including the new budget allocations set against the capital funding available for the period 2026/27-2028/29.

Background Papers

- Children's Services Capital Strategy 2025 – 2028
- Children and Young People's Partnership Plan 2024/25
- SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan 2025/27
- Belonging Strategy 2024
- Alternative Provision Delivery Plan 2025
- SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2024 – 2026

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Proposed Planned R&M Capital Programme for Approval 2026/27– 2028/29
- Appendix 2 - Summary of Completed and Planned Works in Repairs and Maintenance Schemes
- Appendix 3 - High Needs Provision Capital: Budget Headings with Prior Approval
- Appendix 4 - Capital and Programme Governance Arrangements for Specialist Places 0-19 (Round 2) and Summary of Capital Projects for Specialist Places 0-19 (Round 2) Programme
- Appendix 5 - High Needs Provision Capital Allocation capital projects closed in 2025/26
- Appendix 6 - Project Risks and Mitigations

Proposed Planned R&M Capital Programme for Approval 2026/27– 2028/29

Name of Project/Budget	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
Christchurch Learning Centre+	330	As we work with the schools and appointed contractors to review condition data and develop further schemes, we will understand the works that need to be programmed into future years.		330
Mudeford Infant School+	170			170
Planned Repairs and Maintenance	500	1,000	1,450	2,950

+These are planned repairs and maintenance works. Best endeavours have been used to estimate costs based on existing data but due to construction inflation since the surveys were complete, availability of labour and materials and the potential for surveys to uncover additional issues, these costs may increase. These figures should not be viewed as final at this early stage.

Summary of Completed and Planned Works in Repairs and Maintenance Schemes

School	2025/26	2026/27
Burton Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Extension of fire alarm system ➤ Refurbishment of toilet block ➤ Repair of glazed roofs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Replacement of windows ➤ Fire compartmentation ➤ Additional toilet refurbishment
Christchurch Learning Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Replacement and upgrade of boiler plant at Stour Road ➤ Replacement and upgrade of boiler plant at Stour Cottage ➤ Replacement and upgrade of electrical distribution at Stour Road ➤ Roof repairs at Stour Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Replacement of windows and external doors at Stour Cottage ➤ Installation of boundary fencing at Stour Cottage ➤ Repair of boundary walls ➤ Road safety enhancements at entrance to Stour Road ➤ Replacement of lighting at Stour Road ➤ Replacement, upgrade and extension of A/C at Stour Road.
Highcliffe St Mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Site security improvements and boundary fencing. ➤ Replaced life-expired boiler plant and upgraded boiler controls and distribution pipework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Condition survey of flat roofs.
Linwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Widespread replacement of fire doors and additional fire stopping to comply with building regulations. ➤ Replacement and upgrade of main electrical intake. ➤ Upgrade of boundary fencing to improve site security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conversion of former Swimming Pool to sports and dining hall. ➤ Repair of boundary walls ➤ Replacement of boiler plant ➤ Survey and replacement of flat roofs in line with needs.
Mudford Infant School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Replacement of fire doors in response to Fire Risk Assessment ➤ Resurfacing of external play areas to remove trip hazards ➤ Replacement and upgrade of electrical distribution boards in response to EICR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Replacement and upgrade of boiler plant, controls and distribution. ➤ Roof survey and replacement of roofs in line with needs
Mudford Junior School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upgraded access control to improve site security. ➤ Upgraded security alarm and CCTV monitoring on site to bring systems in line with other parts of the school estate. ➤ Installed edge protection system for safe access to A/C equipment on roof. ➤ Internal works to upgrade floor coverings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Condition survey to determine next R&M priorities.
Somerford Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upgrade of school wide LED lighting to reduce carbon emissions. ➤ Replacement and expansion of guttering ➤ Replacement of life expired timber access ramp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ M&E survey to determine interim R&M priorities ➤ Work with Department for Education to maximise scope of rebuild project.
Winchelsea School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Replacement of physical therapy space that was lost when modular buildings were demolished. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with Department for Education to maximise scope of rebuild project.

High Needs Provision Capital: Budget Headings with Prior Approval

Headline Budget	2026/27	2027/28	Total
SEND Advanced Design Fees	200	200	400
SEND Adaptations - Access	100	100	200
Specialist Places 0-19	5,000	300	5,300
Total Budget Approved	5,300	600	5,900

Projects in development using headline budget.

Resourced Provisions

Project Name	2026/27	2027/28	Total
Bethany Junior School	250	0	250
Elm Academy	480	0	480
Manorside Academy	280	0	280
Muscliff Primary School	250	0	250
Pokesdown Primary School	450	0	450
Queens Park Infant School	205	0	205
Queens Park Infant Progression Pathway	250	0	250
Somerford Primary School	250	0	250
St Clement's/ St John's	815	0	815

Special Schools Satellite Expansions

Project Name	2026/27	2027/28	Total
Old Town Infant School	35	0	35
Stanley Green Infant Academy	610	0	610
Total Programme	3,875	0	3,875

*Note: All costs for schemes are based on a Cost Plan 1 cost estimate subject to final designs. Costs currently contain c.15% contingency and will be refined as part of a robust project management and change control methodology (See **Appendix 4**)*

Summary – committed and remaining funding from pre-approved budgets

Project Name	2026/27	2027/28	Total
Total Funding Pre-Approved	5,300	600	5,900
Total Funding Committed	3,875	0	3,875
Amount remaining (to be utilised as the development of schemes progresses)	1,425	600	2,025

Capital and Programme Governance Arrangements for Specialist Places 0-19 (Round 2)

All projects included in the Round 2 programme of work were identified, scoped, designed and costed as part of a robust governance process to ensure that:

- Places are delivered in the right locations.
- Places meet the needs of BCP Council.
- Schemes have had input and approval from school leadership teams and governing bodies.
- Provisions created are proportionate to the needs of the children and young people that are placed there.
- Buildings are compliant with statutory regulations and are in line with Department for Education recommendations with respect to space and facilities.
- Schemes offer value for money.

All expressions of interest from school partners were assessed with oversight from strategic commissioning. Site constraints and capital project risks were captured at the bidding stage. Following this, projects received scrutiny and approval from the Children's Services SEND Programme Board.

Under the capital governance framework, a Project Initiation Document (PID) was prepared for each project that proposed a scope of works, included a detailed risk register and identified site constraints. Following approval of the PID, site surveys were carried out to further develop risk and constraint mitigations and inform a concept design. At all stages, Headteachers and relevant staff from partner schools and academies were consulted on the design and changes were not made without their approval.

After the designs were adopted, all schemes were costed by BCP Council's in-house construction works team and by School Project Managers using data from recently delivered projects. Therefore, the estimated cost used to seek budget approval are robust and include sufficient contingency to mitigate against unforeseen risks proportionate to the scale and complexity of the projects.

The governance process includes for a robust change control process whereby changes are escalated through the dedicated School Project Manager to the Capital Steering Group that provides close financial and operational oversight of all projects. Likewise, the delivery of the schemes against the service objectives are monitored through the SEND Sufficiency Recommendations Board with ultimate oversight from the SEND Programme Board.

All projects have been through the relevant project Gateway Stages to receive approval to proceed and PIDs and Gateway reports detailing the scope of works and a breakdown of the identified costs are available.

Approval for the programme of works is required meet tight timescales for capital delivery as construction works on school sites need to be scheduled and managed in order to minimise disruption to education provision, meeting holiday periods where necessary.

A list of projects is set out in the table below.

Summary of Capital Projects for Specialist Places 0-19 (Round 2) Programme

Project Name	Cost £'000	No. of Places	Age Range Primary Need	Target Opening
Bethany Junior School RP	250	16	Internal segregation, refurbishment and fire compliance works. Form external breakout space with improved fencing. Provides a progression pathway for the RP at St Clement's.	Sep -2026
Elm Academy RP	480	24	Medium refurbishment, health and safety works and minor remodelling of existing modular building with external space.	Sep -2026
Manorside Academy RP	280	10	Heavy refurbishment, remodelling and health and safety works to former caretaker's bungalow with boundary security improvements.	Sep -2026
Muscliff Primary School RP	250	16	Light refurbishment of classroom spaces, remodelling and external spaces with a potential further phase for Alternative Provision.	Sep -2026
Old Town Infant School Satellite	35	10	Winchelsea satellite base expansion for 10 KS1 and early years children at Old Town Infant School. Intimate care space and external play areas	Sep-2025
Pokesdown Primary School RP	450	16	Significant internal remodelling and partitioning works to create suitably sized spaces with some health and safety compliance works and external improvements.	Sep -2026
Queens Park Infant School RP	205	20	Formalisation of existing BCP funded provision. Internal remodelling and light refurbishment to make space suitable for pupils' needs.	Sep -2026
Queens Park Infant Progression Pathway RP	250	16	Refurbishment of spaces to make suitable for pupils' needs and the security of staff and pupils.	Sep-2026
Somerford Primary School RP	250	16	Internal remodelling and condition rectification works to create internal space for existing SEND pupils. Could be used for RP if significant change request is granted.	Sep -2026
Stanley Green Infant Academy Satellite	610	40	Light refurbishment and remodelling works to make spaces fit with Winchelsea's delivery model for Primary School SEND facilities.	Sep -2026
St Clement's/ St John's RP	815	16	Necessary to formalise an existing BCP funded provision. Life expired modular building to be replaced by a new classroom building sensitive to heritage considerations and refurbishment of internal space to form suitable classroom.	Jan -2027
Total	3,875	200		

Appendix 5

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation capital projects closed in 2025/26

Project Name	Places Created	Total Project Cost £'000	Project Description	Date Opened
Bourne Academy Link	12	490	Internal provision to support children transitioning to secondary school as part of a graduated approach to enabling children with additional needs to access the Key Stage 3 curriculum	Sep-2024
Broadstone First School	20	1,700	Extension of school to create 16 place resourced provision for 14 KS1 pupils with ASC.	Oct-2024
Canford Heath Infant/Junior School	35	1,800	Extension and remodelling to create a 15-place resourced provision KS1 pupils and a 20-place resourced provision for KS2 pupils.	Feb-2025
Dingley's Promise: Bournemouth	10	25	Works to improve the space, increase security and make the space more effective for EYFS children undergoing a needs assessment.	Apr-2024
Dingley's Promise: Christchurch	8	306	Refurbishment of former caretaker's bungalow to create early years assessment centre run by Dingley's Promise.	Feb-2026
Dingley's Promise: Poole	12	48	Refurbishment of former family hub to create early years assessment centre run by Dingley's Promise.	Sep-2025
Linwood Satellite: Oakdale Junior School	32	470	Creation of new standalone satellite provision for EYFS and KS1 pupils in surplus accommodation at Oakdale Junior School	Nov-2024
Malmesbury Park	Suitability of existing places	30	Funding to support suitability works to improve an existing Resourced Provision that was approved under a previous tranche of works.	N/A
Post-16 Skills Centre	60	1,550	Refurbishment of former family hub to create Post-16 Skills Centre satellite of Linwood School for 60 young people	Nov-2025
Somerford: Forest Hub	Suitability of existing places	40	Refurbishment of internal spaces to create a dedicated base at Somerford Primary School to support 20 children with EHCPs	Nov-2025
Victoria Education Centre (VEC)	7	110	Refurbishment of internal spaces to create a class for a cohort of EYFS pupils with complex needs placed at VEC.	Jan-2025
Total	196	6,569		

Project Risks and Mitigations

- a. **Risk:** Project costs exceed the approved budget:

Mitigation: condition projects are based on recent condition surveys undertaken by building professionals. Where survey data is older, budgets take into account recent price inflation in construction industry, statutory fees and surveys and allocate a contingency to mitigate project specific risks. Where cost information is not available, for both condition projects and new SEND facilities, in-depth feasibility work will be carried out to provide greater cost certainty and further approvals will be recommended in line with BCP Financial Regulations. This approach has delivered all Planned R&M and SEND Sufficiency schemes undertaken in 2025/26 within their approved budgets.

- b. **Risk:** the project is not delivered on time.

Mitigation: all projects will have a project plan setting out the timescale for critical products and will be managed in accordance with the governance procedures overseen by the Children's Services Capital Steering Group and SEND Programme Board.

- c. **Risk:** the project is not delivered to the quality expected.

Mitigation: all projects will have a clear specification in terms of service outcomes (usually defined within Children's Services), and technical specifications (that will be determined by specialists within the Facilities Management Team or 3rd party consultants as appropriate). Construction monitoring and snagging will be overseen by in-house property professionals in the Facilities Management Team.

- d. **Risk:** the project does not deliver facilities that are required.

Mitigation: Condition works have been agreed in consultation with school senior leadership teams and professional building surveyors. All projects that propose to provide sufficiency places will have a Project Initiation Document, approved by the SEND Sufficiency Project Board and agreed with partner schools that clearly sets out the rationale for the project and the results that are expected from it. The Capital Projects Partnership Working Document sets out the basis on which BCP Council undertakes to fund projects based on the recommendations of the DfE's Building Bulletin 104.

- e. **Risk:** there is not a clear understanding of the respective responsibilities of the council and academy trusts in the delivery of a project on an academy site.

Mitigation: a Partnership Working Document setting the roles of the Capital Delivery Team will be shared with partner schools and a Service Level Agreement (with maintained schools) or Contract (for academy trusts) will be agreed for every scheme to ensure responsibilities with respect to service use and placements will be agreed for every scheme.

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CABINET



Report subject	School Admissions Arrangements 2027/28
Meeting date	4 February 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>BCP Council is responsible for administering admission arrangements for its community and voluntary controlled schools. There is a legal requirement to determine the arrangements annually as described in the School Admissions Code 2021 and associated legislation.</p> <p>The local authority must also formulate and publish a scheme to coordinate the admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools within their area for the 2027/28 academic year.</p> <p>A public consultation on the proposed 2027/28 admission arrangements was held on from 10 November 2025 until 22 December 2026. The proposed change is a reduction to the Published Admission Number at Burton CE Primary School to reflect the broader trend of fewer families seeking school places in the area due to falling birth rates.</p> <p>It is recommended that the arrangements are determined by council members.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>(a) Cabinet consider any comments from the consultation and from Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee concerning the Schools Admissions Arrangements 2027/2028 for community and maintained schools; and</p> <p>(b) Cabinet support the determination of the arrangements as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of this report.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>BCP Council is legally required to determine admission arrangements for the 2027/28 academic year for all maintained schools for which it is an admission authority and to agree coordinated admission arrangements for all admission authorities in the area. Arrangements must be determined by BCP Council by 28 February 2026.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton – Portfolio Holder, Children’s Services
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley – Corporate Director, Children’s Services
Report Authors	Lisa Linscott – Director of Education and Skills, Children’s Services
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Council and schools that are deemed to be an ‘admission authority’ are required each year to set arrangements explaining how and when they will decide to offer school places.
2. The Council is required to have an admissions policy for its four maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools located in Christchurch.
3. The Council must also set an administrative scheme setting out for parents and schools how the application and offer process will be co-ordinated.
4. Reductions in Published Admission Numbers (PANs) must be publicly consulted on in accordance with the requirements detailed in the School Admissions Code 2021.

Admission arrangements and published admission numbers

5. The admissions arrangements must explain how to apply for a school place and, once an application is received, how it will be processed. The policy must contain clear oversubscription criteria should there be more applications than there are places available. The number of places available at a normal point of entry for each school, the published admission number (PAN), must also be set and included in the policy for parents.
6. The proposed admissions policy is attached at appendix one. In addition to the reduction in PAN, additional clarification for the oversubscription criterion for children of school staff has been provided and minor date alterations have been made. All other areas of the arrangements (catchments, supplementary information form, and the policy for requests for applications for a place in a different year group to that determined by date of birth, including delayed admission to reception for summer born children) remain the same.
7. The proposed published admission numbers (PAN) for each of the maintained primary schools are detailed at the end of appendix one. The proposed change that required consultation is the reduction in PAN at Burton CE Primary School.
8. Burton’s school governing body has requested a reduction in PAN. Reducing the school’s intake from 45 to 30 will enable the school to organise classes efficiently. It also reflects the broader trend of fewer families seeking school places in the area due to falling birth rates.

Coordinated Scheme

9. The Council is required under paragraph 2.22 of the Department for Education's School Admissions Code 2021 to set a coordinated scheme for the processing of school applications for entry to school in September 2027.
10. The scheme recommended and attached at appendix two is a single scheme for the whole of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area. The scheme is in principle the same as that set by the Council for the 2026/27 academic year with minor date alterations.

Consultation

11. The statutory period for consultation required by the School Admissions Code 2021 is a minimum of six weeks. The admission arrangements were consulted on from 10 November 2025 until 22 December 2026.
12. The consultation was available on Have Your Say and the School Admissions webpages. All schools in the Relevant Area, neighbouring local authorities and relevant dioceses were notified. Schools and early years settings were asked to inform families about the consultation whilst social media and BCP Council newsletter emails also publicised it.
13. No responses were received regarding the Council's proposed admission arrangements during the consultation period.

Options Appraisal

14. The existing arrangements cannot continue as the Council has an annual statutory requirement to determine the admissions policy. Taking no action is therefore not an option.
15. The reduction in PAN supports Burton Primary School to manage its resources more effectively and deliver education effectively.
16. It is recommended that the Council determine the arrangements and the coordinated scheme.

Summary of financial implications

17. The admissions function is funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Therefore, there are no wider revenue budget implications to the Council. The recommendations set out above are intended to be accommodated within the existing budget allocated from within the DSG for this purpose.

Summary of legal implications

18. The Council must determine the coordinated scheme, admission arrangements and published admission numbers no later than 28 February 2026.
19. If no action is taken, the Council will not meet its statutory duty to have admission arrangements which meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code 2021.

Summary of human resources implications

20. There are no anticipated changes to human resources from determining the policy and coordinated scheme.

Summary of sustainability impact

21. BCP Council is committed to encouraging children and young people attend their nearest or catchment school.

22. The draft admissions policy includes oversubscription criteria that gives high priority to children living in their school's catchment area. Attendance at a local school provides families with greater opportunity to travel to school on foot or by cycling, scooting or using public transport in line with the Transforming Travel agenda.

Summary of public health implications

23. Ensuring families can apply for a school place supports the health and wellbeing of children and young people by enabling them to attend school.

Summary of equality implications

24. An equality impact assessment screening tool was completed and is attached at appendix three.
25. The admissions policy and co-ordinated scheme will be accessible online for all BCP Council residents and paper copies will be provided on request.
26. School applications will be assessed using the policy oversubscription criteria. Where the child/young person and/or their family have additional needs or requirements these will be considered in line with the policy.
27. Families will have the opportunity to access an independent appeal process if they are unhappy with the school offered.

Summary of risk assessment

28. If BCP Council do not determine admission arrangements for its community and voluntary controlled schools by 28 February 2026, the Council will not have met its statutory duty as defined in the School Admissions Code 2021 and the Department for Education may impose arrangements upon the Council.

Background papers

[School Admissions Code](#) – Published works

[School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) – Published works

Appendices

Appendix one – BCP Council admissions policy 2027/28

Appendix two – BCP Council coordinated scheme for 2027/28

Appendix three – Equality impact assessment conversation screening tool



Community and voluntary controlled infant, junior and primary schools admissions policy 2027-2028

Admissions policy 2027-28

The admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled mainstream schools in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area is the local authority.

This policy applies to applications for school places starting in September 2027 and should be read in conjunction with the parents' guide available at bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions from 12 September 2027.

Children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) issued by a local authority naming a school where a child should receive their education will be admitted to that school before preferences are considered for admission in September.

Where there are more applications than places available the following criteria will be used, in numerical order, to decide the priority list for the offering of places up to the school's published admission number:

1. "Looked after children" or "previously looked after children" (note one) including children who appear to have been in state care outside of England (note two).
2. Children who BCP Council accepts have an exceptional medical or psychological need and where there is a need for a place at one specific school (note three).
3. Children who live in the school's catchment area who have a sibling who is already on the roll of the school and will continue to attend the school at the time of admission (note four).
4. Children living within the school's catchment area who are attending a recognised feeder school and are on that school's roll at the time of application. This applies to Mudeford Infant and Junior Schools only.
5. All other children who live in the school's catchment area.
6. Children who live outside the school's catchment area who have a sibling who is already on the roll of the school and will continue to attend the school at the time of admission (note four).
7. Children living outside the school's catchment area who are attending a recognised feeder school and are on that school's roll at the time of application. This applies to Mudeford Infant and Junior Schools only.
8. Children living outside the school's catchment area and whose parents wish them to attend a Church of England voluntary controlled school on denominational grounds (note five). This applies to Burton C of E Primary School only.

9. Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the school applied for at the time the application for admission is made or who have been recruited to a vacancy to meet a demonstrable skills shortage as at the date of application (in year) or relevant closing date under the local authority co-ordinated scheme (normal year of entry) and who still intend to be employed at the school at the time of the child's admission (note six and note seven).

10. All other children who live outside the school's catchment area.

If a school is oversubscribed in any of the categories above, children in the oversubscribed category who live closest to the school will be given priority (note eight).

If the distance measurement is equal for two or more applicants (excluding children of multiple birth, please see below), the place will be allocated by the drawing of lots. The person drawing the names will be an officer within BCP Council who is not involved in the school admissions process.

Please ensure you read notes one to eight and the remainder of this policy for further information.

Admission arrangements

Admission will be in accordance with the agreed scheme for coordinated admission arrangements 2027-28.

Starting reception in 2027-28

All children can start in reception on a full-time basis in September 2027. Where parents and carers wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Parent and carers should discuss this with the headteacher. The final decision will rest with the parent or carer of the child.

Delayed or deferred start

For children born between 1 September and 31 March, parents and carers can delay their child's start date until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age (i.e., by the start of the term following their fifth birthday). For children born between 1 April and 31 August, parents can also delay their child's start date; but not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year (i.e., the term that starts after the Easter/Spring holidays).

The school place offered cannot be delayed until the following academic year – it must be taken-up in the academic year for which it is offered. Parents and carers who do not take-up the offer of a place during the reception year will need to re-apply for a school place the following year. Places offered but not taken-up by the beginning of the final term (i.e., the term that starts after the Easter/Spring holidays) will be withdrawn.

If parents and carers want to apply for the following year, they would normally apply for a place in year one. Parents and carers need to be aware that year one in the school they were previously offered could be full at this stage.

Applications for a place in a year group different to that determined by date of birth, including delayed entry to reception for summer born children

Applications for children to be educated in a year group different to that determined by their date of birth, including delayed admission to reception for summer born children, will be considered on their individual merits by a specialist panel.

Details of what you need to do to apply for a different year group can be found in the policy document “Policy for responding to parental requests for admission to community and voluntary controlled schools to a year group different to that determined by their date of birth, including delayed admission to reception for summer born children” available online at bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions or from the school admissions team.

Parents and carers considering this should contact BCP Council at the earliest possible opportunity (preferably before 30 November 2026) to ensure a decision is made before the national closing date for applications.

Excepted pupils for infant classes (Years R, 1 and 2)

Infant classes must not contain more than thirty pupils with a single schoolteacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an ‘excepted pupil’ for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- children admitted outside the normal admissions round with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) specifying the school
- looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round
- children admitted after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process
- children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal
- children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance
- children of UK (United Kingdom) service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round
- children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil
- children with SEND who are normally taught in a SEND unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

In year fair access

All the admission authorities in BCP Council have established an in year fair access protocol. The purpose of the protocol is to ensure that – outside the normal admissions round – unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are provided with a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible.

Cases are considered by a panel comprising Headteachers and/or their representatives. When seeking to place a child, the panel will consider all schools in a fair, equitable and consistent manner. Decisions of the panel may mean that individual schools admit children above the published admission number. Admission authorities will not normally be asked to admit a child to an infant class where there are already thirty children in the class.

In year admissions – looked after children

A looked after child may be admitted to a school above the admission number if it is felt by the local authority that a particular school is the most appropriate placement to meet the needs of the individual child.

Home address

The home address where a child lives is a residential property that is the child's main or only address during term time.

Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence to verify addresses and/or other details provided. It is at the discretion of the local authority what evidence is required (evidence may include, but is not limited to, child benefit, GP (general practitioner) registration, evidence of home ownership/tenancy etc.). The final decision on the home address of a child will be made by BCP Council. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the local authority to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, BCP Council may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

Applications from separated parents and carers

Only one application and one address can be accepted for each child. Where parents and carers are separated, it is essential that agreement is reached by both parties about which schools are named on the application form by the closing date.

The local authority is unable to mediate in any dispute between parents. If parents are unable to agree lines of communication between themselves on issues involving their child, they may wish to seek independent legal advice and explore other options. These might include referring the matter to non-court dispute resolution, such as mediation.

If parents cannot agree through mediation, they should resolve the issue through the court system, for example a 'Specific Issues Order' which specifies which parent has responsibility to make decisions on school preferences.

If more than one application is submitted for the same child, or if the admissions team

becomes aware that the application was made without the agreement of all parties with parental responsibility, the application will not be processed. A new application will be required, and confirmation of agreement must be provided by all parties involved. If this single application is submitted after the closing date, it will be treated as a late application.

If a parent signs the declaration to say that they have parental responsibility and indicates that all others with parental responsibility also consent to the application, and BCP Council subsequently is informed that this was incorrect, this may result in the application not being processed. In the event that a place has already been allocated, that place may be withdrawn in accordance with the statutory School Admissions Code, which allows for withdrawal of places offered in error or obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Any decision to continue processing or to withdraw an application will be made based on the specific circumstances of the case, with the child's safeguarding and welfare as the highest priority.

Where a child spends part of their week with one parent or carer and part with the other, only one address can be provided. This must be the address at which the child spends most of their time during term time.

If a child spends equal time with each parent, both parties must also come to agreement about which address to use on the application, as well as the schools and preference order.

Changes of address

When applying for point of entry, BCP Council will not accept a change of address once the National Closing Date has passed.

The National Closing Date for point of entry year groups (Reception and Year 3) is 15 January 2027. This means if your moving date is after 15 January 2027, we will use your old address to categorise your application. You will need to tell us your new address so we can update your child's record.

If you move house after you have submitted your application but before the National Closing Date, you **must** inform us **by** the 15 January 2027 to ensure your application is considered from your new address.

Alternatively, a house move occurring by the closing date, also includes:

- (if purchasing) exchange of contracts occurring on or before the closing date;
 - (if renting) signed tenancy agreement which commences on or before the closing date
- This information **must** be provided **by 15 January 2027**.

Application for children of multiple births

If there are insufficient places to accommodate all the children of a multiple birth (i.e., twins, triplets etc.) in any year group and one child can be admitted, the other siblings of the multiple birth will be admitted over the school's published admission number. If it is in an infant class (Years R, 1 and 2) the additional children over the published admission number will be considered as excepted pupils for the entire time they are in an infant class at the school or until the class numbers fall back to the infant class size limit in accordance with the school admissions code.

Waiting lists

BCP Council maintains waiting lists for its schools. When a child is added, the waiting list must be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or when their name was added to the waiting list.

Children who have been refused a place will automatically be added to the waiting list for the relevant academic year. If parents or carers wish for their child to remain on the waiting list beyond that academic year, a new application must be submitted from 1 June for the following year.

Being on a waiting list does not guarantee a school place. A child's position may change as new applications are received, or others are removed.

Appeals

If the local authority is unable to offer a place at a school that has been applied for, the parent or carer has the right to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Details will be included in the letter refusing the school place. The decision of the appeal panel is binding on all parties.

Notes

1. A "looked after child" means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was "previously a looked after child" means a child who after being looked after, became subject to an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976 or under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order or Child Arrangement Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of BCP Council what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by BCP Council. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, BCP Council may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.
2. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if

they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of BCP Council what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by BCP Council. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, BCP Council may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

3. If applying under medical or psychological grounds, written advice from an NHS consultant (for medical grounds), or an NHS consultant psychiatrist (for psychological grounds) that documents the child's medical or psychological needs must be included with the application. Children will only meet this criterion if the school(s) named on the application form is assessed by BCP Council to be the only school(s) that can meet any specific medical or psychological needs identified. The final decision whether an application can be considered using this criterion will be made by BCP Council.
4. "Sibling" means:
 - a full brother or sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
 - a half-brother or half-sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
 - an adoptive brother or sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
 - a foster brother or sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
 - non-blood related children who, together, all live with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.

For Mudeford Community Infants School the sibling link will apply if the sibling is on roll and will continue to attend Mudeford Junior School at the time of admission and vice versa. For those applying for a place at Mudeford Infant School, this includes pupils who have a sibling in Year 2 and have applied for Year 3 at Mudeford Junior School.

5. To qualify for consideration under this category for Burton CE Primary School, parents and carers will need to show that at least one adult family member and the child to whom the application relates to have been attending their local church at least once a month for a minimum of a year prior to the closing date for applications. The application must also be supported by a supplementary information form signed by the vicar/priest/minister or leader of the church confirming this.

If during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or relevant place of worship or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

6. Staff are defined as all teaching and support staff employed at the preferred school. 'Children of staff' refers to situations where the staff member is the natural parent, the

legal guardian, or a resident step-parent. If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion, then a letter from the headteacher confirming the criterion applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

7. A demonstrable skill shortage refers to a post which the school has had difficulties fulfilling. For priority to be given on this basis, the school must have taken part in a recruitment drive to fill the post where the post was not filled after two attempts at recruitment have been made.
8. The distance between the child's home and preferred school will be determined by the shortest straight-line measurement calculated using the local authority's geographical information system in use at the time of allocation. The system at the time of setting the policy is Servelec Synergy and it takes the measurement between the address mapping points of the school and the applicant's home. Please note that eligibility for school transport assistance is based on walking distance measurements.

Published admission numbers 2027-28

School Name	Published Admissions Number 2027/28
Burton CE Primary School	30
Mudeford Community Infant School	60
Mudeford Junior School	66
Somerford Primary School	30

BCP Council School Admissions and Transport Team

school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

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Admission Arrangements Coordinated Scheme 2027-28

Coordinated Admissions Scheme 2027-28

All schools in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole together with the Local Authority have, in accordance with statutory requirements, agreed to coordinate the main entry admission and transfer process for 2027-28. The agreed scheme enables an application to be made on a single application form.

The coordinated scheme applies to the following admission points of entry:

Point of Entry	Apply from:	National Closing Date (Applying on Time)
Entry in Reception at all First, Infant Primary and All-Through schools	1 November 2026	15 January 2027
Entry into Year 3 at Junior schools	1 November 2026	15 January 2027
Entry into Year 5 at Broadstone Middle School	1 November 2026	15 January 2027
Entry into Year 7 at all secondary schools with the exception of Corfe Hills School and LeAF Studio School	1 September 2026	31 October 2026
Entry into Year 9 at Corfe Hills School and LeAF Studio School	1 September 2026	31 October 2026

BCP Council will coordinate with other local authorities to ensure that a child receives only a single offer of a school place. It will seek to offer the highest preference able to be agreed subject to the receipt of information in sufficient time and the other local authorities' schemes providing for this.

Parents and carers should complete an application and name four different schools in the order they would like their child to attend. Parents and carers must submit their application to their home local authority by the published closing date specified in the table above.

Preferences on faith grounds

Parents and carers expressing a preference on faith grounds must check the relevant school admissions policy to find out how to provide evidence of religious faith and practice. Parents and carers may be required to complete a supplementary information form and submit the form before the published closing date. Where baptismal evidence is required, parents and carers must check how this is provided to the school. All relevant evidence must be submitted before the published closing date. The supplementary information forms can be downloaded from the BCP Council website or from the relevant school website.

Changes to or applications made after the national closing date

Applications or any change of preference received after the national closing date will be considered as a late application unless otherwise specified within the school's admissions policy.

Applications that are considered late will be processed after all on-time applicants have been notified of their result. Late applications received before the published late closing date will be processed in accordance with the timetable (see below).

Any applications received after the published closing date for late applications will be processed as quickly as possible after the timetable (see below) has been completed. Once processed, they will be immediately added to the waiting lists if a place is not available.

Living or applying for schools outside of BCP Council area

Parents and carers who live outside of the BCP Council area who wish to apply for a school will need to complete their home local authority's application form in accordance with timescales published in that local authority's scheme.

BCP Council will send a list of all applicants to all school admission authorities within the council's area. It will send applications for schools in other local authorities to the relevant local authority to administer.

Information from other admission authorities

Where a parent or carer lists a school which is its own admission authority, or a school in another local authority as one of their preferences, information is electronically transferred to the relevant school or local authority. The admission authority will then be required to rank in order the applications they received in accordance with their admission arrangements and decide whether they can offer the child a place.

Once the decisions have been made by the relevant admission authority, they are returned to the local authority (LA) by the deadline specified (see timetable below). The LA then compares the ranked lists; if a child's name appears on more than one ranked list, the LA will then refer to the preference order on the application to see which school the family wants the most. Then, in accordance with the order of preference on the application form, the child's name will be retained on the list of the highest preference school able to offer a place and removed from the lower preference schools lists.

Places freed up by this process will then be offered to applicants who are next on a school's ranked order of priority.

When preferences cannot be met

For those applicants who are not able to be offered any of their preferred schools and do not have the opportunity to remain at their current school:

- if they are resident in BCP Council, they will be offered a place at the nearest school to their home address which still has places available with agreement from the relevant admissions authority; or
- if they are resident outside of the BCP Council area, we will advise their home local authority that we are unable to offer a place. The resident's local authority are responsible for offering a place, where appropriate.

Those applicants who apply after the national closing date go through a similar process again, resulting in further offers being made in accordance with the agreed late application timetable.

Outcome of applications

BCP Council will advise parents and carers who applied online by uploading the outcome to the online system. Parents and carers will be able to view the outcome of their application online on the relevant national offer date. BCP Council will issue letters to all parents on the national offer dates.

Waiting lists

The length of time a child's name is on the waiting list cannot be considered when places become available. Places are offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria in the school's published admissions policy.

Waiting lists for the point of entry must be held until 31 December 2027. Not all schools hold waiting lists after this time. Parents will receive information in their notification letter about how the waiting lists are managed.

All waiting lists held for the full academic year 2027-28 will expire on 31 August 2028. Parents and carers must submit a new school application form for 2028-29 and any subsequent years. Applications can be submitted from 1 June 2028.

Timetable for on-time applications

	Secondary	Junior/Middle	Infant
Opening date for applications	01/09/26	01/11/26	01/11/26
Closing date for applications	31/10/26	15/01/27	15/01/27
BCP Council to exchange applicant information received with other local authorities and school admission authorities in the BCP Council area by	18/11/26	03/02/27	03/02/27
Admission authorities to send electronically a list of pupils to BCP Council in the order to be considered, together with the relevant criteria for each applicant by	13/01/27	10/03/27	10/03/27
First exchange of offers between BCP Council and other LAs for applicants resident in their respective areas by	27/01/27	17/03/27	17/03/27
Deadline for final exchange of offers between LAs for applicants resident in their respective areas	10/02/27	31/03/27	31/03/27
BCP Council to inform other admission authorities of final allocation of places by	24/02/27	12/04/27	12/04/27
BCP Council issues notification letters to all applicants and on-time notifications to be uploaded on	01/03/27	16/04/27	16/04/27
Parents respond by	15/03/27	30/04/27	30/04/27

Timetable for late applications

	Secondary	Junior/Middle	Infant
Late applications submitted from	01/11/26	16/01/27	16/01/27
Closing date for late applications	22/01/27	15/04/27	15/04/27
BCP Council to issue notification letters to all late applicants on	25/03/27	14/05/27	14/05/27
Parents respond by	08/04/27	28/05/27	28/05/27

Please note

At the end of the above timetable, BCP Council will continue to coordinate the allocation on a regular basis until 31 August 2027.

In Year Admissions

BCP Council School Admission coordinates in-year applications for the majority of schools. This means that a single application form is available for parents to express one or more school preferences.

There are some schools that have chosen to manage their in-year admissions themselves. Parents should check bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions for further information prior to making an application.

The following information is only relevant for schools who agree to be part of the local authority's in year coordination scheme:

In Year applications for faith schools

Parents and carers applying for a church school who request a place on faith grounds may need to provide a completed supplementary information form. The supplementary information form (SIF) is available from the school or a copy can be downloaded from the BCP Council website. Details of where to return the SIF are set out in the information on each school's websites regarding their admission arrangements.

Outcomes following submission of in year applications

Parents and carers applying for schools through BCP Council's School Admissions Team should expect to receive an outcome in writing within fifteen school days. The exception to this is where a parent applies for a place in a grammar school. In these cases, the school must notify the parent in writing within fifteen school days of the date for the assessment. Information regarding schools that do not process applications in a timely manner may be passed on to the Schools Adjudicator and/or relevant Department for Education agencies (e.g. Regional Schools' Commissioner, Education, Funding and Skills Agency). The need to request direction may also be considered.

Admission appeal outcomes

All Admission Authorities will inform BCP Council of the results of any appeal hearings within two working days of the appeal outcome.

Advance applications for a September start for places in a year group other than the standard point of entry (in-year admissions)

With the exception of applications for Grammar Schools, applications received will not be processed until after 1 June 2028.

Applicants applying any time before 1 June 2028 for the 2028/29 academic year will be informed that their application form will be cancelled and they will need to submit a new application. This does not constitute a refusal to offer a school place at any of the preferred schools and therefore there will be no right of appeal until such time as the application has been processed.

Grammar School applications will need to be processed early to allow sufficient time for testing and, if appropriate, to allow appeals to be heard before the end of the summer term. Parents will need to contact grammar schools to find out testing dates and the earliest date they can apply from.

BCP Council School Admissions and Transport Team

school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment: Conversation Screening Tool

What is being reviewed?	School Admission Arrangements 2027/28
What changes are being made?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School Admissions Code 2021 requires admission authorities for publicly funded non-special schools to consult and determine admission arrangements in readiness for future school applications. We are the admission authority for four maintained schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burton CE Primary School Mudeford Community Infants School Mudeford Junior School Somerford Primary School We have a single admissions policy for the above four schools. The policy only applies to these schools. All other publicly funded non-special schools in BCP Council are responsible for consulting and determining their own admissions policies. Any changes to the council's admission arrangements must be publicly consulted on to meet statutory requirements. We are consulting on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the Published Admission Number (the number of children admitted at the start of the 2027/28 academic year into Reception) from 45 to 30 Clarifying the definition of children of staff following advice from our dioceses. The consultation runs from Monday 10 November 2025 until Monday 22 December 2025. This meets the statutory requirement to consult for a minimum of six weeks. Once completed, we will be requesting consideration and determination of the Cabinet through our democratic processes. Further information about School Admissions for all publicly funded non-special schools in BCP Council can be found at bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions
Service Unit:	Children's Services
Participants in the conversation:	<p>Angie Hill, Manager, School Admissions and Home to School Transport, Children's Services</p> <p>Tanya Smith, Head of Service – School Places and Capital, Children's Services</p> <p>Caroline Stanley, Team Leader, School Admissions and Home to School Transport, Children's Services</p>
Conversation date/s:	Weekly since September 2025 (as we also support other schools that need to consult on their policies).
Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?	<p>The BCP Council Community and VC Schools Admissions Policy is for parents and carers of children aged 3-to-11-years-old who want to apply for a primary school in Christchurch.</p> <p>The BCP Council Coordinated Scheme is specifically for the council, schools and other local authorities to refer to in order to ensure that the administrative processes are correctly applied and timescales are followed to meet statutory application closure and notification dates.</p>

	<p>Both the Admissions Policy and the Coordinated Scheme will be made available on the BCP Council school admissions webpages. Current versions are available at Admission arrangements for BCP schools 2026-27 BCP. The 2027/28 arrangements will contain will be publicly available in the same way once determined.</p> <p>During the 2024/25 academic year, BCP Council received approximately 7,500 applications for point of entry to school (Reception, Year 3, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9) and a further 4,200 (approximately) in year applications to start school during the school year.</p>
<p>Do different groups have different needs or experiences? Age (young/old), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, members of the armed forces community, any other factors/groups e.g. socioeconomic status, carers, human rights</p>	<p>The policy ensures that school admission applications are considered based on the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code.</p> <p>The School Admissions Code requires Looked After Children, Previously Looked After Children and children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are prioritised.</p> <p>When there are more applications than school places available, the admissions policy includes a set of oversubscription criteria to enable fair and equitable ranking of applications. The oversubscription criteria, after allocation of placement for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (including children who were previously looked after in state care outside of England). 2) Children who BCP Council accepts have an exceptional medical or social need and where there is a need for a place at one specific school. 3) Children who live in the school's catchment area who have a sibling who is already on the roll of the school and will continue to attend the school at the time of admission. 4) Children living within the school's catchment area who are attending a recognised feeder school and are on that school's roll at the time of application. 5) All other children who live in the school's catchment area. 6) Children who live outside the school's catchment area who have a sibling who is already on the roll of the school and will continue to attend the school at the time of admission. 7) Children living outside the school's catchment area who are attending a recognised feeder school and are on that school's roll at the time of application. 8) Children living outside the school's catchment area and whose parents wish them to attend a CE (Church of England) voluntary controlled school on denominational grounds. 9) Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the school applied for at the time the application for admission is made, or who have been recruited to a vacancy to meet a demonstrable skills shortage as at the date of application (in year) or relevant closing date under the local authority co-ordinated scheme (normal year of entry) and

who still intend to be employed at the school at the time of the child's admission.

10) All other children who live outside the school's catchment area.

If a school is oversubscribed in any of the categories above, children in the oversubscribed category who live closest to the school will be given priority.

In the event that the last place offered is given to a child from a multiple birth, all children from the multiple birth will be offered a place over the published admission number for the school.

In the event that the criteria and distance measurement s equal for two or more applicants, the place will be allocated by the drawing of lots.

The School Admissions Code support equality duties by placing the following restrictions on admission arrangements:

"1.9 It is for admission authorities to formulate their admission arrangements, but they must not:

a) place any conditions on the consideration of any application other than those in the oversubscription criteria published in their admission arrangements;

b) take into account any previous schools attended, unless it is a named feeder school;

c) give extra priority to children whose parents rank preferred schools in a particular order, including 'first preference first' arrangements;

d) introduce any new selection by ability;

e) give priority to children on the basis of any practical or financial support parents may give to the school or any associated organisation, including any religious authority. The exception to this is where parents pay optional nursery fees to the school or school-run nursery, for additional hours on top of their 15-hour funded early education, where children from the school nursery class or school-run nursery are given priority for admission to Reception;

f) give priority to children according to the occupational, marital, financial, or educational status of parents applying. The exceptions to this are children of staff at the school and those eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium and the service premium who may be prioritised in the arrangements in accordance with paragraphs 1.39 – 1.42;

g) take account of reports from previous schools about children's past behaviour, attendance, attitude, or achievement, or that of any other children in the family;

h) discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children, those with special educational needs, or those applying for admission outside their normal age group where an admission authority has agreed to this under paragraphs 2.18 to 2.20;

i) prioritise children on the basis of their own or their parents' past or current hobbies or activities (schools which have been designated as having a religious character may take account

of religious activities, as laid out by the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination;

j) in designated grammar schools that rank all children according to a pre-determined pass mark and then allocate places to those who score highest, give priority to siblings of current or former pupils;

k) in the case of schools with boarding places, rank children on the basis of a child's suitability for boarding – more information on boarding schools is set out at paragraphs 1.43 - 1.44;

l) name fee-paying independent schools as feeder schools;

m) interview children or parents. In the case of sixth form applications, a meeting may be held to discuss options and academic entry requirements for particular courses, but this meeting cannot form part of the decision making process on whether to offer a place. Boarding schools may interview children to assess their suitability for boarding;

n) request financial contributions (either in the form of voluntary contributions, donations, or deposits (even if refundable)) as any part of the admissions process – including for tests; or

o) request photographs of a child for any part of the admissions process, other than as proof of identity when sitting a selection test.”

The School Admissions Code also prohibits collection of the following on the application form:

“2.2 The Common Application Form (CAF) must allow parents to provide their name, their address (including documentary evidence in support), and the name, address, and date of birth of the child. The child must not be required to complete any part of the CAF.

2.4 In some cases, admission authorities will need to ask for supplementary information forms in order to process applications. If they do so, they must only use supplementary forms that request additional information when it has a direct bearing on decisions about oversubscription criteria or for the purpose of selection by aptitude or ability. Places must be allocated on the basis of the oversubscription criteria only. An applicant must not be given additional priority solely on the basis of having completed a supplementary form. Admission authorities must not ask, or use supplementary forms that ask, for any of the information prohibited by paragraph 1.9 above or for:

a) any personal details about parents and families, such as maiden names, criminal convictions, marital, or financial status (including marriage certificates);

b) the first language of parents or the child;

c) details about parents' or a child's disabilities, special educational needs, or medical conditions;

d) parents to agree to support the ethos of the school in a practical way;

	<p>e) both parents to sign the form, or for the child to complete the form.”</p> <p>The requirements of the School Admissions Code, our admissions policy and our application form therefore support different groups, including groups with protected characteristics applying for a school place and ensure that the allocation of school places is fair, clear and objective.</p>
Will this change affect any service users?	<p>As the proposed changes to the admission arrangements do not impact on the anticipated number of children who will be in the area and require a school place at Burton Primary there will be no change in how service users are affected.</p>
What are the benefits or positive impacts of the change on current or potential users?	<p>The proposed reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Burton Primary is intended to strengthen the school’s financial sustainability and support effective planning, resourcing, and delivery of the curriculum. This change will help provide children and their families with a stable and well-supported educational experience.</p> <p>As there are no other changes to the admission arrangements and the processes involved in allocating school places the impact of the policy will remain the same as previous years.</p> <p>The arrangements remain in line with the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code and ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of places is fair, clear and objective.</p> <p>The requirement to ensure that children with EHCPs are placed before allocation of all children and the requirement to ensure all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are ranked highest using the oversubscription criteria ensures that these vulnerable groups are positively impacted by the admissions process.</p> <p>Families are asked prior to completing their application to confirm they have read the Parent’s Guide to Admissions. They can also seek advice and guidance from the School Admissions Team and reminders about applying for a school place are promoted through BCP Council media channels, early years providers and schools.</p> <p>Families are strongly advised to complete all four preferences on their application form and include their nearest or catchment school as one of their preferences to ensure they have the maximum opportunity to be offered a place at their local school should one of their higher preferences be unable to do so.</p>
What are the negative impacts of the change on current or potential users?	<p>As the reduction in PAN is underpinned by pupil place planning data illustrating the reduced need for places in the Christchurch area it is anticipated that there will be no change in how service users how service users are affected.</p> <p>This is further evidenced by the fact that Burton (which has an Admission Number of 45 in all its year groups) has vacancies in all year groups except Year 6.</p>

Will the change affect employees?	Not applicable as the arrangements only apply to those seeking a school place.
Will the change affect the wider community?	The proposed reduction in PAN will not impact the wider community – almost all pupil place planning areas in BCP Council are experiencing reduced demand for school places due to falling birth rates.
What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by this change?	<p>The consultation has been made available on both the Have Your Say website and on the BCP Council school admissions webpages available at bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions.</p> <p>In addition, we have publicised the consultation on social media and through BCP Council newsletters.</p> <p>We are also statutorily required to inform all schools in our area (including those within a mile of BCP Council's boundaries), neighbouring local authorities and our local dioceses. This has been completed through emails, our Early Years and Childcare Newsletter and our Education Bulletin. Early Years providers and schools have been encouraged to share the consultation with their families, staff and other interested parties.</p> <p>Forecasts indicate that from September 2027, no more than 30 places will be required at the school. This reflects a broader trend of fewer families seeking school places in the area due to falling birth rates.</p> <p>The Governors and staff at Burton Primary School support the proposed reduction. Operating with a PAN of 30 will help ensure the school remains financially sustainable and enable the school to plan, resource and deliver our curriculum effectively. It is more cost-efficient to run a full class than two small classes. If needed, the PAN can be increased again in the future if local demand for school places rises again.</p> <p>Parents Guides are published annually to support parents and are available at Parents guide to school admissions BCP.</p> <p>As the processes involved in allocating school places remain the same, there will be no change in how service users are affected.</p> <p>In circumstances where families are not offered one of their preferred schools, we are required to allocate a school place. Families who are unhappy with their offered school can submit additional preferences and consider using their right to request an independent admission appeal.</p> <p>Advice and guidance for families wishing to apply for a school place is available at bpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Families can also email their queries to school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk or talk to us by calling 01202 123222.</p>
Summary of Equality Implications:	<p>All school applications will continue to be processed in line with the requirements of the School Admissions Code and the relevant school admissions policy(s). Families are provided with advice and guidance on how to apply, deadlines for applying and information about their right of appeal should they not be offered their preferred school.</p> <p>Families will have the opportunity to access an independent</p>

	<p>appeal process if they are unhappy with the outcome of their application.</p> <p>The requirement to ensure that children with EHCPs are placed before allocation of all children and the requirement to ensure all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are ranked highest using the oversubscription criteria ensures that these vulnerable groups are positively impacted by the admissions process.</p> <p>School admission arrangements are within the domain of Education described in the Measurement Framework for Equality and Human Rights. They ensure access to appropriate education is provided for children and young people.</p>
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Form Version 1.2

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CABINET



Report subject	Corporate Performance Report - Q2
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	[Public / Exempt] Report
Executive summary	<p>BCP Council adopted 'A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28' in May 2024.</p> <p>The shared vision is the corporate strategy which sets out the council's vision, priorities and ambitions as well as the principles which underpin the way the council works as it develops and delivers its services.</p> <p>Incorporated in the vision is a set of measures of progress for achieving the vision, priorities and ambitions.</p> <p>This is the performance monitoring report for Quarter Two 25-26, presenting an update on the progress measures.</p> <p>The council's delivery against its priorities and ambitions can also be monitored through the performance dashboard which is available on the council's website providing up-to-date real time information on the progress measures.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <p>a) Consider the Quarter Two performance</p> <p>(b) Note that work continues to expand the data available on the interactive performance dashboard</p> <p>(c) Note the positive activities highlighted in the report</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>Our shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole sets out the priorities and ambitions against which the council's performance will be judged, and as such is a vital component of the council's performance management framework.</p> <p>An understanding of performance against targets, goals and objectives helps the council to assess and manage service delivery and identify emerging business risks</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Millie Earl, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Service Director	Isla Reynolds, Director of Marketing, Communications and Policy
Report Authors	Chris Shephard, Head of Policy. Strategy and Partnerships Liz Orme, Policy & Strategy Officer Pippa Quinton, Policy Apprentice Performance leads across the council
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. BCP Council adopted 'A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28' in May 2024 which was developed following a process of stakeholder engagement from June to October 2023.
2. The vision includes a comprehensive set of progress measures that track performance against the ambitions and focus areas of activity.
3. Since the vision was adopted, work has been carried out to establish and evolve baseline data, targets and intervention levels for the progress measures.
4. A performance dashboard has been created which we have been using successfully to support the monitoring of our progress towards the council's vision, using technology to enhance transparency and support data-driven decisions. This dashboard is updated by performance officers across the council, providing real-time information as it's available and is accessible on the council's website. The dashboard continues to be updated and evolved.
5. The Corporate Strategy Delivery Board meeting allows officers to meet monthly to monitor delivery of the council's vision at a strategic level. This also allows the board to conduct delivery deep dives and risk reviews, allowing for areas of concern to be addressed in a timely manner and best practice can be celebrated and shared. The board also allows the Council to prioritise key areas of activity.

An interactive performance dashboard to monitor performance

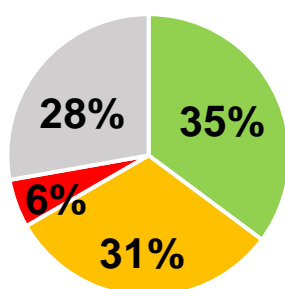
6. A live and interactive [performance dashboard](#) is available alongside quarterly reports, providing a real-time tracking tool that effectively addresses Cabinet's previous concerns regarding the timeliness of the reports. This is because quarterly performance reports are static snapshots of performance, often two to three months out of date by the time they reach Cabinet.
7. The performance dashboard supports the council's approach towards data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement in organisational performance.

8. Furthermore, transparency and accountability is enhanced through the public-facing live performance dashboard, accessible at all times by residents, councillors and officers.
6. The dashboard's purpose is to maintain a strategic perspective of overall council performance, and it is reviewed regularly with directors to ensure the best data is provided. Cabinet also has the flexibility to introduce additional measures if necessary for more detailed performance monitoring.
7. The dashboard is developing in phases, with further plans to enhance data availability, links to other dashboards and data sources and provide various lenses to view the data eventually replacing the need for a paginated performance report.
8. The dashboard was reviewed for accessibility and usability and changes to the design and content are being made as a result.
9. Links have been made to a [sustainability dashboard](#) demonstrating further information on the council's advancements towards achieving our net zero targets.
10. Subsequent phases will include:
 - a. Progress on strategic programmes of work,
 - b. Analysis of the latest data regarding the health of the people and places within the BCP area,
 - c. Sharing an overview of corporate risks.

Summary of Quarter Two Performance

11. Quarter Two data shows some significant changes in performance (Figure 1) explained by most annual and bi-annual measures being moved to pending (grey). The percentage of measures that are on target (green) has moved from 58% in Quarter One to 35% in Quarter Two. The percentage of pending measures has increased from 4% in Quarter One to 28% in Quarter Two. These measures are now showing as pending (grey) because data is not yet available so there is no data to report in this quarter. Where performance is being monitored (amber), the percentage has moved from 36% in Quarter One to 31% in Quarter Two. The percentage of those measures requiring action (red) has moved from 2% in Quarter One to 6% in Quarter Two.

Figure 1: Quarter Two Performance Summary



12. Appendix A has more detail for each measure including the latest performance compared to the target and the baseline, and an updated commentary.

13. The direction of travel for each measure is also provided in Appendix A. This shows whether performance is improving, declining or remains the same level compared to the previous update. For Quarter Two, there are fewer measures showing a positive direction of travel compared to Quarter One with 20 measures showing a positive direction of travel (20 compared to 27), 7 fewer measures showing a negative direction (13 compared to 20), and 2 more measures have stayed the same (6 compared to 4).

14. It is important to note the excellent performance in the following measures:

- The number of available Council and public Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers has increased to 265 in the latest Government figures.
- We are seeing a strong increase the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) served for fly tipping and littering offences with 1428 issued including 8 PSPO offences, 17 for fly-tipping, 3 for waste duty of care and 1400 for litter. This is up on last quarter (760) and up on target (840).
- Footfall across the 3 town centres is up, 22.54m from 21.74m last quarter and over target (20m).
- We are improving from 95% to 96% the timeliness of assessments to determine the child's needs is conducive with offering the right service at the right time to children, young people and their families. This is consistently high performing (8 consecutive quarters), higher than the national benchmark (85%) and comparator authorities.
- There has been a strong reduction in the number of secondary school aged children excluded from school with 7 permanent exclusions (0.067%), from 35 (0.137%) in the spring term.
- There is a marked reduction in the percentage of children and young people returning to early help within 12 months from 13% to 10%.
- number of current council employees supported to undertake apprenticeships has increased from 123 to 126.
- We have achieved 6 successful grant applications, a 100% success rate. These are:
 - £95,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Debris Screen Health and Safety Works.
 - £6,222,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defences.
 - £1,501,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Museum Estate and Development Fund.
 - £73,000 awarded by Veolia for Queens Park Play Area.
 - £376,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Poole Museum.
 - £93,000 awarded by DEFRA for King Charles III England Coast Path.

15. There are more details in the positive exception reports in Appendix 2. There are some without exception reports. This is due to officers in those areas being fully

immersed in inspections, the implementation of Pay and Reward, or other major projects.

16. There are also those measures that are doing less well and are areas of focus. Some of these for Quarter Two are:

- The percentage of all major planning applications determined on time has fallen from 88% in Quarter One to 69% in Quarter Two.
- The percentage of waste diverted from landfill fell to 86.25%, below Quarter One, target and intervention level.
- The number of homeless households in bed & breakfast has increased from 44 in Quarter One to 65 in Quarter Two.
- The number of people rough sleeping has increased from 49 in Quarter One to 66 in Quarter Two.
- We continue to see a significant downward trend on 'Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans issued within 20 weeks', from 58.54% to 24.60%.

17. There are more details in the exception reports at Appendix 3 including an exception report included relating to the Residents Survey which was requested by Cabinet at the review of Quarter One performance. There are some without exception reports. This is due to officers in those areas being fully immersed in inspections, the implementation of pay and reward and other major projects.

18. It is also interesting to note two new measures relating to the Corporate Strategy ambition of "Our inclusive, vibrant and sustainable economy supports our communities to thrive". These are to "Increase non-financial support given to BCP-based businesses" and to "Increase in the creation of new business enterprises".

These replace the measure "Increase the number of jobs created and/or safeguarded through Government and/or external funding", which helped deliver the Corporate Strategy ambition of "Employment is available for everyone and helps create value in our communities". This change is due to the external funding that was driving this measure, ending. The changes ensure performance relating to job creation through entrepreneurship, and business support, continues to be measured, just under a different ambition. This change has been approved by Corporate Strategy Delivery Board at November's meeting.

19. Performance continues to be monitored by services and by the Corporate Strategy Delivery Board to ensure appropriate mitigations are in place and actions being taken.

Summary of financial implications

20. There are no financial implications as this is a performance monitoring report for the corporate strategy. The corporate strategy is an important document to identify and establish project priorities for council budget-setting and contains programmes of work aimed at improving strategic finance, under the Our Approach priority.

Summary of legal implications

21. There are 3 measures that require action in Quarter Two. Any potential risks and mitigations have been and will continue to be assessed by the relevant service area and reviewed by the Corporate Strategy Delivery Board.

Summary of human resources implications

22. One of the key strategies linked to delivery of the corporate strategy - the people and culture strategy - aims to foster a high-performance culture. Through a performance framework, colleagues understand their roles and contribution to BCP Council's vision and ambitions. It includes regular 1:1s, SMART objectives, and annual reviews. Personal objectives are linked to corporate ambitions in the shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. A dashboard is being developed with ICT to provide council leadership teams with performance insights, enhancing alignment to performance reporting. Additionally, programmes under Our Approach priority aim to positively impact human resources.

Summary of sustainability impact

23. The programmes of work underpinning the Place and Environment priority of the corporate strategy are designed to have a positive impact on sustainability outcomes.

Summary of public health implications

24. The programmes of work underpinning the People and Communities and Our Approach priorities in the corporate strategy are designed to have a positive impact on public health outcomes.

Summary of equality implications

25. The work programmes supporting the corporate strategy aim to positively impact protected groups. Equality impact assessments are conducted for these programmes, particularly under the People and Communities and Our Approach priorities.

Summary of risk assessment

26. There are 3 measures from Quarter Two that require action, and 17 that require monitoring. Potential risks and mitigations are assessed by the relevant service area and are regularly reviewed by Corporate Strategy Delivery Board

Background papers

- [A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole](#)
- [BCP Council Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Quarter Two - Corporate Performance Report – Overview of Q2 Performance

Appendix 2: Positive Exception Reports

Appendix 3: Exception Reports

Positive Exception Performance Report:

Please use this report to highlight outstanding performance during the last quarter, the factors that drove the good performance, and the reason it is important. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the number of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 265

Quarterly Target: 240

Reason for level of performance (what drove success?):

The number of available Council and public Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers has increased to 265 in the latest Government figures. As soon as we commence the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Work, which is imminent, we will exceed targets.

It took longer than expected to meet the target this quarter as procurement took much longer than expected due to staffing issues at the time. The procurement of local electric vehicle infrastructure grant (LEVI) was delayed and although we have made the award three months late, we still needed to iron out the contract amendments between both parties. The programming of sites ready for delivering is on-going.

The outcome of the local electric vehicle infrastructure grant (LEVI) bid was excellent news for BCP Council moving forward, we had set a minimum of 750 7kw charging sockets and the winning bidder Connected kerb came in at 1100 charging sockets, 550 dual charger bollards for streets without off-street parking.

The six charging hubs have been delayed due to the supplier, the first of these was finalised last week (Littledown) with more hubs following very soon. These will be multiple rapid charging locations with their own substation (when required) including Seldown which will power the two new electric buses arriving at the end of this financial year for route one.

The homeowner chargers that will be installed through the charging gulley programme trial is about to commence, this was held up by waiting for the grant funding that we now have of £93,000, awarded last Thursday 30th Oct. We can use £1,200 towards each installation. We are starting with a ten-gulley trial, which we hope to expand out after an agreed timescale. After all the various delays, we now have a great foundation to deliver on all fronts.

Completed by: Martin Jolly

Date: 13th November 2025

Service Unit Head approval: John McVey

Date: 13th November 2025

Exceptional Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance meeting or exceeding target, what was achieved, why did it happen, and what the next steps are/could be. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the number of Fixed Penalty Notice's served for fly tipping and littering offences

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 1428

Quarterly Target: 844

Reason for level of performance:

The summer months see an increase in visitor numbers and anecdotal concerns regarding litter in key locations such as beaches and open spaces. As such, Public Protection and Wise Ltd work together to ensure maximum resourcing in Q2 to ensure litter enforcement was robust. This year WISE Ltd also supported enforcement of the Coastal Public Spaces Protection Order for issues such as urination and fires.

Actions/Next steps:

Public Protection and Wise Ltd will continue to monitor footfall trends to ensure robust enforcement of environmental crime. There is also a communications campaign in progress to educate around the impact and enforcement in relation to flytipping

Learnings to share:

Planned resourcing that is scaled up based on predicted demand

Completed by: Sophie Sajic

Date: 19/11/25

Exceptional Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance meeting or exceeding target, what was achieved, why did it happen, and what the next steps are/could be. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase footfall across our three town centres

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 22.54m

Quarterly Target: 18m

Reason for level of performance:

The summer season has delivered a strong footfall performance across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole, reflecting the area's appeal as a summer destination. Quarterly figures show significant improvement in what is typically a challenging metric.

This success is underpinned by targeted interventions from the Economic Development team, including:

- Strategic Support: Continued backing for the four Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and proactive engagement with key stakeholders such as Legal & General, Savills, and a broad network of independent businesses.
- Branding Initiatives: The "Support Local" campaign has reinforced town centre identity and demonstrated the Council's commitment to local businesses.
- Events and Community Empowerment: By supporting third-party events and enabling communities to develop their own, the Events team has fostered a sense of ownership and vibrancy. Groups such as Powerhouse, Poole Quay Events Forum, and Christchurch Chamber are advancing plans with Council support.

These combined efforts have strengthened town centre resilience and contributed to a positive visitor experience.

Actions/Next steps:

Sustaining strong footfall across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole during the festive season while mitigating weather-related risks is a big focus and concern but key interventions have been put in place to help with mitigation.

Festive Activities

- The launch and promotion of Christmas lights in all three town centres to attract visitors
- Supporting seasonal events to create a festive atmosphere and increase dwell time

Events

- Collaboration with community groups and BIDs to curate festive events
- Ensure event calendars are widely promoted across Council channels and partner networks

Small Business Saturday (6th Dec)

- Delivery of a public-facing campaign highlighting local businesses and asking the public to identify their favourite shops and local experiences
- Provide further 'Support Local' stickers to amplify reach

Learnings to share:

Working together works - Partnering with BIDs, local businesses, and community groups makes events and interventions stronger and more successful

Consistent messaging helps - The "Support Local" campaign showed that clear, joined-up marketing brings more awareness to town and district centres

Events bring people in - Seasonal events are key for footfall. Planning early and promoting well makes a big difference

Data helps us react quickly - Tracking footfall means we can change plans and target marketing if needed

Weather matters - Bad weather can reduce footfall, good weather helps us as a conurbation. Having consistent online messaging helps keep people engaged

Completed by: Hannah Porter

Date: 13.11.25

Positive Exception Performance Report:

Please use this report to highlight outstanding performance during the last quarter, the factors that drove the good performance, and the reason it is important. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Ensure that the timeliness of assessments to determine the child's needs is conducive with offering the right service at the right time to children, young people, and their families.

2024/25 Q4 outturn: 94%	2025/26 Q1 outturn: 96%	2025/26 Q1 target: 85%
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Reason for level of performance (what drove success?):

The dedication and professionalism of our social work teams continue to shine through in our assessment timeliness, with an outstanding 96% of assessments completed within the statutory 45 working day timeframe. This performance is not only significantly above national benchmarks (85%) it has remained consistently higher than all comparator authorities for an incredible seven consecutive quarters. Such sustained excellence is a direct reflection of an unwavering commitment to children and families, and an ability to deliver timely, high-quality interventions even in the face of complex and demanding caseloads.

Quarter 1 has seen further improvement, with the average time to complete assessments reduced to just 21 working days—two days faster than the previous quarter and four days quicker than the same period last year. This remarkable progress is a testament to the relentless focus on efficiency and the ability to adapt and refine practice to meet the needs of the community. It speaks volumes about the skill, energy, and determination of our social work teams, who continue to go above and beyond to ensure that every child receives the support they need without delay.

Most impressively, 59% of assessments were completed within 20 working days—an extraordinary achievement that places us 28.8 percentage points above the national average of 30.2%. This result is not just a number; it represents the real impact of teams that are deeply committed to safeguarding and early intervention. Their hard work, resilience, and passion for making a difference are driving transformative outcomes for children and families across the directorate. We are immensely proud of their achievements and grateful for their continued excellence.

Reason for significance:

These improvements in assessment timeliness are profoundly important to the children and families in Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole (BCP), as they directly impact the speed and quality of support provided during critical moments in their lives. When assessments are completed quickly and efficiently, it means that children experiencing vulnerability or risk are identified sooner, and the right interventions can be put in place without delay. This can be life-changing—ensuring safety, stability, and access to services that promote wellbeing and development.

Completed by: Nigel Burton

Date: 10/09/2025

Exceptional Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance meeting or exceeding target, what was achieved, why did it happen, and what the next steps are/could be. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard): *Decrease the percentage of Children and Young People returning to Early Help (targeted support) within 12 months*

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 10%

Quarterly Target: 15%

Reason for level of performance:

The Early Help and Targeted Intervention Service (EH&TIS) place resilience and empowerment at the heart of their work with families. This can be evidenced in the robust performance shown against the percentage of children and young people being re-referred into BCP Early Help Services. We can see from the data that the majority of re-referrals in Q2 are families that are returning for support at least 2 years after their initial referral, with some coming back 3 and 4 years later. This indicates that the reasons for re-presentation are likely to be novel ones rather than a repetition of prior support needs which would be expected, given the fluctuating needs of some families, however 10% re-referrals is testament to the majority of families being supported to build resilience, strong networks and that have learnt the extent of their own capability.

It is also worth noting the improvement in performance between Q1 and Q2, where re-referral rates have dropped by 4percentage points from 14% in Q1 to 10% in Q2. This is further evidence of the ability of the EH&TIS to maintain performance over time in an area that evidences sustainable change for the families we work with.

There are several contributory factors to the consistent performance of EH&TIS against the decrease in % of children and young people returning to EH&TIS within 12 months:

The right help at the right time:

EH have strong processes in relation to their practice standards and graduated response. This allows sound decisions to be reached in relation to threshold, ensuring that families are receiving the correct service for their needs, with minimal points of handover or duplication. Once families are allocated to a lead professional, Early Help Support Workers (EHSW) build discussions on closure in from the very start of the work, ensuring that families have the opportunity to share what success looks like for them and can then work with us to not only reach their goals, but to develop the resilience to achieve the same result without our support.

Strong holistic assessment and planning:

EHSW's work with families to create robust assessments with the child's voice at the centre. Significant effort is put into assessing and analysing family strengths and needs, supporting families to create a plan that involves a network that can be utilised when things become difficult. Families own their assessment and are an integral part of planning and family network meetings. Putting families at the heart of this work ensures that they are invested in their own outcomes and contributes to a lower level of re-referrals.

A passionate workforce:

EHSW's and their management teams are passionate about what they do. There has been significant change within the area of Early Help, with staff teams being reconfigured, new skills being required and new processes to adjust to. Teams have successfully compartmentalised and, in doing so, have ensured

that the tide of change has not affected the high quality and level of service that families receive. EHSW's are passionate advocates of families' autonomy and of their strengths. They ensure their voices are heard and that they have the support that they need around them to truly thrive. When families know that they are capable, they are less likely to experience learned helplessness and require services in the future.

Strong Partnerships:

Our EH Strategy focuses on the power of networks, both within families and as professionals. We work with families to build their personal networks of professionals, community, friends and family but we also know the power of our EH Partnership network and where families might benefit from services outside of the EH&TIS. Our Early Help Advice Point is able to effectively triage families being referred into services, whether for the first time or subsequently, and to ensure that they are signposted to the correct service to best meet their needs. These conversations are based upon the families' wishes and feelings and, again, are built on the premise that where a family feels they have choice and are autonomous, they are more likely to engage and have successful outcomes.

Actions/Next steps:

These improvements in re-referral numbers are profoundly important to the children and families in BCP, as they reflect that families are receiving the right support at the right time. When re-referral rates are low, we know that families that previously sought support have built resilience and autonomy, that they are advocating for themselves and finding their own solutions without the need for intervention from professionals. This is our goal for all our families, and we will work towards continual improvement in this area to ensure the best outcomes for our families.

Learnings to share:

The re-referral numbers are very low and have remained consistently so. The most common closure reasons preceding re-referral in Q2 were closure to Universal services at Level 1 and escalation to services at statutory Level 4. There is not enough data to indicate a trend and further analysis of data over a longer period would be required to assess whether early closure and escalating needs were the drivers of re-referral. It is also worth noting that across our system, we would expect some families to experience challenges beyond the scope of EH that require statutory intervention. Equally, we would expect a number of families to experience some issues 'going it alone' as this is a big step. A pattern in either would be concerning but, at this point and with the data we have, there is no pattern that indicates that there is an issue with the timeliness of closure or a lack of impactful work being delivered.

We will monitor the trends to ensure that any patterns are identified and analysed at the earliest opportunity.

Completed by: **Nina Wilson – Service Manager**

Date: 13/11/2025

Service Unit Head approval with date:

Nigel Burton - Head of Service for MASH, Assessment and Out of Hours Teams

Date 13/11/2025

Exception Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.

This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the percentage of all major planning applications determined on time

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 69%

Quarterly Target: 80%

Reason for level of performance:

Planning application determination data is sourced from central government and provides year-to-date quarterly performance updates. 20 major planning applications were determined in Q2, although throughput and total number of decisions is high in terms of the number of decisions issued in time Performance has dipped in Q2. Factors which have influenced this include:

Determining a number of older applications – We have been issuing a number of older applications where the applicant had been unwilling to agree to an extension of time

Staff sickness at the senior planner level – This has reduced capacity to handle and determine major planning applications. We have some officers on long term sick leave, and it has been necessary to re-allocate their case load. This puts pressure on exiting staff and applicants are often unwilling to agree to extensions of time if the application has already gone beyond the decision date.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – This has been a source of delay for a number of major planning applications, due to the complexity of the matter and the limited resource to provide detailed feedback on BNG (There are only 2 ecologists at the Council). Due to the time it has taken to agree a suitable solution some applicants lost patience and did not agree an extension of time.

Delays in consultee responses – This often leads to applications going beyond the decision date and a number of agents are often unwilling to agree extensions of time in these situations as they are unhappy with the length of time it is taken the consultee to respond.

Reduction in Agency Staff – We have been gradually reducing the number of agency staff which has impacted on our capacity at senior planner level. This results in higher caseloads for the existing staff putting more pressure on them to deliver.

Committee overturns – Some applications were overturned at committee and the time it took to agree reasons for refusal went over the agreed extension of time. Applicants were unwilling to agree a further EOT as app was now being refused.

Summary of financial implications:

Increased risk of being placed on special measures if government performance targets are not met.

Increased risk of planning fees having to be refunded if the government's planning guarantee is not met.

Summary of legal implications:

Increased potential for number of appeals due to higher number of refused planning applications

Summary of human resources implications:
Increased/ high workloads for existing staff, could affect staff moral leading to staff looking elsewhere for a job. High workloads could result in increased levels of stress for the team and possible staff sickness
Summary of sustainability impact:
No Impact
Summary of public health implications:
No Impact
Summary of equality implications:
No Impact
Actions taken or planned to improve performance:
<p>Staff training on BNG so they are less reliant on seeking advice from the ecologist thereby reducing delays in the consultee process.</p> <p>New protocol being put into place with regards to procedure for seeking an extension of time to a planning application. Case officer to review an application no later than 6 weeks after receipt, if it looks likely that it will not be possible to determine in time then to seek an EOT at that point. Should an agent decline then to determine the application within the timeframe.</p> <p>A new policy on accepting amended plans has recently been adopted. This sets out a clear procedure for when we will accept amended plans or not. This will enable the case officer to have a clear framework for assessing and determining the planning application. This includes refusing applications which are unacceptable rather than seeking to negotiate a solution which often elongates the process unnecessarily and leading to applications being determined past the decision date.</p> <p>New report templates have been developed to streamline the report writing process and help reduce time spent by case officers writing reports allowing them to focus on issuing decisions.</p>
Completed by: Jon Bishop Date: 05/11/2025
Service Unit Head approval with date:

Exception Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.

This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the percentage of waste diverted from landfill

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 86.25%

Quarterly Target: 90%

Reason for level of performance:

A temporary decrease in our landfill diversion rate is due to a decision made by our waste contractors to send residual waste to landfill rather than to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities. This decision was part of their contingency plan to remain within the limits of the Environment Agency site permits. It was necessary during a period when several regional EfW facilities were undergoing scheduled maintenance resulting in a shortage of available capacity. We will continue to monitor this situation and anticipate an improvement in our diversion rate during Q3 and Q4.

Summary of financial implications:

The cost to BCP Council remains the same regardless of where our contractors send waste.

Summary of legal implications: n/a

Summary of human resources implications: n/a

Summary of sustainability impact:

While we remain committed to minimising landfill use and promoting sustainable waste management, our ability to influence these decisions is limited by the current contract, which allows our contractors to select the final disposal facility.

Summary of public health implications: n/a


Summary of equality implications: n/a

Actions taken or planned to improve performance

We continue to work closely with our contractors to encourage our landfill diversion rate to be as high as possible. We are pleased to report that waste is once again being processed through the usual Energy from Waste and Mechanical Biological Treatment routes, which is expected to improve our landfill diversion rate in the future.

Completed by: Mariana Tomasova, Strategic Waste Officer

Date: 31.10.2025

Service Unit Head approval with date:  **04/11/2025**

Exception Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.

This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard): Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans issued within 20 weeks

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 24.6%

Quarterly Target: 70%

Reason for level of performance:

Since September 2024, we have been unable to resource the Educational Psychology (EP) team sufficiently to keep up with the number of requests for Education Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessments and Plans. The rate of Initial Requests per 10,000 population shows that BCP have seen an increase in initial requests between 2020 and 2024 with a rate of 105.7 in 2024 more than double compared to 41.3 in 2020. BCP are above all the comparator groups in 2024 including the national average at 88.1, the regional average at 95.9 and also above statistical neighbours 93.4.

In 2024 our 20-week timeliness improved due to a cash injection to resource the Educational Psychology Service at the level which was required for them to meet the demand for EP assessments. The benefit of this funding was clearly seen in the data, with a period of strong performance (above 70%) between Jun 24 and April 25. Bids to secure funding to resource the Educational Psychology Team at a higher level were unsuccessful and the impact of this was forecast from mid 2024. Several further bids have been made to fund the service at the level required to keep pace with the increased demand in order to comply with our statutory duties –unsuccessfully.

The ceasing of this additional resource contributed significantly to, but is not wholly accountable for, the extended timescales seen with the 20-week process more recently. Some delays were attributed to administrative processes between the Business Support Team and Assistant EHCCO's /EHCCO's. These are now resolved and will need close monitoring.

The Educational Team have been prioritising children for assessment based on vulnerability factors and, enough new requests to enable the ECH process to be completed in line with national average performance. The notable dip in performance in Q2 may be attributed in part to previous prioritisation of EP assessments –until August 2025 -which focussed only on a child's vulnerability factors. Other factors are historic turbulence in staff turnover at EHCCO level which is now stabilising although this may not mean that the timescales will improve as the rise in referrals to the system are increasing year on year.

Summary of legal implications:

Failure to adhere to statutory timescales as set out in the Children and Families Act a2014 /SEND Code of Practice 2015

Actions taken or planned to improve performance:

Several bids to resource the Educational Psychology Service at the level required to meet demand have been made through 2024 and 2025. Review current practice of how EP advice for SEND statutory assessments are carried out once the Principal Educational Psychologist is in post later 2025 /early 2026

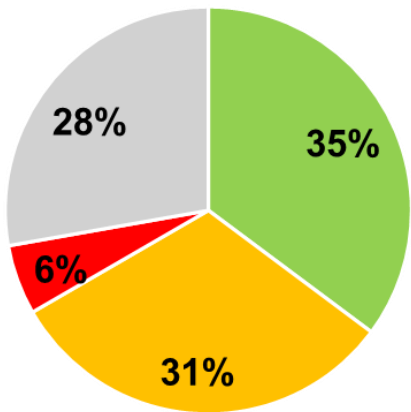
<p>Completed by: Stefanie Gehrig Clark – Head of Performance, Governance & Systems</p> <p>Date: 17 October 2025</p>
<p>Service Unit Head approval with date:</p> <p>Jeanette York, Head of SEND Assessment and Review – 20 October 2025</p> <p>Karen Chester, Interim Head of SEND Strategic – 20 October 2025</p>

Exception Performance Report	
<p>Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.</p> <p>This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.</p>	
<p>Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):</p> <p>Increase the percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live</p>	
2024/25 Q4 outturn: 75%	Target: 84%
<p>Reason for level of performance:</p> <p>The Resident's Survey is now conducted every 2 years. The last one was done in 2024, and the next one is due in autumn 2026.</p> <p>The last survey showed that satisfaction with the local area remained consistent between 2023 and 2024 with 78% of respondents satisfied with the local area as a place to live. This was 3% higher than the national benchmark observed through the LGA poll.</p> <p>Unfortunately, levels of satisfaction didn't increase to the levels observed in 2021 which saw 84% of respondents satisfied with the local area as a place to live.</p> <p>These figures must be seen in the context of the world around us including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - international and national events - the lack of growth in the economy and the continual rise in the cost of living - continual technological advances such as artificial intelligence - how we are as a society following the COVID pandemic <p>And, considered in the context of local challenges that are faced by the Council including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council's finances - Increasing demand for services, especially social care - A recent history of political change <p>Additionally, levels of satisfaction with the local area vary across the conurbation and although caution is advised as sample sizes at ward level are very small, some areas across the conurbation are markedly</p>	

different. For example, Burton and Grange have very high levels of satisfaction with 96% of respondents saying they are satisfied living in the local area compared to Bournemouth Town Centre where this decreases to 53% satisfied.
Summary of financial implications:
The Council's financial position means an inevitable change in service provision. This is unlikely to change soon despite a forecast balanced Medium Term Financial Plan.
Summary of equality implications:
The resident's survey is open to everyone in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, with every effort taken to ensure people with any protected characteristics were informed about and able to take the survey. The data therefore reflects the views of those who responded. Further work can be done to analyse the results to establish whether the change in satisfaction is stronger amongst those with one or more protected characteristic.
Actions taken or planned to improve performance:
<p>As a Council we continually strive to achieve our ambitions and our shared vision.</p> <p>Through the Corporate Strategy Delivery Board, senior officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review progress every month - encourage and oversee projects that implement new systems and processes that improve efficiency and deliver better outcomes for residents and visitors - monitor and review risks and ensure that there are mitigations in place <p>Successes regularly reported through our quarterly performance report and in other media show that the Council can deliver quality services on the current resource levels, but as demand for services continues to rise and consequently so do costs, to keep at the same level there is a need for more funding.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Government grant continues to decrease. This means savings need to be found each year which will and already is having an impact on service delivery.</p> <p>This does not mean we will not continually strive to achieve our ambitions however, as we continually look for ways to improve and be more efficient. In many cases this means utilising technology, working in different ways and innovating new solutions.</p> <p>The Council has limited ability to change the national or international picture too, but there is continued lobbying of Government through appropriate channels on national issues, and involvement in shaping new policies and partnerships by contributing evidence, data and examples.</p>
<p>Completed by: Lisa Stuchberry and Carly Hoyle</p> <p>Date: 13.11.25</p>

Quarter 2 2025-26 - Overview of performance

This report provides an update of quarter two in the 2025/26 year on the progress measures in the council’s shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. More detail is available in the [performance dashboard](#).

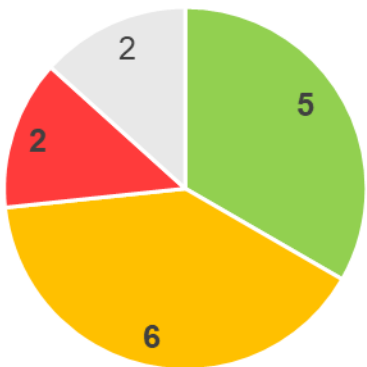


Q2 Overall

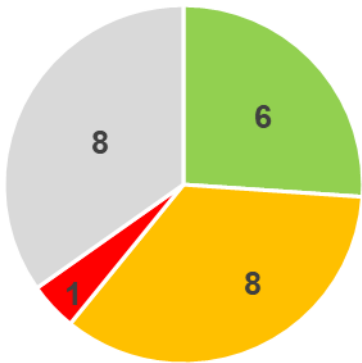
- 19 Measures are on target (green)
- 17 measures require monitoring (amber)
- 3 measure requires action (red)
- 15 measures are pending a RAG rating (grey) mostly due to these being annual or bi-annual measures

Across the three corporate priority areas, this breaks down into:

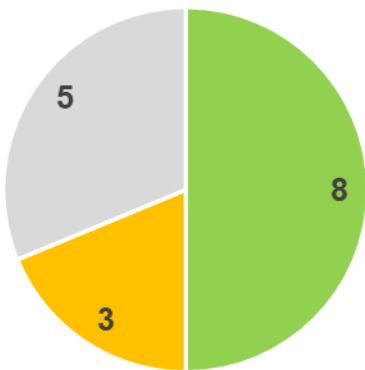
Our Place and Environment



Our People and Communities



Our Approach



More detail about each measure is set out in the following tables.

Explanation of performance tables

- **Frequency:** How often new data is available
- **High or low figure is better:** Whether good performance is a higher figure or a lower figure.
- **Baseline figure:** A reference point from which the latest progress can be monitored. The time period the baseline data relates to is noted.
- **Target:** The performance level (goal) the council is aiming to achieve. Rationale for target levels are provided in the performance dashboard.
- **Direction of travel & RAG:** This column shows whether performance is improving, declining or remaining at the same level compared to the previous update. This is indicated by a directional arrow.

Whether the Q2 data is on target is shown by the RAG rating:

- **Red:** Performance has not met its target and has reached a level of intervention at which action is required to improve performance.
 - **Amber:** Performance is not on target but has not reached a level at which action is needed. This requires monitoring to ensure performance stays on track.
 - **Green:** Performance has met or exceeded its target.
 - **Pending:** RAG rating not set. This could be because more data is needed to set targets to know if performance is on track, or new data is not yet available, such as with annual or biannual measures.
- **Commentary:** Provides further detail on performance.

Our Place and Environment

There are currently fifteen measures that sit under the six ambitions of 'Our Place and Environment' priority. Two of these are measured **annually** and two measured **biannually** and are shaded grey unless being reported in Q2, and eleven are measured **quarterly**.

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
People and places are connected by sustainable and modern infrastructure								
PE1A.1	Increase the total number of sustainable passenger trips in the BCP area per year	Quarterly	High	24.85M (June 2025)	27.71M (March 2026)	24.84M (September 2025)	↔	The number of bus passenger trips shows a very slight decline from the previous quarter. The increase in the national fares cap from £2 to £3 is affecting bus patronage and lack of noticeable growth in the national economy is also a factor.
PE1A.2	Increase the number of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points	Quarterly	High	220 (June 2025)	240 (September 2025)	265 (September 2025)	↑	<p>The number of council and public electric vehicle (EV) chargers has increased to 265, exceeding the target. Earlier delays were caused by procurement and contract issues, but these have now been resolved and site programming is underway.</p> <p>The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) bid secured 1,100 charging sockets and six rapid charging hubs, with the first hub now set to be operational in early 2026 and more to follow. A homeowner charging gully trial is also starting imminently, supported by £93,000 in grant funding. Despite previous setbacks, these developments provide a strong foundation for delivering EV infrastructure across the area.</p>
Our communities have pride in our streets, neighbourhoods and public spaces								
PE2B.1	Increase the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) served for fly tipping and littering offences	Quarterly	High	760 (June 2025)	844 (September 2025)	1.43K (September 2025)	↑	<p>1428 fixed penalty notices issued including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 PSPO offences • 17 flytipping • 3 waste duty of care • 1400 litter <p>The increase in FPNs issued this quarter is due to additional mobile resource to support visitor influx.</p>
PE2D.1	Reduce levels of police recorded antisocial behaviour (ASB)	Quarterly	Low	2,370 (June 2025)	1,775.5 (September 2025)	2,573 (September 2025)	↓	There is a slight rise in anti-social behaviour (ASB) data for the last quarter compared to the same quarter last year. There is joint work currently being done between the Police and BCP Council around writing an ASB strategy and a new strategic ASB group is being formed.
PE2D.2	Increase enforcement outcomes relating to street-based antisocial behaviour (ASB)	Quarterly	High	1,475 (June 2025)	1,926 (September 2025)	1,069 (September 2025)	↓	<p>Street based enforcement stats Q2:</p> <p>Number of CSAS incidents attended: 632</p> <p>Number of alcohol seizures: 22</p> <p>Number of dispersals: 344</p> <p>Early intervention notices: 10</p> <p>Support referrals:34</p> <p>Community Protection Warnings (CPW) – 23</p> <p>Community Protection Notices (CPN) – 1</p> <p>Anti-Social Behaviour Injunctions (ASBI) – 1</p>

								Closure – 2 We have seen an overall year-on-year reduction in anti-social behaviour statistically and a quarterly reduction in the new metrics being tracked over the summer period, which bucks the previous years' trends. As such individual engagements and enforcement will be lower.
PE2A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live	Biannual	High	75% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
PE2B.2	Increase residents' satisfaction with street cleaning	Biannual	High	48% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Our inclusive, vibrant and sustainable economy supports our communities to thrive								
PE3A.1	Increase the number of businesses in the BCP area	Annual	High	15,495 (December 2024)	15,500 (December 2025)	15,600 (September 2025)	↑	The number of enterprises measure tracks the size of the business stock in the BCP Council area and is Office of National Statistics (ONS) data (UK Business Counts).
PE3B.1	Increase non-financial support given to BCP-based businesses	Quarterly	High	0	475 (March 2026)	280 (September 2025)	↑	The businesses supported is a new measure, agreed at the Corporate Strategy Performance Board on 11 November 2025 and tracks the number of BCP based businesses that are supported. Support includes enquiries received and responded to, and attendance at events.
PE3C.1	Increase in the creation of new business enterprises	Quarterly	High	0	30 (March 2026)	9 (September 2025)	↑	The new enterprises measure is new, agreed at the Corporate Strategy Performance Board on 11 November 2025, and tracks the number of new enterprises (businesses) set up following our UKSPF funded 'Ignite' business start-up courses. There are courses for both BCP residents and BCP based university students.
Revitalised high streets and regenerated key sites create new opportunities								
PE4A.1	Increase footfall across our three town centres	Quarterly	High	21.74M (June 2025)	20M (September 2025)	22.54M (September 25)	↑	As expected, the summer season delivered a strong footfall performance, amounting to 22.5 million visits to Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole town centres in Q2, reflecting the area's enduring appeal as a summer destination. This represents a significant improvement compared to the Q1 figures with an additional 2 million visitors. The growth is particularly positive given that town centre footfall has generally faced static or declining trends post-Covid, driven by changing consumer habits, increased online shopping, and economic pressures. Achieving sustained growth in this metric is challenging, making these results a positive indicator of the resilience of BCP's visitor economy.
PE4B.1	Increase the percentage of all major planning applications determined on time	Quarterly	High	88% (June 2025)	80% (September 2025)	69% (September 2025)	↓	Planning application determination data is sourced from central government and provides year-to-date quarterly performance updates. 32 major planning applications were determined in Q2, although throughput and total number of decisions is high in terms of the number of

								decisions issued in time, performance has dipped in Q2. This has been in part due to issuing decisions on a number of older applications where the applicant had been unwilling to agree to an extension of time. Other factors which have influenced this is staff sickness which reduced capacity to handle and determine major planning applications. This has been highlighted to the planning team and the team managers will be working closely with the senior planning officers to ensure performance increases in Q3.
PE4B.2	Increase the percentage of all non-major planning applications determined on time	Quarterly	High	83% (June 2025)	92% (September 2025)	88% (September 2025)	↑	Performance has increased in Q2 and remains strong in this area. Staff recruited earlier in the year have now had time to establish themselves within the team and the department is seeing the benefits of a period of stability. It is anticipated that performance will continue to improve and meet targets.
Climate change is tackled through sustainable policies and practice								
PE5E.1	Increase the percentage of waste diverted from landfill	Quarterly	High	89.07% (June 2025)	90% (March 2026)	86.25% (September 2025)	↓	A temporary decrease in our landfill diversion rate is due to a decision made by our waste contractors to send residual waste to landfill rather than to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities. This decision was taken during a period when EfW facilities were undergoing scheduled maintenance resulting in a shortage of available capacity. We will monitor this situation although we believe Q3 & Q4 will show some improvement.
PE 5A.1	Reduce the tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions from our vehicles and buildings (tCO2e).	Annual	Low	12,911 (October 2024)	Carbon Neutral by 2045	13.4% reduction in 2024/25 against annual reduction in 23/24	↑	Progress has been made during 2024/25, showing an overall reduction in emissions by 13.4%, this has been achieved by retrofit investment on the corporate estate, increased purchase of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, investment in the electric vehicle fleet and more accuracy in the revised staff travel survey.
Our green spaces flourish and support the wellbeing of both people and nature								
Measures under discussion with Green Space and Conservation team.								

Our People and Communities

There are twenty three measures that sit under the seven ambitions of ‘Our People and Communities’ priority. Eight are measured **annually**, twelve are measured **quarterly**, two are **termly** and one is collected **everytwo years**. Annual/biannual measures are shaded grey unless being reported in Q2.

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
High quality of life for all, where people can be active, healthy and independent								
PC1A.2	Increase the percentage of people with a learning disability living independently in settled accommodation	Quarterly	High	81.2% (June 2025)	80% (March 2026)	79.7% (September 2025)	↓	We have maximised opportunities to de-register residential homes i.e., to support the transition of individuals – particularly those with learning disabilities (LD) or mental

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								<p>health (MH) needs – into settled, supported accommodation.</p> <p>Commissioning is refocusing on developing appropriate supported accommodation to divert people away from residential care. A Working Age Adult Framework is to be tendered Spring 2025 to maximise procurement opportunities for supported living. Ongoing work with Housing to develop a Strategic Housing Plan to inform specialist housing development. Work continues to address updating the records of people with an unknown accommodation status. Strategic Housing Plan now completed by PPL (Private Public Ltd) and subgroups being set up by Housing to take forward specific developments by primary support groups. Framework due out this year to provide the care and support against each property.</p> <p>Supported Housing</p> <p>Commissioning is currently working with housing and development to increase specialist accommodation capacity through the specialist housing strategy. We have a development due in March 2026 which will provide 13 MH and 13 LD one bed (2 person) flats. Allowing us to nominate either for one person or couples.</p> <p>We are also working through a consultation pre planning on another development that will provide an additional 12 one bed flats for LD. Planning to go in 2026.</p>
PC1A.3	Increase the percentage of people with a mental health issue living independently in settled accommodation	Quarterly	High	70.8% (June 2025)	70% (September 2025)	70% (September 2025)	↔	<p>We have maximised opportunities to de-register residential homes i.e., to support the transition of individuals – particularly those with learning disabilities (LD) or mental health (MH) needs – into settled, supported accommodation.</p> <p>Commissioning is refocusing on developing appropriate supported accommodation to divert people away from residential care. A Working Age Adult Framework to be tendered in Spring 2025 to maximise procurement opportunities for supported living. Ongoing work with Housing to develop to a Strategic Housing Plan to inform specialist housing development. Work continues to address updating the records of people with an unknown accommodation status. Strategic Housing Plan now completed by PPL (Private Public Ltd) and subgroups being set up by Housing to take forward specific developments by primary support groups. Framework due out this year to provide the care and support against each property.</p> <p>Supported Housing.</p> <p>Commissioning is currently working with housing and development to increase specialist accommodation capacity through the specialist housing strategy. We have a development due to come online March 2026 which will</p>

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								provide 13 MH and 13 LD one bed (2 person) flats. Allowing us to nominate either for one person or couples. We are also working through a consultation pre planning on another development that will provide an additional 12 one bed flats for LD. Planning to go in 2026.
PC1B.1	Increase the number of registrations from people in the most deprived areas accessing health and wellbeing support (LiveWell Dorset)	Quarterly	High	257 (June 2025)	267 (September 2025)	222 (September 2025)	↓	<p>The service continues to reach clients living in our most deprived neighbourhoods. Registration numbers are below that of Q2 2024/25, however the proportion reached – 30% – is higher than Q2 2024/25 and is above our 25% target of registrations from clients living in our most deprived neighbourhoods. Q2 2024/25 had a greater number of registrations which has set a higher target for this quarter. Reasons for a reduction in registration numbers includes the loss of the ability to direct targeted marketing and communication campaigns via social media, the loss of the Public Health Dorset website and the organisation's social media account no longer being used. To resolve this, a number of campaigns are planned through targeted marketing and alternative social media advertising.</p> <p>LiveWell Dorset has changed the basis on which the indicator is constructed, now looking at the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods locally when previously it was looking at the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally, which increases the target audience quite significantly.</p>
PC1A.4	Increase the percentage of Adult Social Care users who are satisfied with the care and support they receive	Annual	High	59% (March 2025)	62% (December 2025)	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new information is available. New information should be available in March 2026.
PC1A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who have a good satisfaction with life	Annual	High	70% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
PC1C.1	Increase the percentage of physically active adults	Annual	High	71.50% (June 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. When new national averages are released, we will be able to set our target.
PC1C.2	Increase the percentage of physically active children and young people	Annual	High	61% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. When new national averages are released, we will be able to set our target.
PC1A.5	Increase the percentage of carers who are satisfied with the care and support they receive	Biannual	High	36% (March 2024)	38% (March 2026)	-		This is a biannual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. New data should be available in spring 2026.
Working together, everyone feels safe and secure								

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
PC2A.1	Reduce levels of police recorded serious violent crime	Quarterly	Low	333 (June 2025)	313 (September 2025)	363 (September 2025)	↓	The figures were slightly higher in July than last year (137 to 122) but almost identical figures for August and September. The highest volume of serious violence is still sexual violence, and some work is being done to monitor public place sexual violence in a more comprehensive manner. The partnership structure for managing serious violence is changing also with a new Serious Violence Multi-Agency action group being formed with a police officer leading which is a change from our current serious violence delivery group structure.
PC2B.1	Increase the percentage of residents who feel safe in their local area during the day	Annual	High	87% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
PC2B.2	Increase the percentage of residents who feel safe in their local area after dark	Annual	High	54% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Those who need support receive it when and where they need it								
PC3C.1	Increase the number of individuals entering drug treatment	Quarterly	High	3,195 (March 2025)	3,127 (June 2025)	3,156 (June 2025)	↓	Q2 actual figures will not be available until end of November (the verified data via central government is about 8 – 12 weeks after the end of the quarter). Drugs activity can only be reported via verified data which is in the public domain Due to the government time lag in finalising publicly available figures, quarterly reporting for this measure will be one quarter behind. Since verification, we can now report that the actual Q1 figure is 3,156 adults in treatment. Q2 figures will be reported in full at Q3 and will be updated as soon as available on the live Corporate Performance dashboard.
PC3A.1	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans issued within 20 weeks	Quarterly	High	58.54% (June 2025)	70% (September 2025)	24.60% (September 2025)	↓	Since September 2024, we have been unable to resource the Educational Psychology (EP) team sufficiently to keep up with the number of requests for Education Health and Care Needs Assessments and Plans. BCP are showing an increase in the rate of Initial Requests per 10,000 population (0-25) between 2020 and 2024 with a rate of 105.7 in 2024 compared to 41.3 in 2020. BCP are above all the comparators in 2024 (Eng 88.1, SW 95.9 and SN 93.4). In 2024 our 20-week timeliness improved as a result of a cash injection to resource the EPS at the level which was required for them to meet the demand for EP assessments. Once this resource was spent, it has contributed to, but is not wholly accountable for, the extended timescales seen with the 20-week process more recently. From August 2025 the EP Team are prioritising assessments for children based on vulnerability factors

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								weighed against enough new requests to enable the ECHP process to be completed in line with national average performance. The notable dip in performance in Q2 may be attributed in part to previous prioritisation of EP assessments which focussed only on a child's vulnerability factors. There were also some delays with BSO functions which are now resolved. Another factor is historic turbulence in staff turnover at EHCCO level which is now stabilising.
PC3B.1	Reduce the attainment gap and improve learning outcomes for children and young people in receipt of free school meals	Annual	Low	50.1 (Sept 2024)	35 (March 2026)	50.60 (September 2025)	↔	Provisional data collected locally is provided, national data will be published in the Autumn term, and the measure will be updated accordingly when available. BCP Council schools are significantly above national, regional and SN benchmarks from the previous year. However, we are unable to provide a direct comparison until the 2024/25 national benchmarking data is released by the Department for Education. There is a slight improvement on the previous year, based on the BCP Council provisional data.
PC3D.1	Ensure that the timeliness of assessments to determine the child's needs is conducive with offering the right service at the right time to children, young people and their families	Quarterly	High	95% (June 2025)	85% (March 2026)	96% (September 2025)	↑	This performance is significantly above national benchmarks (85%) and has remained consistently higher than all comparator authorities for an incredible eight consecutive quarters. Such positive performance is a direct reflection of the commitment of staff to children and families, and the clear processes in place to ensure consistency and timely assessments.
Good quality homes are accessible, sustainable and affordable for all								
PC4B.1	Reduce the number of homeless households in bed and breakfast	Quarterly	Low	44 (June 2025)	40 (September 2025)	65 (September 2025)	↓	Households in bed & breakfast have increased in the past quarter, with the Housing service experiencing the highest level of demand during this period in the past 5 years. Homelessness demand has increased by 9% over the past year, with more recent drivers coming from no-fault evictions from the private rented sector. The impact of the future legislative changes in this market are forecast to continue to have a homelessness impact. Additional central Government grant resources will be focused on supporting the homelessness prevention agenda, with targeted interventions supporting household most likely to be at risk.
PC4A.1	Reduce the number of people rough sleeping	Quarterly	Low	49 (June 2025)	50 (September 2025)	66 (September 2025)	↓	The overall prevalence of rough sleeping continues to show reductions from the same period last year with an 11% reduction. Whilst seasonality continues to influence the total count, the profile of those rough sleeping has seen a marked change. There are 75% fewer people rough sleeping long term. Those new to rough sleeping are only seen a few times before they are helped into alternative accommodation, meaning that people are staying on the street for a shorter time. There are fewer people on the street now who are long term rough sleepers due to a concentrated effort by the council and

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								partners to find them the homes and support they need to prevent the risk of returning to the street.
PC4C.1	Increase the number of both completed new affordable and social rented homes	Quarterly	High	0 (June 2025)	100 (March 2026)	2 (September 2025)	↑	100 homes completed by end of March 2026 on target. 2 new homes completed this quarter at Craigmoor Avenue. 7 new homes at Grants Close, Bournemouth and High Street Christchurch due for completion in November 2025. Further build completions expected at Hillbourne and Templeman House in early 2026. 152 affordable homes currently under construction.
Local communities shape the services that matter to them								
PC5A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area	Annual	High	30% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Employment is available for everyone and helps create value in our communities								
PC6A.2	Increase the uptake of supported employment for those with learning disabilities	Quarterly	High	4.6% (June 2025)	4.5% (March 2026)	4.7% (September 2025)	↑	<p>The Supported Employment Review has been agreed as one of the six priorities of the co-produced Day Opportunities Strategy. Our Fulfilled Lives, strengths-based approach in Adult Social Care ensures that employment is explored with those people who are able to work. Dorset Work Matters is a joint project between Dorset HealthCare and Dorset Mental Health Forum and helps people who are accessing mental health services to find paid employment. Employment specialists have been working with people to reconnect them with their passions, interests, and skills, and use this as a focus for them to find employment. The employment specialists are skilled at working with employers to negotiate personalised reasonable adjustments and to ensure that the right support is in place to sustain work.</p> <p>The individual placement support workers have received an expansion in their funding over the next 5 years. The funding will include an extra 5 Individual Placement and Support (IPS) workers and a new team lead.</p>
PC6A.3	Increase the uptake of supported employment for those with mental health issues	Quarterly	High	2.6% (June 2025)	2.6% (March 2026)	2.4% (September 2025)	↓	<p>The Supported Employment Review has been agreed as one of the six priorities of the co-produced Day Opportunities Strategy. Our Fulfilled Lives, strengths-based approach in Adult Social Care ensures that employment is explored with those people who are able to work. Dorset Work Matters is a joint project between Dorset HealthCare and Dorset Mental Health Forum and helps people who are accessing mental health services to find paid employment. Employment specialists have been working with people to reconnect them with their passions, interests, and skills, and use this as a focus for them to find employment. The employment specialists are skilled at working with employers to negotiate personalised</p>

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								<p>reasonable adjustments and to ensure that the right support is in place to sustain work.</p> <p>The individual placement support workers have received an expansion in their funding over the next 5-years. The funding will include an extra 5 Individual Placement and Support (IPS) workers and a new team lead.</p>
Skills are continually developed, and people can access lifelong learning								
PC7B.1	Reduce the number of primary school aged children excluded from school	Termly	Low	0.012% (March 2025)	0.01% (March 2026)	0.012% (September 2025)	↔	<p>Data from Summer 2025 is currently latest available, showing 0.012%, which is in line with national averages and equivalent to 3 permanent exclusions, the same as the Spring term.</p> <p>It should be noted that the low number of children that are excluded from primary school can result in this indicator fluctuating greatly when in reality the number of children does not significantly change.</p> <p>Analysis of primary aged children excluded in the 2024/25 academic year highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 92% (11 of 12) children either had an EHC Plan or were in the process of being assessed for one. - 92% (11 of 12) children were open to or had been referred to Children's Social Care or Targeted Family Support Services, however, only 38% of those referred accepted the offer of support. <p>This demonstrates that children with additional support needs are more likely to be excluded and suggests that sufficiency issues and current challenges assessing the needs of children with special educational needs may be a factor in the increase of primary aged children being excluded.</p> <p>The following actions have been taken to address the rise in primary aged children being excluded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional funding has been secured to commission The Difference, a nationally respected organisation that has successfully supported schools and Local Authorities to reduce exclusions, to work with our schools to develop inclusive practice that will reduce exclusions. - A three-tier alternative provision model, that focuses on early intervention and preventing exclusion is being co-designed with schools and other stakeholders. - An Alternative Provision Panel at which schools can request additional resources to support children that are at risk of exclusion has been established.
PC7B.2	Reduce the number of secondary school aged children excluded from school	Termly	Low	0.137% (March 2025)	0.082% (March 2026)	0.067% (September 2025)	↑	<p>Data from the Summer 2025 is currently latest available, showing 0.067%, equivalent to 7 permanent exclusions, a decrease from 0.137% (35 permanent exclusions) in the Spring term.</p> <p>Although this indicator suggests improvement, data for the full academic year 2024/25 would indicate the BCP rate of</p>

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								<p>exclusion from secondary schools continue to remain high and significantly above the national average. 53% of exclusions in 2024/25 were of children with identified special education needs. There was a 48% increase between 2023/24 and 2044/25 of the number of children being excluded for drug and alcohol-related issues.</p> <p>The following actions have been taken to prevent children from being excluded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We have commissioned 50 places for school leaders on 'The Difference's' Inclusion Leadership Programme. The Difference are a national education charity, which works with MATs and LAs to reduce lost learning.- A three-tier alternative provision model, that focuses on early intervention and preventing exclusion is being co-designed with schools and other stakeholders.- An Alternative Provision Panel at which schools can request additional resources to support children that are at risk of exclusion has been established.

Our Approach

There are sixteen measures that sit under the seven principles of ‘Our Approach’ priority. Six are measured **annually** and are shaded grey unless being reported in Q2 and ten are measured **quarterly**.

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
Working closely with partners, removing barriers and empowering others								
A1A.1	Increase the number of assets transferred to communities	Annual	High	1 (March 2025)	6 (March 2026)	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as ‘pending’ until new data is available. New data should be available in March 2026.
Providing accessible and inclusive services, showing care in our approach								
A2B.1	Raise the proportion of interactions that come from online platforms	Quarterly	High	71% (June 2025)	85% (March 2026)	78% (September 2025)	⬆	Now that the new Dynamics platform is in place with improved functionality to support the roll out of self-serve options, the aim is to actively channel shift activity away from phone lines and on to self-serve options. A programme is being put together to deliver these changes. This will form part of the Customer Strategy refresh, which is currently being scoped now that the transformation programme has delivered the technological advances to the underlying systems. A deep dive is taking place into all aspects of the contact centre, a proportion of which will focus on increasing self-service.
A2A.1	Increase the proportion of people who use care services who find it easy to find information about services	Annual	High	68% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as ‘pending’ until new data is available. New data and a new target should be available in March 2026.
A2A.2	Increase levels of trust in the council	Annual	High	48% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Using data, insights and feedback to shape services and solutions								
A3B.1	Increase satisfaction with the way the council runs things	Annual	High	41% (December 2023)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
A3A.1	Reduce percentage of upheld Ombudsman complaints per 100,000 of the population	Quarterly	Low	0.25% (March 2025)	0.25% (September 2025)	0.21% (September 2025)	⬆	During the last quarter the Ombudsman made 16 decisions relating to BCP complaints. Of these, 15 were not upheld, leaving one case which was upheld. This equals the same number that was upheld in the previous quarter meaning performance has not changed. The low number of upheld complaints reflects improved complaint handling at stage 1, and the commitment to a more centralised approach to complaints training
Intervening as early as possible to improve outcomes								

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
A4A.1	Decrease the percentage of Children and Young People returning to Early Help (targeted support) within 12 months	Quarterly	Low	13% (June 2025)	15% (March 2026)	10% (September 2025)	↑	The most common closure reasons preceding re-referral in Q2 were the Level 1 and Level 4, which suggests that both early closure and escalating needs are key drivers of re-referral, which has remained consistently low. The focus remains on the wider Early Help network to continue to provide intervention, therefore Level 1 closures may indicate that some children's needs were underestimated or support ended too soon/ was not effective, while Level 4 step-ups reflect children and families whose needs intensified needing a higher level of support/ intervention. We are strong performers in this area indicating that our level 3 support works well and meets the needs of most families.
Developing a passionate, proud, valued and diverse workforce								
A5B.2	Increase the percentage of equality monitoring data collected from staff	Quarterly	High	64.49% (June 2025)	70% (September 2025)	65.56% (September 2025)	↑	<p>Slight increase in overall completion rates.</p> <p>People and culture have now devised a way to import Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) information captured on the Recruitment System to Dynamics F&O which should ensure no data provided by colleagues is missed going forward.</p> <p>Director of People and Culture to emphasise to DSG members the importance of encouraging colleagues within their service to complete their EDI data.</p> <p>Overall completion rate: 65.56%</p> <p>Disability completion rate: 76.75% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Ethnicity completion rate: 76.54% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Marriage/Civil Partnership completion rate: 50.23% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Gender Identity completion rate: 51.25% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Religion completion rate: 69.16% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Sexual Orientation completion rate: 69.43% of colleagues have provided this data</p>
A5C.1	Increase the number of successful candidates from underrepresented groups for council jobs	Quarterly	High	4.8% (June 2025)	6% (September 2025)	3.92% (September 2025)	↓	Out of the 3,897 applicants who responded this quarter, 11.03 % declared a disability (430 applicants). Out of those applicants successful in the recruitment process, the % of candidates declaring a disability is 14.95 % (16 applicants). The differential between overall applicants and successful candidates for this underrepresented group remains a positive figure for the last quarter.
A5B.1	Increase levels of employee engagement	Annual	High	60% (March 2024)	62% (September 2025)	63% (September 2025)	↑	Employee engagement continues to trend upward, exceeding our target for 2025. Starting from a baseline of 60% in 2024, we set an ambitious goal of 62% and achieved 63%, reflecting a sustained improvement in engagement levels across the organisation. This progress is thanks to the hard work of services across the Council, which have focused on improving engagement. Individual data shows

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								significant improvement, largely attributed to the rollout of the new Performance Framework and the associated impact of creating dedicated time for discussions around Learning and Development opportunities. In addition, the certainty and successful delivery of the Pay and Reward Programme is believed to have played a vital role in contributing to this increase, reinforcing confidence and fairness across the workforce.
Creating an environment for innovation, learning and leadership								
A6B.1	Increase the number of current council employees supported to undertake apprenticeships	Quarterly	High	123 (June 2025)	126 (September 2025)	126 (September 2025)	↑	In the last quarter, 11 existing colleagues successfully completed their apprenticeships and 4 withdrew from their programmes, which accounts for the slightly lower increase to normal, although we remain on target.
A6B.2	Increase the number of newly recruited colleagues into apprenticeship posts	Quarterly	High	39 (June 2025)	40 (September 2025)	39 (September 2025)	↔	The number of apprentices employed since the last reporting period has not changed and remains on target.
Using our resources sustainably to support our ambitions								
A7A.2	Increase the percentage of successful grant applications	Quarterly	High	100% (June 2025)	92% (September 2025)	99.64% (September 2025)	↔	Total of 6 bids, all successful. £95,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Debris Screen Health and Safety Works. £6,222,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defences. £1,501,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Museum Estate and Development Fund. £73,000 awarded by Veolia for Queens Park Play Area. £376,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Poole Museum. £93,000 awarded by DEFRA for King Charles III England Coast Path.
A7A.3	Increase the percentage of business rates collected	Quarterly	High	31.65% (June 2025)	49% (September 2025)	57.04% (September 2025)	↑	This remains on target.
A7A.4	Increase the percentage of council tax collected	Quarterly	High	27.25% (June 2025)	49% (September 2025)	52.9% (September 2025)	↑	The % collected at the end of quarter 2 is slightly less than last year, but in excess of any intervention level.
A7A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who think the council provides value for money	Annual	High	33% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Work Plan
Meeting date	19 January 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee is asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review, update and confirm the Work Plan.
Reason for recommendations	The Council's Constitution requires all Overview and Scrutiny Committees to set out proposed work in a Work Plan which will be published with each agenda.
Portfolio Holder(s):	N/A – Overview and Scrutiny is a non-executive function
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Work Plan updates

1. This report provides the latest version of the Committee's Work Plan at Appendix A and guidance on how to populate and review the Work Plan in line with the Council's Constitution. For the purposes of this report, all references to Overview and Scrutiny Committees shall also apply to the Overview and Scrutiny Board unless otherwise stated.
2. Items added to the Work Plan since the last publication are highlighted as **NEW**. Councillors are asked to consider and confirm the latest Work Plan.
3. The most recent [Cabinet Forward Plan](#) can be viewed on the council's website. This link is included in each O&S Work Plan report for councillors to view and refer to when considering whether any items of pre-decision scrutiny will join the O&S Committee Work Plan.

Resources to support O&S Work

4. The Constitution requires that O&S committees take account of the resources available to support proposals for O&S work. Advice on maximising the resource available to O&S Committees is set out in the O&S Work Planning Guidance document referenced below.

Work programming guidance and tools

5. The [Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference](#) document provides detail on the principles of scrutiny at BCP Council, the membership, functions and remit of each O&S committee and the variety of working methods available.
6. [The O&S Work Planning Guidance](#) document provides detail on all aspects of work planning including how to determine requests for scrutiny in line with the Council's constitution.
7. The [O&S Framework for scrutiny topic selection](#) was drawn up by O&S councillors in conjunction with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The framework provides detail on the criteria for proactive, reactive and pre-decision scrutiny topics, and guidance on how these can be selected to contribute to value-added scrutiny outcomes.
8. The '[Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny](#)' form is an example form to be used by councillors and residents when making a new suggestion for a scrutiny topic. Word copies of the form are available from Democratic Services upon request by using the contact details on this agenda.
9. Performance information: progress against the council's Corporate Strategy can be viewed on the council's [Performance Dashboard](#). The dashboard includes ratings to show where the council is on target, areas for monitoring or where action is required, and explanations. The dashboard includes measures relevant to all O&S committees and is provided to assist committees in their horizon scanning and work selection process.
10. Data Toolkit: The Children's Services O&S Committee has developed a Data Toolkit to assist with the inclusion of data into its work. Resources included in the Data Toolkit can also be used as horizon scanning tools to help the committee to understand where it can impactfully target its work. [Data Toolkit](#)

Options Appraisal

11. The O&S Committee is asked to review, update and confirm its Work Plan, taking account of the supporting documents provided and including the determination of any new requests for scrutiny. This will ensure member ownership of the Work Plan and that reports can be prepared in a timely way.
12. If updates to the Work Plan are not confirmed there may be an impact on timeliness of reports and other scrutiny activity.

Summary of financial implications

13. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

14. There are no legal implications arising from this report. The Council's Constitution requires that all O&S bodies set out proposed work in a Work Plan which will be published with each agenda. The recommendation proposed in this report will fulfil this requirement.

Summary of human resources implications

15. There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

16. There are no sustainability resources implications arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

17. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

18. There are no equality implications arising from this report. Any councillor and any member of the public may make suggestions for overview and scrutiny work. Further detail on this process is included within O&S Procedure Rules at Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

Summary of risk assessment

19. There is a risk of challenge to the Council if the Constitutional requirement to establish and publish a Work Plan is not met.

Background papers

- [Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference](#)
- [O&S Work Planning Guidance document](#)
- [O&S Framework for scrutiny topic selection](#)
- [‘Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny’](#)

Further detail on these background papers is contained within the body of this report.

Appendices

Appendix A - Current O&S Work Plan

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BCP Council Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Work Plan. Updated 9.1.26

Guidance notes:

- 2/3 items per committee meeting is the recommended maximum for effective scrutiny.
- The Children's Services O&S Committee will approach work through a lens of **TBC**
- Items requiring further scoping are identified and should be scoped using the Key Lines of Enquiry tool.

	Subject and background	How will the scrutiny be done?	Lead Officer/Portfolio Holder	Report Information
Meeting Date: 27 January 2026				
1.	Housing for Care Experienced Young People Update	Committee Report	Head of Strategic Housing & Partnerships	Was agreed to come as Committee report in June 2025 meeting
2.	Budget Scrutiny - High Needs Block, Invest to Save	Committee Report	Director for Education and Skills	
3.	Family Hubs Working Group – Update Report		Overview and Scrutiny Specialist	
	School Admissions Arrangements 2027/28	Information only		Annual Report
	Children's Services Capital Strategy Report 2026-2028			
Meeting Date: 9 March 2026				
1.	Families First Programme NEW	Presentation		
2.	Children in Care – Budget Report NEW	Committee Report		

Key: Pre-Decision Scrutiny Pro-active Scrutiny

3.	Local Area Partnership SEND inspection report 'NEW'	Committee Report		
4.	Verbal update from John Coughlan on SEND improvement Journey	Verbal Report		
5.	Youth Service Motion Report	Committee Report		Moved from January 2026 meeting
6.	Deficient Recovery report – HOLD 'NEW'	Committee Report		
Items with Dates to be allocated				
	Annual report from Corporate Parenting Board to include information on Children in Care To include details of any protected characteristics detailed within the Equalities Act	Committee Report	TBC – DS look into this	Enable the Committee to maintain oversight of this issue and target scrutiny as required.
	Children's Services Data Toolkit	TBC	November	To enable the Committee to have a toolkit to consider data relating to CS
	Strengthening Families, Supporting Communities Update (New Service Delivery Model)	TBC	TBC	Was suggested by Officers but was not chosen as a priority by the Committee
	Post 16 Provision	TBC	TBC	Was suggested by Officers but was not chosen as a priority by the Committee

Key: Pre-Decision Scrutiny Pro-active Scrutiny

	CS Budget Updates	TBC	Potential focus for budget work 2026	Was suggested by Officers but was not chosen as a priority by the Committee
Working Groups				
	Family Hubs across BCP	Proposed outline of working group included in scrutiny request	TBC	Requires full scoping Appendix E - Request for consideration of an issue by OS Family Hubs - Cllr Brown 003.pdf (bcpcouncil.gov.uk)
	Transition of mental health services from children to adults			CS O&S CAMHS.docx Was chosen by the Committee as their top priority after conclusion of Family Hubs working group
	The increased use of and funding for TAs in schools to support SEND and increase inclusion			Scrutiny request form TAs.docx Was chosen as second priority
	Child Exploitation inc knife crime – To consider and track Cabinet's response to the recommendations and how they could potentially be furthered by the Committee and whether this topic should be revisited by a working group			Discussed at the meeting of 24 July 2024. Was chosen as third priority
	Parent / Carer Forums and wider family engagement channels used			Scrutiny request form

	by BCP Children's Services and health colleagues			Was chosen as fourth priority
	Review of the quality of food served to children at our schools			Scrutiny request form School meals.docx Was chosen as fifth priority
Item Suggestions for Briefing Sessions				
	POTENTIAL BRIEFING SESSIONS	TBC	TBC	TBC
Update Items The following items of information have been requested as updates to the Committee. The Committee may wish to receive these in an alternative to format to Committee updates (e.g. by emailed briefing note outside of the Committee) to reserve capacity in Committee meetings for items of value-added scrutiny.				
	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) To receive KPIs to include updates on CMOEs and NEETs	Committee Report	Head of Performance for Children and Young People Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People	Consideration being given to include in data tool kit
Annual Report				
•	Virtual School Head Annual Report	Committee Report	Headteacher of Virtual School and College Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People	To be received annually in January as an annual update.
•	School Admissions Arrangements for community and maintained schools	Committee Report	Director of Education	To be received annually in

Key:  Pre-Decision Scrutiny  Pro-active Scrutiny

				September/November as an annual update.
•	Youth Offending Service Annual Youth Justice Plan	Committee Report	Service Manager, Dorset YJS	To be received annually in June as an annual update.
•	Annual Report from CPB to include info on CIC	Committee Report	TBC	TBC
•	Annual Report – Complaints and Compliments	Committee Report		To note the information only report – in March

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