



NOTICE OF MEETING

The Executive

Tuesday 14 February 2017, 5.00 pm

Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell

To: The Executive

Councillor Bettison OBE (Chairman), Councillor Dr Barnard (Vice-Chairman), Councillors D Birch, Brunel-Walker, Mrs Hayes MBE, Heydon, McCracken and Turrell

ALISON SANDERS

Director of Corporate Services

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Published: 6 February 2017



The Executive
Tuesday 14 February 2017, 5.00 pm
Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House,
Bracknell

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AGENDA

	Page No
1. Apologies	
2. Declarations of Interest	
Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Affected Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.	
3. Minutes	
To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 24 January 2017.	5 - 12
4. Urgent Items of Business	
Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.	
5. Capital Programme 2017/18 - 2019/20	
To recommend the Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2019/20 to Council.	13 - 30
6. General Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18	
To recommend the General Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18 to Council. The annexes to this item will be circulated as a supplementary paper.	31 - 164
7. Learning Improvement Strategy Framework	
To approve the Learning Improvement Strategy Framework.	165 - 186
8. Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017 - 2020	
To approve the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017-2020. Please note that the Strategy will be circulated as a separate	187 - 262

supplement (Annex 1).

9. **Outcome of the External Review of the use of the High Needs Funding Block (DfE funding for education services)** 263 - 368

To seek endorsement from the Executive to implement the recommendations within the attached High Needs Block funding review report.
10. **Corporate Parenting Support for Care Leavers** 369 - 372

To grant Council Tax exemption for Care Leavers aged 18 – 21.
11. **One Public Estate Authority & Governance for Participation in the Berkshire Property Partnership** 373 - 382

To ensure that the correct governance arrangements, including the authority and terms of reference for the Partnership, are in place for the Council in the One Public Estate programme.
12. **Direction under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended)** 383 - 390

To note and approve the draft Article 4(1) Direction at Appendix A for the purposes of consultation.
13. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

To consider the following motion:

That pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 14 and 15 (part) which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

(3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.
14. **Options for Joint Commissioning of Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI) Care Home Beds** 391 - 402

To approve department plans on the joint commissioning of Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI) care home beds in Bracknell Forest.
15. **Transformation Programme - Leisure Review Procurement Plan** 403 - 424

To approve the Procurement Plan to market test and potentially outsource the management of the three major leisure sites; Bracknell Leisure Centre (BLC), Coral Reef (CR) and Downshire Golf Complex (DGC).

**EXECUTIVE
24 JANUARY 2017
5.00 - 5.25 PM**



Present:

Councillors Bettison OBE (Chairman), Dr Barnard (Vice-Chairman), D Birch, Brunel-Walker, Mrs Hayes MBE, Heydon, McCracken and Turrell

57. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs Hayes declared an interest in agenda item 7: London Road (Strongs Heath) Landfill Site, as the Ward Member for this area.

58. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 13 December 2016 together with the accompanying decision records be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

59. Charging Options for Care and Support at Home

RESOLVED that;

- i) the Executive noted the transformation of the support offer at night.
- ii) the Executive agrees to consult on the following option for charging:

that the Council when financially assessing someone in receipt of Adult Social Care fully takes account of the income received by people receiving the higher rate of benefit from Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, and Personal Independence Payments.

60. School Capacity Strategy & School Places Plan

RESOLVED that;

- i) the School Places Plan 2016-21 (Appendix 1 of the agenda papers) which forecasts a further 2,980 pupils will be seeking a school place by 2020/21, an 18% increase, be approved.
- ii) the School Capacity Strategy set out in the report be approved.
- iii) refurbishment projects at Easthampstead Park and Sandhurst schools be added to the Education Capital Programme, to be funded from Department for Education (DfE) Basic Need Grant.

61. London Road (Strongs Heath) Landfill Site, Part Disposal

RESOLVED that the Executive deferred the decision to dispose of part of the site and would reconsider the proposal in June 2017, when further work had been concluded to address the future management of the entire Strong's Heath site.

Decision Records

CHAIRMAN

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I064153
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1. **TITLE:** Charging Options for Care and Support at Home

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Adult Social Care, Health & Housing

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To seek approval from the Executive to consult on possible options for charging for Adult Social Care.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the Executive noted the transformation of the support offer at night.

i) That the Executive agreed to consult on the following option for charging:

That the Council when financially assessing someone in receipt of Adult Social Care fully takes account of the income received by people receiving the higher rate of benefit from Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, and Personal Independence Payments.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Night time support transformation

There is limited provision of support at night in someone's home in Bracknell Forest. A number of people do have live-in carers, and a further small cohort have scheduled night time visits from a care home provider. This leaves a gap for people who may need occasional support, but do not need regular support. Most of these individuals will have been assessed by the DWP as being in need of night term support, and therefore eligible for the night time component of one of the benefits listed in paragraph 3.10 below, but have not been assessed by Adult Social Care as being eligible for support, as the thresholds are different.

Proposed charging amendments

The Care Act 2014 imposes powers and duties on Local Authorities in relation to these matters from April 2015, with further ongoing changes to some of the detailed requirements.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

There is no alternative to implementing the requirements of the Care Act however there are decisions to be made regarding the detail of local implementation.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** People in receipt of non residential adult

social care support.

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Adult Social Care, Health & Housing

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
24 January 2017	31 January 2017

SIGNED:.....

DATE:.....

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I064983
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1. **TITLE:** School Capacity Strategy & School Places Plan

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Children, Young People and Learning

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To approve the annual update of the School Places Plan 2016-21 that describes the latest pupil data, forecasts of pupil numbers for the next five years and a commentary on the need to add school capacity and re-alignment of the Education Capital Programme.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the School Places Plan 2016-21 (Appendix 1 of the report) which forecasts a further 2,980 pupils will be seeking a school place by 2020/21, an 18% increase, be approved.

That the School Capacity Strategy set out in the report be approved.

That refurbishment projects at Easthampstead Park and Sandhurst schools be added to the Education Capital Programme, to be funded from Department for Education (DfE) Basic Need Grant.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The provision of school places remains an essential part of the Council's organisation and planning process and enables the Council to meet its statutory duties in relation to school places. This plan is an essential tool in forecasting demand and has been successful in ensuring a school place continues to be available for every child in the Borough who wants one.

The Executive last approved the School Capacity Strategy in December 2014, and this has been updated to reflect the current revised requirements for new school places and the funding from the Department for Education for basic need.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

It is business critical to undertake pupil forecasting to ensure the Council meets its statutory obligation of sufficiency of school places. The SPP provides a mechanism to communicate these forecasts and the capacity strategy the mechanism to provide places.

Options for delivery of the Capacity Strategy are set out in the body of the report.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** None

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Children, Young People &

Learning.

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
24 January 2017	31 January 2017

SIGNED:..... **DATE:**.....

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I065500
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1. **TITLE:** London Road (Strongs Heath) Landfill Site, Part Disposal

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Corporate Services

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To seek approval of sale of 0.98 hectares of land at London Road (Strongs Heath).

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the Executive defers the decision to dispose of part of the site and reconsiders the proposal in June 2017, when further work has been concluded to address the future management of the entire Strong's Heath site.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Officers have been in discussion with a credible potential developer on various ways to mitigate or extinguish any potential liabilities arising from the historic landfill use of the site and to create a viable area for housing or other development. The developer has suggested that disposing of part of the site and creating an impermeable barrier could be detrimental to longer term options for the whole site. To provide time to assess this suggestion a deferral of any sale of part of the site is necessary.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

To continue with the recommendations in the original report.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Berkshire local authorities

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Corporate Services

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
24 January 2017	31 January 2017

SIGNED:..... **DATE:**.....

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**TO: THE EXECUTIVE
14 FEBRUARY 2017**

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/2018 - 2019/2020
(Borough Treasurer/Chief Executive)**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 As part of the Council's financial and policy planning process, the Executive issued draft Capital Programme proposals for 2017/18 - 2019/20 for consultation on 13 December 2016. The main focus was inevitably departmental spending needs for 2017/18, although future year's schemes do also form an important part of the programme. This report sets out the proposed capital programme, following the consultation exercise, for consideration by the Executive prior to submission to the Council on 1st March 2017.
- 1.2 The revenue implications of the recommendations in this report are reflected in the subsequent report on the Council's revenue budget proposals. Any revisions to the proposals put forward for each service would also need to be reflected in the revenue budget report.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

2.1 Recommends to the Council

- a) **General Fund capital funding of £69.083m for 2017/18 in respect of those schemes listed in Annexes A – E.**
- b) **The inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for Invest to Save schemes.**
- c) **The inclusion of £0.942m of expenditure to be funded from S106 as outlined in paragraph 5.32.**
- d) **That those schemes that attract external grant funding are included within the Capital Programme at the level of funding received.**
- e) **That funding of £0.473m be released through a supplementary capital approval in 2016/17 for the schemes included in para 5.30**

2.2 Agrees that capital schemes that require external funding can only proceed once the Council is certain of receiving the grant.

2.3 Reviews the indicative programme for 2018/19 and 2019/20 in the light of resources available and spending priorities in December 2017.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The alternative options are considered in the report.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Capital Resources

5.1 Each year the Council agrees a programme of capital schemes. In the past these schemes have been funded from three main sources:

- the Council's accumulated capital receipts
- Government Grants
- other external contributions

5.2 The Local Government Act 2003 brought in radical changes to the financing of capital expenditure and from that date, the Government no longer issued borrowing approvals. Instead, under a new "prudential framework", Councils can set their own borrowing limits based on the affordability of the debt.

5.3 As the Council's accumulated capital receipts have been fully utilised, the Council returned to a position of internal borrowing in 2010 and as such a revenue contribution is required each year to repay this internal borrowing. Once the Council's current level of investments is exhausted, which is expected to be during 2016/17, the Council will need to borrow externally.

5.4 The Council's estimated total usable capital receipts at 31st March 2016 are zero. As a debt free authority the Council is partly reliant on capital receipts to fund its capital programme, although interest generated from capital receipts can also help support the revenue budget in the short term – however with investment rates at historic lows it makes more economic sense to defer borrowing. The Council still receives a share of any Right-To-Buy proceeds from Bracknell Forest Homes in addition to a share of capital receipts from the VAT Shelter scheme, however this is now coming close to the end of the 10-year agreement.

5.5 The proposed capital programme for 2017/18 has been developed, therefore, on the assumption that it will be funded by a combination of Government grants, other external contributions and borrowing in addition to capital receipts. Historically capital receipts have averaged around £5m per annum, however with the introduction of CIL and the forthcoming sale of the Sandy Lane land there is potential for a much larger level of capital receipts in 2017/18. However the exact value received will depend largely on the value of receipts from Sandy Lane and the timing of the sale. Borrowing from external sources (e.g. the PWLB) will be taken when needed, although internal resources will be used in the first instance where this is possible. The financing costs associated with the General Fund Capital Programme have been provided for in the Council's revenue budget plans which also appear on tonight's agenda.

New Schemes

5.6 Within the general financial framework outlined above, Service Departments have considered new schemes for inclusion within the Council's Capital Programme for 2017/18 – 2019/20. Given that both capital and revenue resources are under pressure, each Department has evaluated and prioritised proposed schemes into broad categories in line with the Council's Asset Management Plan. Having done this, only the very highest priority schemes and programmes are being recommended for inclusion in the Capital Programme.

Town Centre

- 5.7 Following the conclusion of the Development Agreement with Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) the Council set out its own planned investment on wider Town Centre infrastructure as part of the 2015/16 Capital Programme. These previously agreed investment plans follow through into 2017/18.
- 5.8 Similarly in order to facilitate transport movements around the Borough, including the planned Town Centre redevelopment, it is necessary to continue to fund a number of infrastructure schemes. As such a funding need of £1.5m has been identified in the 2017/18 proposals (and a further £0.5m in 2018/19) to ensure that the regenerated town centre functions as a “whole centre” and not just as an isolated shopping outlet. Spending levels of this magnitude are likely to be required until the new Northern Retail Quarter area is open and established for trading. This additional expenditure is aimed at maximising the positive experience of visiting the regenerated town centre.
- 5.9 All of these items have a much wider impact than the new development itself and will benefit the whole Borough. However the expenditure needs to be co-ordinated with the specific work that BRP are planning to carry out.

Commercial Investment Strategy

- 5.10 The Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts a substantial budget gap over the next three financial years. The Transformation Programme initiated during 2015 is critical to the achievement of our financial objectives.
- 5.11 A key project within the Transformation Programme is a Commercial Property Investment Strategy (as outlined in the Report to 16th November Executive) designed to deliver additional income of £1m in 2017/18 with a further £1m in 2018/19 and a further £1m in 2019/20. Assuming an average net yield of 5% per annum this will require the Council to invest £20m per annum in commercial property during 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Other Unavoidable & Committed schemes

- 5.12 This category covers schemes which must proceed to ensure that the Council is not left open to legal sanction and includes items relating to health and safety issues, new legislation etc. Committed schemes also include those that have been started as part of the 2016/17 Capital Programme. Also included within this category are those schemes that were previously funded from the General Fund Revenue Account, but which by their nature could be legitimately capitalised, thereby reducing pressure on the revenue budget. Schemes in this category form the first call on the available capital resources.

Maintenance (Improvements and capitalised repairs)

- 5.13 An assessment has been made of the condition of the Council’s property assets to arrive at an estimate of the outstanding maintenance works required. An assessment is made of the state of each building element and its repair priority with a condition rating and repair urgency.

<p>Definition of Condition Categories:</p> <p>A: Good – Performing as intended and operating efficiently. B: Satisfactory – Performing as intended but showing minor deterioration. C: Poor – Showing major defects and/or not operating as intended. D: Bad – Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure.</p>

Priority:

- 1 Urgent works that will prevent immediate closure of premises and/or address an immediate high risk to the health and safety of the occupants and/or remedy a serious breach of legislation.
- 2 Essential work required within two years that will prevent serious deterioration of the fabric or services and/or address a medium risk to the health & safety of the occupants and/or a minor breach of the legislation.
- 3 Desirable work required within 3 to 5 years that will prevent deterioration of the fabric or services and/or address a low risk to the health & safety of the occupants and/or a minor breach of the legislation.
- 4 Long-term work required beyond a period of 5 years that will prevent deterioration of the fabric or services.

The figures below are based on the information held in the Construction and Maintenance Groups' property management system. They have been adjusted to exclude those works that are already budgeted for within existing 2016/17 schools and corporate planned maintenance programmes. The priorities can be broken down as follows:

Maintenance Backlog

		£ (000)	£ (000)
Schools	Priority 1C & 1D	2,914	
	Priority 2C & 2D	8,539	
	Lower Priorities	26,237	37,690
Corporate Properties	Priority 1C & 1D	2,553	
	Priority 2C & 2D	2,758	
	Lower Priorities	11,574	16,885
Total		<u>54,575</u>	

- 5.14 The overall maintenance liability has increased from £52.5m in 2016/17 to £54.58m. The last couple of years have seen large increases in building costs. As the Council is now running a five year programme of condition surveys, some of the older data was quickly becoming out-of-date and, as a consequence, adjustments have been applied to that data to bring it in line with current costs. Secondly, the nature of the condition surveys has evolved such that more emphasis is now given to predicting the need for works further in advance than was previously the case. This is partly because of the five year programme approach mentioned above and partly because the asset management package that we now use to manage this data lends itself to better recording. As such much of the value attributed to lower priority works is for things that are likely to be required over the next several years. However it should be noted that the work being done as part of the property review Transformation Programme, which is seeking to consolidate the number of council buildings and make more intensive use of those we will continue to operate, should help reduce the maintenance backlog in future.

Schools

- 5.15 Historically the Schools Maintenance Programme has been funded from the Capital Maintenance grant allocation from the Department for Education (DfE). The allocation from the DfE for 2017/18 of £1.931m will be used to tackle the highest priority items identified in the condition surveys indicated above.

Non-schools

- 5.16 From an initial analysis of the work required it is clear that some works, whilst urgent, cannot be legitimately capitalised and must be met from a revenue budget. An allowance of £200,000 is available in the 2017/18 Revenue Budget proposals to meet these liabilities.
- 5.17 In line with the policy adopted last year the Asset Management Group has considered only those works that fall within categories 1C and 1D. Given the financial constraints on both the revenue and capital budgets an allocation of £1.775m is recommended to address the most pressing 1C & 1D priorities.
- 5.18 A package of works related to Bracknell Sports and Leisure Centre have been included in the maintenance budget to avoid potential operators adding a risk premium to their bids when the Council tenders services in 2017/18. Failure to do so would result in higher revenue costs for the contracted services.
- 5.19 The implications of failing to maintain Council buildings and to address the backlog will be a significant issue for the Council over the coming years and efforts will be focussed on ensuring that the highest priority items are tackled first and that efficiencies are maximised in the procurement of works.

Rolling programmes

- 5.20 These programmes cover more than one year and give a degree of certainty for forward planning schemes to improve service delivery. They make an important contribution towards the Council's established Asset Management Plans.

Other Desirable Schemes

- 5.21 In addition to the schemes identified in the above categories, each service has requested funding for other high priority schemes that meet the needs and objectives of their service.

Invest-To-Save Schemes

- 5.22 These are schemes where the additional revenue income or savings arising from their implementation exceeds the Council's borrowing costs. In the past the Council has allocated £1m per annum to fund potential Invest-to-Save (ITS) schemes that may present themselves during the year, this is recommended to continue.

Changes since Consultation

Library Self Service

- 5.23 Further work has been undertaken in reviewing the needs of the scheme to introduce self-service technology assisted opening in Libraries. This scheme is fundamental to the delivery of the long-term Libraries service across the Council and the savings built into the Efficiencies Plan. The overall cost of the programme has been re-evaluated and additional costs have been identified if the scheme is to be successfully rolled out. This will not affect the funding required in 2017/18 but has added an additional need in 2018/19 of £0.124m

Civic Accommodation

- 5.24 Funding bids within the 2017/18 proposals included a number of projects that will support the Transformation Programme that is fundamental to delivering the savings needed to balance the Council's budget over the medium term. Two schemes can be started early in order to maximise the delivery of the changes needed in working patterns. This includes work on the Civic Accommodation at Time Square and the

need to refresh the Council's intranet if it is to enable increased self-service and host a staff self-service portal.

- 5.25 The initial estimate for the work at Time Square to accommodate all staff from Easthampstead House has been updated to reflect the latest designs and inflation estimates. Work to create the Council Chamber and to provide an area for Members and the Chief Executive on the 4th Floor have increased costs by £0.737m. Furthermore by reviewing the programme plans it is possible to accelerate the project and to complete the project by February 2018, six months earlier than originally planned. This will require a re-profiling of the cash-flows, however it will enable the savings associated with having staff working on one site realised sooner. In turn, this will release the Easthampstead House site for redevelopment, with the proceeds helping to fund future capital investment.

Supported Housing Investment

- 5.26 An opportunity has arisen at a Council property (Holly House) that provides housing and related support for young single homeless people, including care leavers. Without this provision there would be additional costs for the Council in accommodating care leavers as well as some young people that would fall under the Council's homeless duty. A refurbishment of the property would enable the accommodation of care leavers with higher support needs on the basis of dedicated support arrangements. The Council would look to share the costs of the capital works necessary to enable this which could be self-funded (based on Invest-to-Save) from the savings achieved from placing these higher support-needs clients in a local provision. The supported housing services are due to be retendered in 2017/18 and any refurbishment would be reliant on the completion of this process. The share of the refurbishment costs met by the Council would be capped at £0.45m.

New Chapel at Cemetery and Crematorium

- 5.27 Funding for £1m was approved in the 2016/17 Capital Programme for the construction of a new Chapel at the Cemetery & Crematorium. The tender process was re-phased to accommodate the operational needs of the service and a number of bids have now been received. However, with inflation levels in the construction industry costs increasing, a supplementary capital approval of £0.15m is needed to complete the project. The project was brought forward as an invest-to-save scheme in 2016/17 and the additional funding requested will be supported by additional income based on the latest income projections for this project.

Other Changes

- 5.28 In addition to these schemes, it has been identified that the Council's Alert System (this provides a database to record and provide background information prior to a visit or reference to a particular resident, enabling staff to make an assessment of the risk and take appropriate action to protect their health and safety. All information held within the database is confidential) is no longer supported under its current contract and the risk identified with this position is deemed significant enough to request that the funding identified in the 2017/18 proposals be brought forward into the current year.
- 5.29 An additional grant from the Department for Education has been notified to the Council this month, this will be used to expand and adapt current provision to allow for Early Years providers to deliver more free childcare hours. This is a ring-fenced grant.

The table below identifies the funding impact of the above proposals. A Supplementary Capital Approval for 2016/17 amounting to £0.473m is requested alongside additional net funding of £0.861m

Funding Changes since Consultation					
	Scheme	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
	Self Service Technology Assisted Opening in Libraries	0	0	124	0
	Civic accommodation*	90	1,862	-1,085	-40
	Intranet Development*	20	0	0	0
	Supported Housing Investment (Invest-to-Save) **	0	450	0	0
	New Chapel**	150	0	0	0
	Alert System*	18	0	0	0
	Early Years Capital Grant Funding***	195	0	0	0
	Total	473	2,312	-961	-40
	Included in original proposals*	128	0	0	0
	Additional Funding	345	2,312	-961	-40
	Less Self-funding proposals**	150	450	0	0
	Less External Grant***	195	0	0	0
	Change in Council Funding	0	1,862	-961	-40

- 5.30 If approved this additional funding will impact on the Revenue budget through additional interest of £22k (in a full year) and an MRP cost of approximately £30k (in 2018/19).

Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2019/20

- 5.31 A summary of the cost of schemes proposed by Departments is set out in the table below. A list of schemes within the capital programme for each service is included in Annexes A – E. Total Council funding amounts to £50.075m.

Capital Programme 2017/18-2019/20				
Annex	Service Area	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
A	Adult Social Care, Health & Housing	7,452	0	0
B	Children, Young People & Learning	20,540	3,574	574
C	Corporate Services	3,450	1,025	30
D	Council Wide	23,822	20,500	510
E	Environment Culture & Communities	13,819	5,398	3,400
	Total Capital Programme	68,566	30,497	4,514
	Externally Funded	19,008	3,728	3,209
	Total request for Council funding	50,075	26,769	1,305

Externally Funded Schemes

- 5.32 A number of external funding sources are also available to fund schemes within the capital programme. External support has been identified from two main sources:

Government Grants

A number of capital schemes attract specific grants. It is proposed that all such schemes should be included in the capital programme at the level of external funding that is available.

A significant element of the grant-funded capital programme relates to the planned investment in Schools. The schools investment programme included in this report reflects the highest priority schemes identified by the Department and the Education Capital Programme Board. A total of £11.327m will be invested in schools from specific capital grants.

A second key constituent of capital grant funding relates to the Highway Maintenance, Integrated Transport Block and grants from the Local Enterprise Partnership. Grant approvals of £5.132m are currently anticipated for 2017/18.

Section 106 (£0.942m)

Each year the Council enters into a number of agreements under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 by which developers make a contribution towards the cost of providing facilities and infrastructure that may be required as a result of their development. Usually the monies are given for work in a particular area and/or for specific projects. The total money available at present, which is not financially committed to specific projects, is £3.8m, although conditions restricting its use will apply to almost all of this.

Officers have identified a number of schemes that could be funded from Section 106 funds in 2017/18, where funding becomes available. These are summarised below and highlighted in the Annexes to this report.

Department	Schemes	Budget
		<i>£000</i>
CYPL	Various School Schemes	423
ECC	Leisure & Culture	169
ECC	Local Transport Plan	350
	Total	942

The level of new funding available through Section 106 is expected to reduce in the future following the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). However the more flexible CIL funding should offset this reduction.

On-going Revenue Costs

- 5.33 Schemes may have associated on-going revenue costs which tend to become payable in the year after implementation. These will be included within the Council's Commitment Budget for 2017/18, total £69,000 and relate to the licence and maintenance contracts associated with the new IT hardware investment.

Funding Options

- 5.34 Following the transfer of the housing stock in 2008, the Council's capital receipts are limited to miscellaneous asset sales, the contribution from the VAT Shelter Scheme and Right-to-Buy claw back agreed as part of the transfer and the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- 5.35 The Council introduced CIL in April 2015. It is difficult to estimate the potential amount of CIL that will be generated as this will depend on the delivery of additional housing development in the Borough, which is to a large extent outside of the control of the authority. However based on the most recent housing trajectory estimates and knowledge of development schemes that will come forward in the next 18 months, it is estimated that £2m is an appropriate assumption for 2017/18.
- 5.36 The proposed capital programme for 2017/18 has been developed, therefore, on the assumption that it will be funded by a combination of approximately £14m of capital receipts, Government grants, other external contributions and borrowing. The financing costs associated with the Capital Programme have been provided for in the Council's revenue budget plans.
- 5.37 Given the level of investment proposed in 2016/17 and 2017/18, it is inevitable that the Council will soon be required to borrow externally. The timing of this will depend on the level of surplus cash held by the Council which will be used in the first instance to fund the Capital Programme commitments.
- 5.38 The use of these monies is known as internal borrowing and the Capital Finance regulations require the Council, through the General Fund, to set aside an amount, the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), which would be broadly equivalent to the amount the Council would need to re-pay if it borrowed externally. Any external borrowing will also require MRP in addition to an interest charge depending on the maturity of the loan.
- 5.39 The table below highlights the indicative funding of the Capital Programme, however it should be noted that the actual level of borrowing will depend on a number of factors; the progress made in implementing the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Capital Programme, the level of CIL and Capital receipts achieved in the year and the level of internal borrowing that is available (using working capital to fund investment).

2017/18 Programme & Funding	£'000
Total Programme	69,083
External Funding	19,008
Capital Receipts	14,000
External Borrowing	36,075

- 5.40 Following the introduction of the Prudential Borrowing regime local authorities are able to determine the level of their own capital expenditure with regard only to affordability on the revenue account. In practice this represents the amount of borrowing they can afford to finance, and will necessitate taking a medium-term view of revenue income streams and capital investment needs.
- 5.41 To achieve its aim of ensuring that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, the Local Government Act requires all local authorities to set and keep under review a series of prudential indicators included in the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Capital Programme recommended in this report can be sustained and is within the prudential guidelines. Full Council will need to agree the prudential indicators for 2017/18 to 2019/20 in March 2017, alongside its consideration of the specific budget proposals for 2017/18 and the Council's medium-term financial prospects.
- 5.42 Members will need to carefully balance the level of the Capital Programme in future years against other revenue budget pressures and a thorough review, including the prioritisation of those schemes planned for 2018/19 onwards, will need to be undertaken during next summer.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The authorisation for incurring capital expenditure by local authorities is contained in the legislation covering the service areas. Controls on capital expenditure are contained in the Local Government Act 2003 and regulations made thereunder.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The financial implications are contained within the report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The Council's budget proposals impact on a wide range of services. A detailed consultation was undertaken on the draft budget proposals published in December to provide individuals and groups the opportunity to provide comments. Where necessary, impact assessments on specific schemes within the capital programme will be undertaken before work commences.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 The scale of the Council's Capital Programme for 2017/18 will impact upon the revenue budget. All new investment on services will need to be funded from new capital receipts or borrowing. This effect is compounded by future year's capital programmes. The generation of capital receipts in future years may mitigate the impact on the revenue budget, but as the timing and scale of these receipts is uncertain their impact is unlikely to be material.
- 6.5 There are also a range of risks that are common to all capital projects which include:
- Tender prices exceeding the budget
 - Planning issues and potential delays
 - Uncertainty of external funding

- Building delays due to unavailability of materials or inclement weather
- Availability of staff with appropriate skills to implement schemes

6.6 These can be managed through the use of appropriate professional officers and following best practice in project management techniques. The report also identifies the risk associated with the shortfall in maintenance expenditure compared to that identified by the latest condition surveys. With only those highest priorities receiving funding in 2017/18, there will be a further build up in the maintenance backlog and a risk that the deterioration in Council assets will hamper the ability to deliver good services.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 See the General Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18 report on tonight's agenda outlining the results of the budget consultation

Background Papers

None

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME - ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING

	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	TOTAL £000
Committed	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Unavoidable	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Maintenance See Council Wide	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable Downshire Homes	7,002	0	0	7,002
	<u>7,002</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>7,002</u>
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	<u>7,002</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>7,002</u>
External Funding Supported Housing - Invest-to-Save Community Capacity Grant	450 tba	0 tba	0 tba	450 tba
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	<u>450</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>450</u>
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	<u>7,452</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>7,452</u>

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Committed				
Priestwood Early Years Facility - Non Schools	70	0	0	70
Binfield Learning Village	8,590	3,000	0	11,590
	<u>8,660</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,660</u>
Unavoidable				
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Maintenance				
Schools Maintenance externally funded	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable				
Carbon Reduction Measures	10	10	10	30
CP-IS Project	80	0	0	80
Total	<u>90</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>110</u>
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	<u>8,750</u>	<u>3,010</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11,770</u>
External Funding - DfE Basic Need Grant				
Amen Corner North	247	tba	tba	247
Amen Corner South	614	tba	tba	614
Great Hollands Surge & Expansion	712	tba	tba	712
Jennett's Park	10	tba	tba	10
The Pines Surge & Expansion	536	tba	tba	536
TRL	787	tba	tba	787
Warfield East	614	tba	tba	614
Wildmoor Heath	15	tba	tba	15
Secondary Expansion	949	tba	tba	949
PMO	360	tba	tba	360
Binfield Learning Village	3,968	tba	tba	3,968
	<u>8,812</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8,812</u>
External Funding - Other				
Schools Capital Maintenance Grant	1,931	0	0	1,931
Easthampstead Park Masterplan	274	274	274	822
Section 106 - Small Schemes	250	250	250	750
Section 106 - Binfield Learning Village	173	0	0	173
Carbon Reduction Measures	40	40	40	
Devolved Formula Capital (estimate)	310	tbc	tbc	310
	<u>2,978</u>	<u>564</u>	<u>564</u>	<u>3,986</u>
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	<u>11,790</u>	<u>564</u>	<u>564</u>	<u>12,798</u>
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	<u>20,540</u>	<u>3,574</u>	<u>574</u>	<u>24,568</u>

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CORPORATE SERVICES / CHIEF EXECUTIVE

	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	TOTAL £000
Committed	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Unavoidable				
Compliance with EPC Regulations	50	25	0	75
	<u>50</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>75</u>
Maintenance				
See Council Wide	0	0	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable				
Civic Accommodation	3,400	1,000	30	4,430
	<u>3,400</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>4,430</u>
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	<u>3,450</u>	<u>1,025</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>4,505</u>
External Funding				
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	<u>3,450</u>	<u>1,025</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>4,505</u>

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - COUNCIL WIDE

	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	TOTAL £000
Committed				
Commerical Property Investment Strategy	20,000	20,000	0	40,000
Capitalisation of buildings, highways and ITC project management costs included in revenue budget proposals	400	400	400	1,200
Asbestos	30	0	0	30
Town Centre Redevelopment	550	0	0	550
Town Centre Redevelopment - Stamp Duty	300	0	0	300
	21,280	20,400	400	2,080
Unavoidable				
	0	0	0	0
Maintenance				
Buildings Planned Maintenance	1,775	n/a	n/a	1,775
	1,775	0	0	1,775
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable				
ASCHH Workstyle Changes	220	0	0	220
IT Schemes	547	100	110	757
	767	100	110	977
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	23,822	20,500	510	4,832
External Funding				
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	23,822	20,500	510	4,832

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - ENVIRONMENT CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES

	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	TOTAL £000
Committed				
Coral Reef Roof and Flumes	574	0	0	574
LED Streetlights	3,650	0	0	3,650
Roads & Footway Resurfacing #	200	200	200	600
Equipment Replacement Downshire Golf Complex #	35	35	35	105
Matched Funding for LEP Funding (A329)	450	450	0	900
Town Centre Highway Works	1,500	500	0	2,000
	6,409	1,185	235	7,829
Unavoidable				
New Cash Mechanisms for Parking	20	0	0	20
BSLC Replacement Locker Locks	20	0	0	20
Land Drainage	80	100	100	280
	120	100	100	320
Maintenance				
Minor Works at Leisure Sites	50	150	150	350
Replacement works to toilet area BLC	56	0	0	56
Cem & Crem - Park Area Pathways	35	0	0	35
Management of Parks & Countryside Open Spaces On Confirm	35	0	0	35
Self Service Technology Assisted Opening In Libraries	56	479	0	535
	232	629	150	1,011
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable				
Cem & Crem - Burial Area Memorial Grips	20	0	0	20
Improvement and Maintenance of Play Areas	70	70	70	210
Update Traffic Signal Infrastructure	200	200	200	600
The Look Out Play Area Upgrade	0	50	0	50
	290	320	270	880
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING	7,051	2,234	755	10,040
External Funding				
Highways Maintenance	2,029	1,369	1,200	4,598
Integrated Transport & Maintenance	720	720	720	2,160
LEP Funding (A329)	2,900	0	0	2,900
Section 106 Schemes (LTP)	350	350	0	700
Self Service Technology Assisted Opening In Libraries - S106	44	0	0	44
Disabled Facilities Grants (cash grant to be confirmed)	450	450	450	1,350
Sustainable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS)	150	150	150	450
Section 106 Leisure & Culture (smaller schemes)	125	125	125	375
	6,768	3,164	2,645	12,577
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	6,768	3,164	2,645	12,577
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	13,819	5,398	3,400	22,617

Part Capitalisation of Revenue

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TO: THE EXECUTIVE
DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2017

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18
(Chief Executive/Borough Treasurer)

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 As part of the Council's financial and policy planning process, the Executive agreed draft revenue budget proposals for 2016/17 as the basis for consultation on 13 December 2016.
- 1.2 Over the course of the last two months a number of issues have also become clearer, in particular the details of the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement. This report therefore builds on the draft budget proposals agreed by the Executive in December, in the light of the consultations and the details of the Settlement itself, to set out the basis of the Executive's final budget proposals for 2017/18. These will be submitted to the Council for consideration on 1 March 2017.
- 1.3 The recommendations of this report are, in part, dependent upon proposals to be considered elsewhere on this agenda in respect of the Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2019/20. Changes to the proposals included within that report may therefore necessitate revisions to the 2017/18 General Fund revenue budget proposals set out below. Should this happen a short adjournment of the meeting might be required.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive, in recommending to Council a budget and Council Tax level for 2017/18:

- 2.1 **Confirms the original budget proposals, subject to the revisions in section 8.3 and those decisions to be taken elsewhere on this agenda on the capital programme;**
- 2.2 **Agrees the provision for inflation of £1.553m (section 8.2);**
- 2.3 **Agrees the additional budget proposals as set out in Annexe A and Annexe D and in sections 6.2, 6.3, 7.3 and 7.4;**
- 2.4 **Agrees that the Council should fund the Schools budgets at the level set out in section 9.1 subject to any amendments made by the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning following the receipt of definitive funding allocations for Early Years and High Needs pupils;**
- 2.5 **Includes a contingency of £2.000m (section 10.6), use of which is to be authorised by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Borough Treasurer in accordance with the delegations included in the Council's constitution;**
- 2.6 **Subject to the above recommendations, confirms the draft budget proposals;**
- 2.7 **Approves the Net Revenue Budget before allowance for additional interest from any use of balances as set out in Annexe G;**

- 2.8 Agrees a £2.542m contribution from revenue balances (before additional interest from the use of balances) to support revenue expenditure;**
- 2.9 Recommends that the Council Tax requirement, excluding Parish and Town Council precepts, be set as £53.247m;**
- 2.10 Recommends a 4.99% increase in the Council Tax for the Council’s services and that each Valuation Band is set as follows:**

Band	Tax Level Relative to Band D	£
A	6/9	796.26
B	7/9	928.97
C	8/9	1,061.68
D	9/9	1,194.39
E	11/9	1,459.81
F	13/9	1,725.23
G	15/9	1,990.65
H	18/9	2,388.78

- 2.11 Recommends that the Council approves the following indicators, limits, strategies and policies included in Annexe E:**
- **The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2017/18 to 2019/20 contained within Annexe E(i);**
 - **The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy contained within Annexe E(ii);**
 - **The Treasury Management Strategy Statement, and the Treasury Prudential Indicators contained in Annexe E(iii);**
 - **The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator in Annexe E(iii);**
 - **The Investment Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20 and Treasury Management Limits on Activity contained in Annexe E(iv);**
- 2.12 Approves the virements relating to the 2016/17 budget as set out in Annexe H.**
- 2.13 Approves the write-off of the Business Rates debt referred to in paragraph 16.1.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The recommendations are designed to enable the Executive to propose a revenue budget and Council Tax level for approval by Council on 1 March.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1** Background information relating to the options considered is included in the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION**5 Basis of Draft Budget Proposals**

- 5.1 At its meeting on 13 December 2016, the Executive considered the overall position facing the Council in setting a budget for 2017/18. At the time the Executive agenda was published, the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement had not been announced. Because the Council had signed up to the Government's offer of a Four Year Settlement last autumn, the report was based on a number of assumptions regarding no significant changes to government funding.
- 5.2 In this broad context, the Executive published its draft budget proposals and these have been consulted on with the public, the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Commission and Scrutiny Panels, with town and parish councils, business ratepayers, the Schools Forum and voluntary organisations.
- 5.3 In the face of significant reductions in public expenditure in general and in grants to Local Government in particular, the scope to invest in new service provision was severely restricted. Many of the pressures accommodated in the budget package are simply unavoidable and respond only to changing demographic trends.
- 5.4 As in previous years, economies have focused as far as possible on increasing efficiency, income generation and reducing central and departmental support rather than on front line services. However, since it became a Unitary Authority in 1998 the Council has successfully delivered savings of around £70m in total. As a result it is inevitable that there will be some impact on services, although the transformation programme being put in place by the Council is seeking to minimise this.
- 5.5 The draft budget proposals, which reflect the new Council Plan and included a suggested approach for inflation, are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Draft Budget Proposals

Department	Commitment Budget 2017/18	Capital programme & Changes in investment income	Inflation	Service Pressures / Economies	Change in Contingency	New Homes Bonus	Business Rates transfer from Reserve	Draft Budget 2017/18
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	35,834	0	0	41	0	0	0	35,875
Children, Young People and Learning	28,371	0	0	1	0	0	0	28,372
Corporate Services / Chief Executive's	7,405	0	0	-357	0	0	0	7,048
Environment, Culture & Communities	32,243	0	0	-1,137	0	0	0	31,106
Non Departmental / Council Wide	-36,865	486	1,200	-2,300	1,000	255	11,803	-24,421
Total	66,988	486	1,200	-3,752	1,000	255	11,803	77,980

6 Local Government Finance Settlement

6.1 Overview

- 6.1.1 Last year the Government announced an indicative Four Year Settlement for Local Government, with promises made to councils to deliver the four year funding plans if they published an Efficiency Plan that the Government deemed acceptable. Bracknell Forest published such a plan and was deemed to have accepted the Four Year Settlement.
- 6.1.2 However as part of the overall 2016/17 Settlement, the Government announced plans to consult on a range of changes to the New Homes Bonus (NHB), a specific grant that recognises the additional service delivery costs associated with housing growth throughout the country. As one of the more rapidly growing councils in the country, Bracknell Forest had received a significant income stream through this funding mechanism. Consultation took place through the Summer and it became apparent that there was potential for some longer-term reductions in the funding available to the Council through the NHB, and this was reflected in the budget proposals submitted in December.
- 6.1.3 The Provisional Settlement was published on 15 December 2016 and included a number of significant changes from the Four Year Settlement that the Council had signed up to. The most significant change was the proposals for the NHB. In addition to moving the grant funding from six cumulative years to four (i.e. each year's grant used to be payable for six years, the proposals are for it to be tapered to five in 2017/18 and then finally four in 2018/19), the Government also announced that a national baseline for growth would be established. Any growth in properties below this national target (0.4%) would not benefit from any grant. Furthermore these changes and the resulting cut in funding would be removed from the total pot available to fund the NHB and redistributed to councils via a new specific grant, as a one-off grant for 2017/18, aimed at alleviating some of the financial pressures in Adult Social Care.
- 6.1.4 These changes went significantly further than the Government had consulted on and will leave a large swathe of Councils worse off, including Bracknell Forest. Based on the figures available to the Council the loss of NHB in 2017/18 compared with what had been expected will be £0.875m, with a further loss of approximately £0.4m in 2018/19 and £0.6m in 2019/20.
- 6.1.5 The redistribution via the one-off Adult Social Care grant of the reduction to NHB will be based on a relative needs formula, with the result that Bracknell Forest will receive a one-off specific grant of £0.363m in 2017/18. As such Bracknell Forest Council, along with 56 other councils, will see an overall reduction in funding as a result of this policy change.
- 6.1.6 We do not yet know when the final settlement will be published by the Department for Communities and Local Government although the LGA has confirmed that it will not be debated until some time after Parliament returns from recess on Monday 20 February. As such the budget has been constructed on the assumption that there will no material changes from the Provisional Settlement published in December.

6.2 Specific Grants

- 6.2.1 From 2013/14 almost all Specific Grants have been rolled into the Baseline Funding that councils receive with only a minority administered outside of the formula mechanism.
- 6.2.2 As noted above the Government have introduced changes to the NHB from 2017/18 onwards, with £2.796m of funding expected (compared to £3.934m in 2016/17 and an estimated £3.671m in the December budget consultation). A new one-off grant for Adult Social Care of £0.363m was announced alongside these changes to the NHB.
- 6.2.2 Two of the largest Specific Grants received by the Council are the ring-fenced Public Health Grant and the NHS funding to support social care and benefit health. The Public Health Grant for 2017/18 has been confirmed at £4.157m, a reduction of 2.5% compared to 2016/17. With regards to NHS funding, it has been assumed that the pooling of health and social care services budgets under the Better Care Fund will have a neutral impact on the Council's revenue budget.
- 6.2.3 The Department for Education has confirmed that Education Services Grant, which is paid to fund education support services which local authorities provide centrally to maintained schools but for the most part academies must secure independently, is being withdrawn. However, one-off transitional grant of -£0.401m will be received in 2017/18 which is -£0.146m more than the figure included in the draft budget proposals. Local authorities will also be able to retain some of their schools block funding to cover the statutory duties that they carry out for maintained schools which were previously funded through ESG (-£0.252m). In addition "retained" duties, which local authorities must deliver for both maintained and academy schools, will continue to be funded but via the Schools Block element of the DSG (-£0.260m). A new School Improvement Grant will also be payable from 2017/18 onwards (-£0.038m). Further details can be found in section 9 of this report.
- 6.2.4 Information on a number of smaller Specific Grants is still awaited. The only significant allocation that has been confirmed relates to Housing Benefit Administration Subsidy grant which has been reduced by £0.027m to -£0.319m in 2017/18.

6.3 Business Rates

- 6.3.1 A third important stream of income for the Council is Business Rates, a proportion of which is retained locally following the introduction of the Business Rates Retention reforms in April 2013. The level of Business Rates changes each year due to inflationary increases (set by central government), the impact of appeals and local growth or decline as local businesses and economic conditions expand or contract. The Government sets a baseline level of funding against which any growth or reduction is shared between local and central government.
- 6.3.2 The Government has announced that by 2020, local government will be able to retain 100% of Business Rates and RSG will be phased out. In order to achieve overall fiscal neutrality, local government will be expected to take on new responsibilities. The Government will give councils the power to cut Business Rates to boost economic activity in their areas and to increase them to fund specific infrastructure improvements. The latter power at this stage will only apply to Combined Mayoral Authority areas.
- 6.3.3 The DCLG has embarked on consultation regarding changes to the local government finance system to facilitate the implementation of 100% Business Rates retention and

has published a draft Bill paving the way for future changes. Currently the Council collects significantly more Business Rates than it is allowed to keep and only receives approximately a quarter of any Business Rates growth.

- 6.3.4 It is known that any new system will include an assessment of need and that there will be a re-distribution of resources between authorities to reflect this. The Government has also stated that it will transfer more responsibilities to local authorities, to ensure that the new system is fiscally neutral across the public sector. All of these issues suggest that, until the finer details of the scheme are announced, any potential benefits need to be viewed with caution. A re-set when the new system is introduced will also most likely mean that all or a large part of the additional business rates that the Council has secured through growth in recent years and from the town centre opening in 2017 will no longer directly benefit Bracknell Forest.
- 6.3.5 Taking into account the baseline funding level published in December and factoring in the impact of the 2017 revaluation and local circumstances, the budget projections assume income of -£29.845m (-£18.938m after tariff and levy payments). There is a risk associated with these projections due to the impact of appeals, a request by a multi-national company to re-join the Central Rating List, the Town Centre regeneration and changes in the local economic conditions; however officers monitor total yield, revaluations, changes-in-circumstances, appeals and refunds on a monthly basis. The main uncertainty around the Town Centre regeneration will be the timing with which additional Business Rates income is received as it is dependant on the Valuation Office agreeing rateable values over the coming months and the speed with which the remaining Town Centre units are let. The Council will also receive Section 31 grant to cover the loss of income resulting from capping the Business Rates increase to 2% in 2014/15 and 2015/16 and a number of Business Rate Reliefs (-£0.925m after tariff adjustments).
- 6.3.6 The Government published a bill in January that is seen as the start of the enabling process for introducing the changes required to move to 100% Business Rates retention. The Government maintains its timetable of introducing the changes by the end of the current Parliament in 2020/21. This will result in fundamental changes to the mechanism by which local government is funded. Such complex and involved changes have the potential for unforeseen impacts. The Council will engage with the consultation process working alongside the LGA and other councils to ensure the best possible outcome for Bracknell Forest.
- 6.3.7 As a consequence of the different factors set out above, Bracknell Forest faces a level of potential volatility in the level of business rates it can expect to collect and benefit from over the coming years that is almost unique in local authorities. It is therefore important to take a prudent approach to the projection of likely income, which has been done. An unavoidable consequence is that there may be significant surpluses or deficits in the collection fund each year, depending on the timing of key events and the scale of changes experienced.
- 6.4 Future Funding
- 6.4.1 The 2017/18 Settlement represents the 2nd year of a four year Settlement announced in 2016/17. However as noted above, the Settlement has been significantly impacted by the change in the NHB regime and underlines the underlying risk of assuming that future figures will not change. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy has been updated to reflect the changes proposed for the NHB.

7 Council Tax and Collection Fund

- 7.1 The Council Tax Base for 2017/18 has been calculated as 44,581 (Band D equivalents) which at current levels would generate total income of -£50.715m in 2017/18.
- 7.2 The Government limits Council Tax increases by requiring councils to hold a local referendum for any increases equal to or in excess of a threshold percentage which is normally included in the Local Government Financial Settlement. The threshold percentage has been set at 2% for 2017/18. As a council with social care responsibilities, it will now also be possible for Council Tax to be raised by a further 3% to support social care pressures providing certain criteria are met. The Government's financial modelling assumes that all Councils with adult social care responsibilities will raise a 6% precept over the next three years. Every 1% increase in Council Tax in Bracknell Forest would generate approximately -£0.507m of additional income.
- 7.3 A surplus will be generated on the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund in the current year, primarily due to a lower than expected take up of the Local Council Tax Benefit Support Scheme. The Council's share of this surplus which can be used to support the 2017/18 budget is -£0.613m. This figure is -£0.363m higher than in the draft budget proposals.
- 7.4 During 2013/14 a large multi-national company transferred on to the Council's valuation list which materially increased the level of Business Rates collected locally. However, this company successfully appealed against the rateable value of its business and an allowance was made for the outcome of the appeal when the 2016/17 budget was set. The outcome of the appeal has now been confirmed by the Valuation Office. The refund required and the ongoing reduction in Business Rates income are significant, but lower than budgeted. This is the primary reason that a large surplus has been generated on the Business Rates element of the Collection Fund for 2016/17, the Council's share of which has been declared as £9.113m. While this surplus could potentially be used to support the 2017/18 budget, it would be inadvisable to do so due to the uncertainty surrounding the impact of the 2017 valuation exercise on appeals, a request by the same multi-national company to re-join the Central Rating List and the general uncertainty regarding the introduction of 100% Business Rates retention. This income will therefore be transferred into the Business Rates Equalisation Reserve to mitigate against future funding risks.

8 Developments since the Executive Meeting on 13 December 2016

8.1 Consultation

- 8.1.1 The Executive's draft budget proposals have been subject to a process of public consultation since their publication in December. During the consultation period, the draft proposals have also been scrutinised by the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Commission and Scrutiny Panels. Extracts from the minutes of these meetings are attached as Annexe B and show the Commission broadly supported the draft proposals presented.
- 8.1.2 The draft fees and charges for 2017/18 have also been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Scrutiny Panels and no significant issues were raised.
- 8.1.3 The Schools' Forum considered the Executive's proposals relating to the Children, Young People and Learning department at its meeting on 12 January and, again, no significant issues were raised.

8.1.4 The draft budget proposals were published on the Council’s web site and letters were sent to business ratepayers drawing their attention to the consultation. Only 2 responses were received including a detailed response from the Labour Group. The responses are included at Annexe C.

8.2 Inflation

8.2.1 The Executive established a framework for calculating an appropriate inflation provision at its December meeting. Inflation allowances have been reviewed further by the Borough Treasurer and the Corporate Management Team within this framework. As a consequence, the inflation provision has been increased to £1.553m. The Departmental analysis is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Inflation Allocations

Department	2016/17 £'000
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	558
Children, Young People and Learning (excluding schools)	233
Corporate Services / Chief Executive’s Office	194
Environment, Culture and Communities	568
Non Departmental / Council Wide	0
Total	1,553

8.2.2 This is an additional cost of £0.353m compared to the draft budget proposals. Higher contract inflation and significant increases in gas and electricity prices compared to last year are the main reasons for the increase. Inflation on schools’ expenditure is provided for within the Dedicated Schools Budget expenditure, which is funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant.

8.3 Other Revisions to the Draft Budget Proposals

8.3.1 As outlined above, in the two months since the Executive published the draft budget proposals more information has inevitably become available. Details of the suggested amendments to the draft budget proposals are set out in paragraphs a) to h) below with the net impact being an increase in the net revenue budget for 2017/18 of £0.368m. These changes have been reflected in the full budget proposals set out in Annexe D and the Commitment Budget (Annexe A).

- a) Children, Young People and Learning – Looked After Children
Due to an increase in the number and cost of placements since the December report, this pressure has increased by £0.410m to £0.650m. Should any additional placement costs be incurred during 2017/18 that cannot be accommodated within the approved budget, a request will be made for support from the contingency.
- b) Children, Young People and Learning – Childcare Solicitor Service
Significant cost increases have arisen in 2016/17 through greater use of the Childcare Solicitor service (operated by Reading Borough Council as a Berkshire Joint Arrangement Shared Service). The increase in cases is a national phenomenon driven by increases in the number of looked after children and, at this time, is expected to continue in future years (£0.220m).

- c) Children, Young People and Learning – School Improvement Service
Changes to the School Improvement Service form part of the School Support Services Transformation Project. Restructuring of the service will deliver savings of -£0.140m in 2017/18.
- d) Children, Young People and Learning/Council Wide – changes to Education Services Grant and the funding of associated duties.
One off transitional ESG will be higher than originally forecast (-£0.146m) and per pupil contributions will now be received towards general and retained statutory and regulatory duties previously funded from ESG (-£0.252m and -£0.260m). The latter contributions have been included in Council Wide services as the split between Children, Young People and Learning and Corporate Services will need to be established during the year. These are estimated figures as the actual number of pupils taken into account will be subject to in-year recalculation. Further details are included in section 9.
- e) Non Departmental / Council Wide – Bracknell Forest Supplement and National Living Wage
On the 14 December 2016 the Employment Committee agreed to increase the Bracknell Forest Supplement by 20p to £8.45 per hour from 1 April 2017. The additional cost of this and the increase in the National Living Wage (from £7.20 to £7.50 per hour for casual workers) have been built into the Commitment Budget (£0.025m).
- f) Non Departmental / Council Wide - 2017/18 Capital Programme
For consistency, the impact of the 2017/18 Capital Programme on interest has now been reflected in the Commitment Budget. As outlined in section 9.3, interest on borrowing has increased by £0.011m to £0.497m since the draft proposals.
- g) Non Departmental / Council Wide – pension fund contributions
The Commitment Budget assumed that there would be a £0.300m increase in the employers Pension Fund contributions following the triennial valuation. The draft actuarial valuation of the Pension Fund indicates that that the Council can expect as a minimum a 0.7% increase in 2017/18 and similar increases thereafter (£0.100m). There is a risk when the result of the revaluation is finalised that the scale of increases may need to be higher in order to more quickly address the scheme's underlying funding position, which will need to be closely monitored.
- h) Non Departmental / Council Wide – Citizen and Customer Contact Transformation Project
Savings are no longer anticipated to be delivered in 2017/18 following changes to the service redesign pilots required for the Business Case and the rescheduling of the corresponding gateway review to March 2017 (£0.400m).

8.3.2 The Executive are asked to confirm that there are no further budget proposals that they wish to change following the consultation period.

9 Other Budget Issues

9.1 Schools Budget

9.1.1 Whilst spending on the Schools Budget is generally funded by the ring fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), and therefore outside of the Council's funding responsibilities, councils retain a legal duty to set the overall level of the Schools

Unrestricted

Budget. In deciding the relevant amount, councils must plan to spend at least to the level of estimated DSG. The policy of the Council is to fund the Schools Budget up to the level of grant income, with the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning responsible for agreeing individual service budgets.

- 9.1.2 Funding for the Schools Block element of the Schools Budget has now been confirmed by the Department for Education (DfE) at -£66.395m. Once again, this is a “cash flat” settlement, with funding only adjusted to reflect changes in pupil numbers, meaning schools will need to make savings to cover the increases that will arise from unavoidable cost pressures such as pay awards. The DfE has yet to provide a complete update on grant funding in the Early Years or High Needs Block elements of the Schools Budget as some of the key data used for the calculations has yet to be validated. However, based on current information, grant income of -£5.729m and -£14.67m respectively are expected for these elements, making an initial total DSG estimate of -£86.794m.
- 9.1.3 In addition to the revised estimated for DSG income, the DfE has also now confirmed the Education related revenue grants that will be provided in 2017/18. As highlighted in the December budget report, whilst all the responsibilities on councils in various Education Acts will remain in place, the DfE are withdrawing funding relating to the delivery of ‘general’ education related statutory and regulatory duties to maintained schools. These duties include School Improvement, Finance, Human Resources, Health and Safety, Legal Services, Education Welfare and Asset Management. After allowing for one-off transitional funding of -£0.401m, this represents a loss in income of £1.096m.
- 9.1.4 Whilst the ‘general’ education related statutory and regulatory duties grant income has been completely withdrawn, an element the DfE term ‘retained’ duties, which councils must deliver for both maintained and academy schools will continue to be funded. However, rather than being delivered directly to councils through the Education Services Grant, this has been transferred into the Schools Block element of the DSG (-£0.260m), where subject to annual agreement of the Schools Forum, relevant expenditure will be charged, rather than to the General Fund.
- 9.1.5 The DfE “recognise that councils will need to use other sources of funding to pay for education services once the general funding has been removed” and will “allow local authorities to retain some of their schools block funding to cover the statutory duties that they carry out for maintained schools which were previously funded through the ESG.” The amount to be retained by councils will need to be agreed annually by the maintained schools members of the Schools Forum and will be determined through a single rate per pupil deduction from all maintained schools. Following a formal consultation with schools, a per pupil deduction of £20 has been agreed for 2017/18 which will generate around -£0.252m.
- 9.1.6 Despite earlier announcements, the DfE has now confirmed that there will be a continued role for councils in aspects of School Improvement and that a new grant will be introduced to fund the responsibilities. The funding will be available to support maintained schools, and is expected to be in place for at least two financial years. A provisional allocation for September 2017 to March 2018 has been estimated at -£0.038m.
- 9.1.7 As a number of these funding streams are determined by the number of pupils or schools in the maintained sector, they will be subject to in-year re-calculation and reduction should more schools convert to academy status.

- 9.1.8 Decisions around the final balance of the budget between spending by schools and that on services managed by the Council is the responsibility of the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning, although the Schools Forum must be consulted and, in certain circumstances, agree to budget proposals.
- 9.2 Pensions
- 9.2.1 Accounting standards on the treatment of pension costs (IAS19) require the inclusion within the total cost of services of a charge that represents the economic benefits of pensions accrued by employees. To simplify the presentation of the budget proposals the IAS19 adjustment has not been incorporated at this stage, although it will be included in the supporting information to the Council meeting on 1 March. This will not impact upon the Council's net overall budget or the level of Council Tax.
- 9.3 Investments
- 9.3.1 Investment returns on any surplus cash are likely to remain relatively low during 2017/18 and for some time to come compared to historic averages rates. The immediate impact of the BREXIT vote was a further cut in interest rates to 0.25% in early August as the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) took action to stimulate economic growth based on the risk of a sharp economic downturn. However, economic statistics since August have indicated stronger growth than the MPC expected in August. In addition, inflation forecasts have risen substantially as a result of the sharp fall in the value of sterling since early August. This reduces the possibility that Bank Rate may be cut again, though another cut cannot be ruled out. During the two-year period 2017 – 2019, when the UK is negotiating the terms for withdrawal from the EU, it is likely that the MPC will do nothing to dampen growth prospects already adversely impacted by the uncertainties of what form Brexit will eventually take.
- 9.3.2 Accordingly, a first increase to 0.50% is not tentatively pencilled in, as above, until quarter 2 of 2019, after those negotiations have been concluded, (though the period for negotiations could be extended). However, if strong domestically generated inflation, (e.g. from wage increases within the UK), were to emerge, then the pace and timing of increases in the Bank Rate could be brought forward.
- 9.3.3 The overall longer run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to rise, albeit gently. An eventual world economic recovery may also see investors switching from the safe haven of bonds to equities. The overall balance of risks to economic recovery in the UK remains to the downside. PWLB rates and gilt yields have been experiencing exceptional levels of volatility that are highly correlated to geo-political, sovereign debt crisis and emerging market developments.
- 9.3.4 Given the Council's approach to managing risk and keeping investments limited to a maximum of 6 months maturity with the exception of the part-nationalised UK Banks, the opportunity to achieve rates in excess of the Bank Rate is limited.
- 9.3.5 Given the significant capital investment programme embarked on by the Council in previous years (Binfield Learning Village, Coral Reef and Town Centre) the Council is highly likely to be borrowing externally before the end of 2016/17. As such the 2017/18 Programme will require external borrowing. This position has been exacerbated by the Business Rates revaluation appeal by a large multi-national company early in 2016/17, which saw a significant cash outflow of approximately £16m. This has in effect reduced the ability of the Council to support the 2016/17 Capital Programme from internal borrowing and over the long-term will add to the borrowing costs of the Council. This has been reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and the 2017/18 Budget.

- 9.3.6 With short-term investment rates expected to remain below 0.5% throughout 2017/18, any surplus cash due to the treasury management activities of the Council will earn a minimal return of approximately 0.3%. Maximum use of internal cash will be used in the first instance before going to the external market for borrowing, the timing of which will depend largely on the progress made on completing the major capital projects.
- 9.3.7 Long-term interest rates are at historical lows with 10-year and 25-year Public Works Loan Board rates in the region of 2.2% to 2.5% compared to an internal investment return of 0.3%. Short-term maturities are in the region of 1.5% offering a much smaller cost of carry (this being the difference between the cost of borrowing and the potential re-investment rates). As such, given a mix of borrowing maturities the average interest rate on borrowing assumed in the Council's 2017/18 revenue budget is 2%
- 9.3.8 With borrowing rates at historical lows, the borrowing strategy of the Council will be to minimise the impact on the revenue account by, in the first instance, borrowing at shorter maturities whilst recognising that any short-term benefit may be undone should longer-term interest rates begin to rise. As such the Council, in close co-ordination with its Treasury Management advisers, will monitor medium and long-term interest rates and take any necessary decisions based on the information available to effectively and efficiently fund the capital programme committed to by the Council.
- 9.3.9 The 2017/18 Treasury Management Report attached as Annexe E re-affirms the strategy adopted by the Executive in December 2016 that governs the amount, duration and credit worthiness of institutions that the authority will place investments with during 2017/18. As such the Council will only place deposits with the most highly rated UK Banks and Building Societies, alongside the part-nationalised UK Banks, up to a limit of £7m and for a maximum period of 364 days (for part-nationalised UK Banks). Additionally the Council will be able to invest up to £7m with AAA Money Market Funds and other UK Local Authorities and an unlimited amount through the Government Debt Office Management Deposit Facility. The Annual Investment Strategy is shown in part (iv) of Annex E. Following the review by the Governance and Audit Committee on the 25 January 2017, the Treasury Management Strategy remains unchanged from that consulted on in December.
- 9.3.10 The Local Government Act 2003 introduced a revised framework for capital expenditure and financing, underpinned by CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Code requires the Council to set a number of prudential indicators and limits relating to affordability, capital investment and treasury management. These take account of the Commercial Property Investment Strategy agreed by the Executive on 15 November 2016 and require Council approval. They are included at Annexe E (i) and within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement at Annexe E (iii).
- 9.3.11 The capital programme is being considered separately on tonight's agenda and proposes Council funded capital expenditure of £50.075m and an externally funded programme of £18.491m in 2017/18. After allowing for projected receipts of approximately £14m in 2017/18 and carry forwards, the additional revenue costs will be £0.497m in 2017/18 (an additional £0.011m compared to the draft proposals reflecting changes to the capital programme) and £1.480m in 2018/19. These figures include on-going costs associated with the maintenance and support of IT capital purchases. Costs will need to be revised at the meeting if the Executive decides on a different level of capital spending.

- 9.3.12 The Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year through a revenue charge (the Minimum Revenue Provision or MRP), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments. The regulations issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) require full Council to approve an MRP Policy in advance of each year. The Council is therefore recommended to approve the MRP Policy set out in Annexe E (ii) to the Treasury Management Strategy. The MRP policy has been drawn up to ensure the Council makes prudent provision for the repayment of borrowings (in accordance with the Regulations) and at the same time minimises the impact on the Council's revenue budget. The annuity method will be used to calculate the annual charge where this is based on the life of the asset. The MRP policy was reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 25 January 2017 and no further changes were proposed.
- 9.3.13 As capital expenditure is incurred which cannot be immediately financed through capital receipts or grant, the Council's borrowing need (its Capital Financing Requirement) and its MRP will increase. The Council also needs to make a charge to revenue for "internal borrowing".
- 9.3.14 The draft budget proposals included an estimate of £1.950m for the Minimum Revenue Provision required to be made in 2017/18. This figure remains unchanged. The actual charge made in 2017/18 will be based on applying the approved MRP policy to the 2016/17 actual capital expenditure and funding decisions.
- 9.4 Capital Charges
- 9.4.1 Capital charges are made to service departments in respect of the assets used in providing services and are equivalent to a charge for depreciation. The depreciation charges are included in the base budget figures and are important as they represent the opportunity cost to the Council of owning non-current assets. They must therefore be considered as part of the overall cost of service delivery, particularly when comparisons are made with other organisations. It is also important that these costs should be recognised when setting the level of fees and charges.
- 9.4.2 Capital charges do, however, represent accounting entries and not cash expenditure. The Council is therefore able to reverse the impact of these charges "below the line", i.e. outside service department costs, thereby reducing the net revenue budget whilst not directly affecting the overall cost of each individual service. This means that the charges do not affect the level of Council Tax. The capital charges in 2017/18 total £18.954m which is an increase of £5.111m compared to the current year. This increase primarily relates to the move to valuing infrastructure assets on a depreciated replacement cost basis rather than a depreciated historic cost basis. This will result in a material increase in values and therefore depreciation charges but won't impact on the charge to the General Fund which is based on the MRP not depreciation.
- 9.4.3 Changes to capital charges do affect internal services recharges (see below). Changes to these have not been incorporated into the budget proposals in this report at this stage, although they will be included in the supporting information to the Council meeting on 1 March.

9.5 Internal Services Recharges

- 9.5.1 Members' decisions on the capital programme may affect capital charges and this will determine the overall cost of services in 2017/18. Due to their corporate nature, some services do not relate to a single service department, e.g. finance, IT, building surveyors, health and safety advisers etc. The budgets for these services are changed only by the specific proposals impacting on the departments responsible for providing them (mainly Corporate Services). However, all such costs must be charged to the services that receive support from them.
- 9.5.2 The impact of changes in recharges for internal services is entirely neutral across the Council as a whole, since the associated budgets are also transferred to the services receiving them. The overall level of recharges is dependent upon the Executive's budget proposals being approved.

10 Statement by the Borough Treasurer

- 10.1 Under the Local Government Act 2003, the Borough Treasurer (as the Council's Section 151 Officer) must report to Members each year at the time they are considering the budget and Council Tax on:
- a) The robustness of estimates; and
 - b) The adequacy of reserves.

In addition, CIPFA guidance on Local Authority Reserves and Balances states that a statement reporting on the annual review of earmarked reserves should be made to Council at the same time as the budget. The statement should list the various earmarked reserves, the purpose for which they are held and provide advice on the appropriate level.

Robustness of estimates

- 10.2 The annual statement on the robustness of the estimates formalises the detailed risk assessments that are undertaken throughout the year and which are a standard part of the budget preparations and are included in the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

This identifies a number of key risk areas including:

- financial and economic factors, in particular the need to maintain services whilst achieving significant savings and to promote economic activity in the Borough;
- the impact of demand led services and the need to forecast changes and reshape service delivery to meet changing needs;
- staffing and the need to recruit, train and retain staff with the relevant skills and expertise;
- IT infrastructure availability, compliance and information accuracy;
- potential for the Information Commissioner to impose fines if personal sensitive data is misused or stolen;
- failure to design, monitor and control the implementation of major programmes and projects including the transformation programme;
- business continuity incidents;
- effective safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults;
- effective maintenance of assets including the highways infrastructure;
- working effectively with partners, residents, service users, the voluntary sector and local businesses;
- economic development within the Borough;
- impact of litigation and legislation;

- town centre regeneration:
- cyber attacks.

The budget includes resources sufficient to enable the Council to monitor these key risks and where possible to minimise their effects on services in accordance with the strategic risk action plans. Specific risk reduction measures that are in place include the following:

- **Budget Setting Process**
 - Production and regular monitoring of a robust medium-term financial strategy.
 - Regular analysis of budgets to identify legislative, demographic, essential and desirable service pressures / enhancements.
 - Detailed consideration of budgets by officers and Members to identify potential budget proposals.
 - Robust scrutiny of budget proposals prior to final agreement.
 - Ensuring adequacy and appropriateness of earmarked reserves.
- **Budget Monitoring**
 - Robust system of budgetary control with regular reporting to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and through the Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs) to Members.
 - Exception reports to the Executive.
 - Regular review of the Councils' budget monitoring arrangements by both internal and external audit to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
 - Taking corrective action where necessary during the year to ensure the budget is delivered.
 - Specific regular review by Group Accountants of particularly volatile budget areas.

10.3 The Borough Treasurer receives regular updates from Group Accountants on the largest and most volatile budget areas which could place the overall budget most at risk and makes arrangements to report these through the regular monthly budget monitoring process. The most significant risks in the 2017/18 budget have been identified as the following:

- **Demographics** – the number of “demand” led adult and child client placements, the rising cost and numbers of looked after children, increasing support pressures resulting from people living longer, the impact of new housing developments and changing service provision of social care encouraging people to seek support;
- **Income** - specifically in Planning and Building Control Fees, Leisure Facilities, Car Parks, Commercial Property, Land Charges and Continuing Health Care funding. Significant income streams are reliant on customer demand and physical infrastructure remaining operational, placing a heavy reliance on planned and reactive maintenance being adequate;
- **Major schemes / initiatives** – progress with the Town Centre redevelopment, Coral Reef improvements, Waste Management PFI, major school redevelopment proposals (Binfield Learning Village in particular) and the implementation of savings proposals in particular the significant savings arising from the Transformation Programme;
- **Inflation** – the provision is based on estimates of inflationary pressures at the current time;
- **Treasury Management** – return on investments is affected by cash flow and the level of the Bank rate. There is also a high degree of uncertainty around the timing at which the Council will commence borrowing;

Unrestricted

- **Uninsured losses** – the Council’s insurances cover foreseeable risks. However, some risks are uninsurable, including former County Council self-insured liabilities and mandatory excesses;
- **Contractual Issues** – disputes, contract inflation (in particular rates for care providers which are increasing due to rising demand and reducing supply) and renewal of major contracts;
- **Legislative Changes** – for example, the transference of risks resulting from the retention of Business Rates by councils and the localisation of Council Tax support, the introduction of the Better Care Fund and its impact on funding and the way services will be delivered in the future, the implementation of responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014, and the transition to universal credit;
- **Independent external providers** – changes in provision by independent service providers may result in increased costs to the Council;
- **Service interdependencies** – the potential impact of service reductions in one area on the demand for other services provided by the Council;
- **External inspections** – improvements identified through external inspection;
- **Safeguarding** – failure to adequately safeguard vulnerable people could result in cost pressures.
- **Schools Budget** – the impact of schools becoming academies on school support services, income generated from selling services and grant income that is calculated on the basis of the number of maintained schools and pupils within.

10.4 The probability of some of the above risks occurring is high. However it is unlikely that all will occur at the same time as has been evidenced in the demand led budgets over the past few years. The measures in place, set out in paragraph 10.2, lead the Borough Treasurer and CMT to conclude that the budget proposals have been developed in a sound framework and are therefore robust. However, it needs to be recognised that not all adverse financial issues can be foreseen looking almost fifteen months ahead, e.g. the impact of changes in demand led services or severe weather conditions. It is therefore prudent to include, as in previous years, a contingency sum within the budget proposals.

Contingency

- 10.5 In setting the budget for 2016/17, the level of general contingency was reduced to £1.000m. Within the draft budget proposals for 2017/18 the Contingency was increased to £2.000m, although it was recognised that this would need to be reviewed.
- 10.6 The Borough Treasurer, Chief Executive and CMT have reflected upon the outlook for the economy as a whole, the impact of demographic changes and the resulting pressures on services and other risks contained within the proposed budget. In this respect, while the Transformation Programme is currently broadly on track to complete the first phase reviews over the coming months, it is not possible to state with absolute confidence at this time that the full level of target savings will be achieved through these complex reviews, in the timescales originally envisaged.
- 10.7 Given the overall level of risk from both spending pressures and significant savings, a £2.000m contingency is felt to be appropriate for 2017/18. This figure includes an earmarked sum of £0.500m to cover a specific known risk in Adult Social Care.

Earmarked Reserves

- 10.8 Earmarked Reserves are sums of money which have been set aside for specific purposes. These are excluded from general balances available to support revenue

or capital expenditure. The Council had £30.139m in Earmarked Reserves at the start of 2016/17 which were approved by the Governance and Audit Committee in July 2016. The Borough Treasurer has undertaken a review of existing earmarked reserves and Annexe F sets out each reserve considered. The Borough Treasurer will review again the earmarked reserves in light of the changing risks facing the Council as part of the 2016/17 closedown process and any changes will be presented to the Executive and the Governance and Audit Committee as part of the closure of the accounts.

11 Net Revenue Budget

- 11.1 Table 3 summarises the budget changes for each Department, assuming that all items outlined above and detailed in Annexes A to F are agreed, but before changes to capital charges, pension costs and internal services recharges are incorporated within service department budgets.

Table 3: summary of budget changes

	Inflation (Section 7.2)	Revisions to draft budget proposals (Sections 8.3, and 7.4)	Changes to Specific Grants (Section 6.2)	Total Changes Identified
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	558	3	-336	225
Children, Young People and Learning (excluding schools)	233	275	-38	470
Corporate Services / Chief Executive's	194	0	0	194
Environment, Culture & Communities	568	18	0	586
Non Departmental / Council Wide	-1,200	9,185	875	8,860
TOTAL	353	9,481	501	10,335

These figures are added to the draft proposals to produce a final budget proposal for each department. This is summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Draft Budget Proposal 2017/18

Department	2017/18 Draft Proposals (Table 1)	Changes Identified (Table 3)	Revised Budget Proposals
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	35,875	225	36,100
Children, Young People and Learning (excluding schools)	28,372	470	28,842
Corporate Services / Chief Executive's	7,048	194	7,242
Environment, Culture & Communities	31,106	586	31,692
Non Departmental / Council Wide	-24,421	8,860	-15,561
Total	77,980	10,335	88,315

Unrestricted

11.2 The Net Revenue Budget in 2017/18 if the Executive agreed all of these proposals would be £88.315m before allowing for additional interest resulting from the use of balances. This compares with income of -£83.241m from RSG and Business Rates baseline funding (-£22.800m), the Collection Fund – Council Tax surplus (-£0.613m), the Collection Fund – Business Rates surplus (-£9.113m) and Council Tax at the 2016/17 level (-£50.715m). The Net Revenue Budget is therefore £5.074m above the level of income for 2017/18.

12 Funding the Budget Proposals

12.1 Members can choose to adopt any or all of the following approaches in order to bridge the remaining gap:

- an increase in Council Tax;
- an appropriate contribution from the Council's revenue reserves, bearing in mind the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- identifying further expenditure reductions.

12.2 Council Tax

12.2.1 Each 1% increase in Council Tax in 2017/18 will generate approximately -£0.507m of additional revenue towards the budget gap. It is recommended that the Council increase Council Tax by 4.99%; a general increase of 1.99% plus a further 3% increase to support Social Care pressures. These are the maximum increases permissible under the current guidance without a referendum and, significantly, are the increases factored in to the Governments spending power calculations to 2019/20. This will generate additional income of -£2.532m and reduce the budget gap to £2.542m.

12.3 Use of Balances

12.3.1 The Council needs to maintain reserves to aid cash flow and to protect itself from fluctuations in actual expenditure and income. An allowance for cash flow is reasonably easy to calculate. However, an allowance for variations against planned expenditure is more difficult.

12.3.2 In deciding the level of any contribution from balances, the Executive will wish to have regard to the level of balances available. The Council's General Fund balance at the start of 2017/18 is expected to be £10.9m. This is made up as follows:

Table 5: General Balances as at 31 March 2017

General Fund	£m 12.7
Planned use in 2016/17 (adjusted for in-year savings)	(1.8)
TOTAL Estimated General Balances	<u>10.9</u>

12.3.3 The Council has, in the past, planned on maintaining a minimum prudential balance of £4m. It is prudent when considering the use of reserves to not only consider the current year's budget but also future years' pressures.

12.3.4 The Council's share of the Business Rates surplus for 2016/17 will be transferred into the Business Rates Equalisation Reserve at the year end. It is estimated that there

will be a balance of £7.5m available on the reserve at the end of 2017/18, which provides protection against future volatility in business rates income.

- 12.3.5 It is recommended that the Council makes a contribution of £2.542m (before additional interest from the use of balances) from General Reserves to bridge the remaining budget gap in 2017/18. This approach is set out in Annexe G.

13 Preceptors' Requirements

- 13.1 On the 3 February 2017 the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel met to determine the 2017/18 budget for the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner (TVPCC). The tax for a Band D property for the TVPCC will increase by 1.99% to £170.28 in 2017/18. The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) will not determine its budget and precept for 2017/18 until 27 February. The tax for a Band D property for RBFA in 2016/17 was £61.27. The Parish Councils have yet to set their precepts for 2017/18. These totalled £2.956m in 2016/17 with an average tax of £67.54 for a Band D property. The Parish Council, Police and RBFA precepts will be reported to the Council meeting on 1 March 2017.

14 Summary of Matters for Decision

- 14.1 Annexe G outlines the Council's Council Tax Requirement based on the draft budget proposals. The outcome of the Executive's deliberations will be recommended to the Council meeting on 1 March regarding the budget and Council Tax level for 2017/18. These will be incorporated in the formal Council Tax resolution required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended. However, the following matters need to be determined at this stage in order to allow the Executive to recommend a budget to the Council for 2017/18:

- (a) confirmation of the draft budget proposals, taking account of issues raised during the consultation period and revisions identified to reflect current information (sections 6.2, 6.3, 7.3, 7.4), set out in detail in Annexes A and D;
- (b) confirmation of the impact of changes in investment rates on the budget (section 9.3);
- (c) the level of the corporate contingency (section 10.6);
- (d) the level of Council Tax increase (section 12.2);
- (e) subject to (a) to (d) above and decisions considered elsewhere on the agenda, to determine the appropriate level of revenue reserves to be retained and the consequent use of balances to support the budget in 2017/18 (section 12.3).

- 14.2 As outlined above, dependent upon the decisions made by the Executive concerning these issues, it may be necessary to adjourn the meeting to enable officers to calculate the appropriate figures to include in the recommendations.

- 14.3 A detailed budget book will be prepared during March exemplifying the budget at the level of detail required to support the scheme of virement. This will be made available to all members.

15 Budget Monitoring - Virement requests

- 15.1 A virement is the transfer of resources between two budgets but it does not increase the overall budget approved by the Council. Financial Regulations require formal approval by the Executive of any virement between £0.050m and £0.100m and of virements between departments of any amount. Full Council approval is required for virements over £0.100m. A number of virements have been made since the December Executive meeting which require the approval of the Executive. These have been previously reported to the Corporate Management Team who recommends them to the Executive and the Council for approval. They have been included in the Quarterly Service Reports. Details of the virements are set out in Annexe H.

16 Write-off request

- 16.1 Ascot Cable Limited was liable for the property 1 Eastern Road, Bracknell, RG12 2UP from 14 July 2015 until 19 October 2016. No payments towards Business Rates were made and the account was issued to the Enforcement Agent for recovery action to be taken. The Company made contact on a number of occasions and negotiated repayment arrangements that were not adhered to. The company entered Administration on 19 October 2016 and as a result of this the debt became uncollectible. It is therefore necessary to write off a total value of £166,049.79 in unpaid Business Rates. The impact of this has been built into the calculation of the collection fund year end position. However, Executive approval is required for any write-off in excess of £0.050m.

17 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 17.1 In carrying out all of its functions, including the setting of the budget, the Council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010. That duty requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-
- a) eliminate discrimination , harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a "relevant protected characteristic" and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

"Relevant protected characteristics" are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. As to (b) above due regard has to be had in particular to the need to:-

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The Equality Impact Assessments annexed to this report have been prepared in order to assist the Council to meet the Equality Duty in considering the budget.

Borough Treasurer

- 17.2 The financial implications of this report are included in the supporting information.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 17.3 The Council's budget proposals impact on a wide range of services. A detailed consultation was undertaken on the draft budget proposals published in December to provide individuals and groups the opportunity to provide comments.
- 17.4 Equality impact assessments are attached at Annexe I.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 17.5 The Borough Treasurer's Statement in Section 10 sets out the key risks facing the Council's budget and the arrangements in place to manage these risks, including maintaining an appropriate level of reserves and contingency.

18 CONSULTATION

- 18.1 Details of the consultation process and responses received are included in section 8.1.

Contacts for further information

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Commitment Budget 2017/18 to 2019/20

	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing				
Approved Budget	33,123	33,365	31,410	31,410
Support to former Independent Living Fund recipients		-256		18
Savings approved by Council on 13 July 2016 ¹		-1,702		
Bracknell Forest Supplement and National Living Wage		3		
Net Inter Departmental Virements	242			
Adult Social Care and Health Adjusted Budget	33,365	31,410	31,410	31,428
Children, Young People and Learning				
Approved Budget	16,629	16,911	17,551	17,855
Suitability surveys			20	-20
Schools Music Festival		10	-10	10
Recruitment and retention of social workers in Children's Social Care		26		
Conversion of SEN statements to Education Health Care Plans		-146		
Education Services Grant (ESG)		1,096	401	
Savings approved by Council on 13 July 2016 ¹		-350		
Management Team Review			-64	
Bracknell Forest Supplement and National Living Wage		4		
Capital Invest to Save 2017/18 - Supported Housing (Holly House)			-43	
Net Inter Departmental Virements	282			
Children, Young People and Learning Adjusted Budget	16,911	17,551	17,855	17,845
Corporate Services / Chief Executive's Office				
Approved Budget	14,082	14,420	13,716	13,760
Borough Elections				123
Residents Survey		-29	29	-29
Capital Invest to Save 2015/16- ICT Backup System		-15		
Revenue impact of 2016/17 Capital Programme - ICT costs		36		
Property Services contract savings			15	
Waterside Park Investment Property		-396		
Savings approved by Council on 13 July 2016 ¹		-300		
Net Inter Departmental Virements	338			
Chief Executive / Corporate Services Adjusted Budget	14,420	13,716	13,760	13,854
Environment, Culture and Communities				
Approved Budget	23,453	23,729	21,600	21,068
Waste Disposal PFI		-102	45	31
Local Development Framework		-130	0	
Capital Invest to Save 2006/07 - Easthampstead Park		-1	-1	-1
Car Parking income		-45	-35	
London Road Landfill Site		-14		
Capital Invest to Save 2014/15 - Easthampstead Park outdoor wedding gazebo		-13		
Capital Invest to Save 2015/16 - IDOX Regulatory Services ICT system		-3		
Capital Invest to Save 2015/16 - Street Lighting LED		-376	-41	-25
Capital Invest to Save 2016/17 - Additional Chapel at Easthampstead Cemetery and Crematorium			-17	-65
Town Centre infrastructure maintenance		36	27	
Capital Invest to Save 2016/17 - Corporate Geographic Information System (GIS) replacement		-8		
Savings approved by Council on 13 July 2016 ¹		-1,490	90	
Bracknell Forest Supplement and National Living Wage		17		
Coral Reef - additional income			-600	
Net Inter Departmental Virements	276			
Environment, Culture and Communities Adjusted Budget	23,729	21,600	21,068	21,008
Total Service Departments	88,425	84,277	84,093	84,135
Non Departmental / Council Wide				
Approved Budget	-17,009	-18,147	-17,066	-14,840
Minimum Revenue Provision		97	509	542
2016/17 Use of Balances (Full Year Effect) - Interest		3		
2016/17 Capital Programme (Full Year Effect) - Interest		37		
Ceasing to pay Pension Fund contributions in advance		100		
Increase in employers Pension Fund contributions		400	300	300
Interest on External Borrowing		743	779	12
Earmarked Reserves - funding for Education Health Care Plans		146		
Apprenticeship Levy		215		
Transition Grant		20	914	
Town Centre Business Rates Growth		-750	-750	
Savings approved by Council on 13 July 2016 ¹		-175		
Retained element of ESG transferred to DSG		-252		
2017/18 Capital Programme - Interest		497	405	
Revenue impact of 2017/18 Capital Programme - ICT costs			69	
Net Inter Departmental Virements	-1,138			
Non Departmental / Council Wide Adjusted Budget	-18,147	-17,066	-14,840	-13,986
TOTAL BUDGET	70,278	67,211	69,253	70,149
Change in commitment budget		-3,067	2,042	896

For management purposes budgets are controlled on a cash basis. The following figures which are used for public reports represent the cost of services including recharges and capital charges:

	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
Adult Social Care and Health	37,792	35,837	35,837	35,855
Children, Young People and Learning	27,516	28,156	28,460	28,450
Corporate Services	8,108	7,404	7,448	7,542
Environment, Culture & Communities	34,389	32,260	31,728	31,668
Non Departmental/Council Wide	-37,527	-36,446	-34,220	-33,366
	<u>70,278</u>	<u>67,211</u>	<u>69,253</u>	<u>70,149</u>

Savings approved by Council on 13 July 2016¹

	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000
Adult Social Care and Health	-1,202	-500	0
Children, Young People and Learning	-272	-78	0
Corporate Services	-290	-10	0
Environment, Culture & Communities	-1,458	-32	90
Non Departmental/Council Wide	-175	0	0
	<u>-3,397</u>	<u>-620</u>	<u>90</u>

**MINUTE EXTRACTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION AND PANELS
CONCERNING THE 2017/18 BUDGET CONSULTATION**

Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 10 January 2017

2017/18 Draft Budget Proposals

The Director of Environment, Culture and Communities presented a report on the key themes and priorities for Environment, Culture and Communities as outlined in the draft budget proposals for 2017/18, which the Executive had approved for consultation. The initial preparations for the budget had focussed on the Council's Commitment Budget for 2017/18 – 2019/20, bringing together existing expenditure plans, taking account of approved commitments and the ongoing effects of service developments and efficiencies that were agreed when the 2016/17 budget was set.

A number of changes were proposed to the Commitment Budget since it was last considered by the Executive in July 2016, the overall effect of which was to decrease it by £5.107m to £66.988m. Environment, Culture and Communities spending would decrease as a result of its share in the overall in-year savings agreed by the Council, a lower projection for the Minimum Revenue Provision as a result of changes to capital provision (e.g. Coral Reef) and updated Waste Disposal projections based on the latest tonnages and recycling data.

The Panel noted the draft revenue budget pressures for the Department totalling £387,000 for 2017/18, of which the most significant were £110,000 for increased waste contract costs arising from the additional flats being built in the Borough; £80,000 on waste management costs for disposal of waste from the additional dwellings built; and £70,000 for the cost of developing a joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan over the next four years. However, these were outweighed by savings proposals amounting to £649,000. The largest savings arising were £150,000 on the formation of a joint Regulatory Services team with Wokingham and West Berkshire; £100,000 as a result of re3 local initiatives and increased levels of recycling; and £75,000 for Bracknell Leisure Centre through recovery of lost business and changes to membership scheme sales. All the savings measures had been designed to have the least possible impact on service to the public. The Panel also reviewed the proposed fees and charges for 2017/18, most of which had been increased by around 2%, unless market conditions suggested that a larger increase was appropriate.

The Panel sought clarification and answers to a number of questions, from which the following arose:

- The possibility of charging commercial interests for consent to attach signage to Council street furniture would be looked into.
- Advice on the Council's VAT charging process had been sought as part of the Gateway Review of Leisure Services. Although some VAT savings might arise if certain leisure services were provided through a Trust or a company wholly owned by the Council, greater economies of scale were likely to arise through outsourcing services to a larger contractor.
- A check was requested of the Building Control charges for other work (Plan Charge) for works where the estimated cost was £5,001 to £10,000 or £10,001 to £20,000, each of which appeared to exceed the charge for more expensive works.

The Panel further noted the 2017/18 Capital Programme bids. The Panel was assured that adequate publicity and the affixing of notices to parking pay machines would be arranged in

advance of the installation of new coin mechanisms in the machines, to advise the position on the acceptance or otherwise of new notes and coins in circulation. Members were pleased to note the potential for savings and increased opening hours which would flow from the investment in self-service issue apparatus and mobile technology for Borough libraries.

Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 11 January 2017

2017/18 Draft Budget Proposals

The Panel reviewed the Draft Budget Proposals for 2017/18.

Education Services Grant

The Director drew Members' attention to the following extract from the report:

As part of the 2015 Spending Review the government announced that it was looking to make £600m of savings from this grant. Announcements and consultations published since the settlement now indicated the grant would be withdrawn almost completely and for the Council this represented a funding reduction of £1.242m in 2017/18, followed by a further £0.255m in 2018/19. Reductions of this level meant that services provided to schools could not be maintained at their present level unless schools wished to pay the full cost of providing them. The grant reductions had been reflected in the Commitment Budget.

Education Library Service

The Director confirmed that this service was now closed but a figure of £30,000 had been budgeted as two staff had been retained to close the service down and included their redundancy costs. Therefore the figure represented a one-off budget pressure.

Savings Proposals

A number of services were exceeding their income targets, or had identified new opportunities for income generation, either through improved trading, or additional external contributions, and where this was expected to continue, budgets would be increased accordingly. This related to Community Learning (£30,000) and aspects of support to schools (£15,000). The Director clarified that with regard to the latter saving, this related to a range of activities rather than one large service.

Spending on Schools

Concern was raised with regard to the fact that based on current spending profiles, schools would be expected to face an average unfunded cost pressure of 2.5% which could result in reductions in staffing. This was due to financial difficulties faced by the Council on non-school services which also impacted on schools, with pressures arising on pay and other inflationary cost increases, including the Living Wage, new Apprenticeship Levy and the Local Government Pension Fund deficit. The Director advised that this would be looked at in more detail at the Schools Forum but it was good practice for all schools to look at their staffing structure alongside looking at ensuring children's needs were being met. The Director added that the Transformation Programme which was looking at current processes had identified that good performance management and appraisal processes in schools supported the idea of undertaking a review of current staffing structures.

In addition to the Dedicated Schools Grant, schools also received revenue funding from other specific grants including School Sixth Forms (currently -£4.643m), the Pupil Premium

(-£3.345m), Primary PE and Sports Premium (-0.292m) and the Universal Infant Free School Meals Grant (-£1.487m). All of these amounts were subject to change in 2017/18 but the Director said she was not yet clear exactly when this change would take place as the DfE had yet to clarify. However, it was hoped that more information would be received from the DfE by the beginning of April 2017.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 12 January 2017

2017/18 Budget Scrutiny

The Head of Overview & Scrutiny reported that the Executive had agreed the Council's draft budget proposals for 2017/18 as the basis for consultation with the O&S Commission, O&S Panels and other interested parties. Following the consultation the Executive would consider the representations made before recommending the budget to Council.

Members queried the reduction in funding to Public Health and asked what would be cut as a result of this reduced funding. The Consultant in Public Health reported that the team were working in a number of ways to work more cost effectively and more collaboratively, as a result no services had yet been cut. One example included school nursing and health visitors. A skill mix had been achieved which had allowed savings to be made. The Public Health portal was another example of where savings had been achieved by offering online self service services. Further, smoking cessation work had been successful and this had reduced calls on budgets.

The Panel endorsed the Council's draft budget proposals for 2017/18.

Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 17 January 2017

2017/18 Draft Budget Proposals

The Chief Officer: Commissioning and Resources presented a report on the key themes and priorities for Adult Social Care and Housing as outlined in the draft budget proposals for 2017/18, which the Executive had approved for consultation.

The Panel noted the draft revenue budget pressures for the Department totalling £751,000 for 2017/18, of which the most significant were an additional £292,000 due to capacity in the local care home market and the rising cost of residential and nursing placements, and £250,000 for demographic pressures and a rising demand for adult social care services. However, there were offsetting savings proposed amounting to £710,000, including £250,000 through NHS continuing healthcare funding and £180,000 from managing the cost of Adult Social Care packages. The budget report also included details of the proposed 2017/18 fees and charges for the Department and the Capital Programme for the Department.

Arising from comment and questions, the Panel noted:

- The proposed saving at Clement House would arise through Bracknell Forestcare providing the emergency social care response, avoiding the use of multiple providers at the site.
- The automation of Blue Badge applications and renewals through the Government website was expected to produce a saving through stricter application of the eligibility criteria.

- An explanation was made as to how the charges for lifeline rental and monitoring and care calls would operate.

A cultural change was required to implement the redesign and delivery of packages of care, with the domiciliary care providers to focus on providing only the essential personal care, with other services such as shopping, odd jobs etc to be covered by the voluntary sector.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission – 27 January 2017

The Council's Budget Consultation

The Commission considered a report that set out draft budget proposals for 2017/18. It was reported that the Executive would be considering all representations made at its meeting on 14 February 2017, before recommending the budget to Council.

The Borough Treasurer updated the Commission and made the following points:

- The draft budget proposals for 2017/18 had been agreed by the Executive at its meeting on the 13 December 2016, before the Government had released details on the provisional settlement.
- There had been a risk that the Local Government Settlement may be different than what had been originally proposed.
- The draft budget proposed £1.5m of new pressures.
- The Transformation Programme savings relating to 2017/18 had been incorporated into the budget proposals and were included in the report.
- There had only been two consultation responses, one from BUPA who had stated that they wished to work with the Council and the other from Councillor Templeton on behalf of the Labour Party.
- The provisional Financial Settlement had been announced in mid December 2016, the Government had changed its approach to New Home Bonuses, which meant there would be significant reductions in 2017/18 through to 2019/20.
- The Government had granted a one off Adult Social Care Grant for 2017/18.
- The Schools Grant reduction was not as high as had been anticipated.
- The forecast for 2017/18 looked better than had been anticipated, but worse for 2018/19 and 2019/20 which had resulted in a further £2m increase in the budget gap, to £25 million over the next three years.
- The continuation of big projects within the Capital Programme were still in place with the addition of some new proposals for Capital spend.

The Director of Corporate Services reported that within her department there were pressures within Legal and Property Services. Of the savings proposed in Corporate Services and the Chief Executives Office, very few had a direct impact on frontline services, with most being operational savings.

In response to the Members' questions, the following points were made:

- 1% had been included for inflation in the draft budget proposals; this would be looked at and revised accordingly.
- The Council Tax proposals were not included within the report, but had been discussed at the Conservative Group Meeting.
- There was a potential care home provision from the Council going ahead, this would help to mitigate the increasing costs within that area.

- The 2017/18 budget assumed that the Transformation Programme for Adult Social Care would have come into effect and mitigate the 2017/18 costs.
- The Adult Social Care budget issues were Countrywide not just local to Bracknell Forest Council.
- There had been no responses from residents on the budget consultation.
- The Council would come in on budget for 2016/17.
- There had been no decision yet from Central Government on whether Vodafone would be included on the central list for Business Rates.
- Bracknell Forest Council were over delivering on their Business Rate projections. This would result in an increased levy payment to the Government in 2016/17 with the Council's share of the surplus not being available until 2017/18. This surplus had not been used to support the budget because of the uncertainty around future Business Rates income.
- involve had previously not received any changes to their Voluntary Sector Grant for the past five years going forward this would be cut. The Assistant Chief Executive had met with involve and they were comfortable that they would still be able to provide the same level of service and support. Involve had moved their HQ to cheaper accommodation within the former Magistrates Court.
- The Voluntary Sector Grant to the CAB would be remaining, the Council and CAB were working closely together on work streams concerning debt issues, which were one of the CABs biggest concerns.
- The Voluntary Sector Grant to Victim Support had been removed, The Assistant Chief Executive had met with Victim Support before Christmas and no further comments had been received within the Consultation.
- There had been no changes to the Shopmobility Grant.
- Berkshire Community Foundation had also had their Voluntary Sector Grant cut.
- The Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services & Public Protection had been present at the Assistant Chief Executives meetings with the Voluntary Sector Organisations and commented that involve were very relaxed and understanding with the proposed cuts.
- The property consultant that would be used to undertake the Energy Performance Certificates, this would be a one off cost as there was not enough resource within the Property Services Team to undertake the significant work needed in a short timescale. It was thought that this was the most cost effective approach. It had been recognised that recruiting property expertise in the South East was challenging. Staff had previously been brought in to undertake similar work as there was no allocation within the staff budget to provide this service.
- The Borough Treasurer had a high degree of confidence that the forecast savings from Transformation projects in 2017/18 would be achieved.

The Chairman stated that even though many members had been involved in the Transformation programme so far and had a general understanding and feeling of the figures that had been presented, there was a risk attached in achieving the figures. The Commission would be closely monitoring and watching to see if the savings are achieved. The Chairman also commented on the importance of CIL funding being spent on infrastructure rather than other projects.

The Commission endorsed the comments made in the minute extracts from Overview & Scrutiny Panels and would incorporate these into the overall feedback. The Commission also endorsed the draft budget proposals before them.

RESPONSES TO THE COUNCIL'S 2017/18 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Labour Response on 2017/18 Budget Proposals

I fully understand the financial predicament of Local Councils following the central government's complete withdrawal of the Revenue Support grant by 2020; for Bracknell Forest- a hole of £23.5m I also appreciate all the work being done in the Transformation Teams to identify savings by considering different ways of delivering service.

I voted for signing the four year financial settlement in September, on the understanding that this year's government settlement would be in line with the indicative funding figures, released in February 2016. Every other LA, except 10, also voted for this. Sadly this agreement lasted just 6 weeks. The December 2016 settlement New Homes Bonus changes seem to penalise those councils that have in fact built homes in the last few years. By changing the years for which this bonus is paid to the council from 6 to 5, 2017/18 then to 4 years, 2018/19, the Council will lose £875K this year and £1000K in the next two years. By paying no money until 0.4% of growth in Council Tax base has been achieved, allocations will again immediately be reduced. I understand that there is as yet no indication whether this will get worse in the years to come. Why was this not mentioned before the four year settlement was agreed to? Surely these changes do not reflect the response from the LAs to the summer consultation on the Homes Bonus? The Government seem to have reneged on a promise. Has the Leader appealed? What has happened to the ten authorities who did not sign up to the four year settlement?

The government has been increasingly urged to spend more money on Social Care and this is it- launched as the 2017-18 Adult Social Care Support Grant. No new money But money taken from one pot to fund another - New Homes Bonus, given to new Care fund – but this Support Fund is a one-off whereas the Homes Bonus reduction goes on and on!

For the second year running, the government has also not looked at the history of house completions in Bracknell Forest, but put a finger to the wind, and made a ridiculous deduction. To cut the grant on the assumption there will be an increase in rate collection because 900 new band D houses will be built, and occupied, providing income throughout the coming year is so unrealistic- based on no evidence at all. Usually about 350 houses are completed. Has the Leader appealed?

The outcome of government's autumn revaluation of Business rates, rateable values and multipliers has still not been received - so here could be further bad news! Because of these uncertainties, and the sure fact that there will be lots of appeals, I accept that some of the the balances in the Business Rates element of the Collection Fund may well be needed, but £7.5m seems excessive and I think some of this could be released to support the revenue budget.

All these uncertainties, and the government's record of tearing up agreements, seem to make the 'forecast ' budget requirements for 2018/19 and beyond seem very tenuous indeed.

I voted for the investment of £190K to refurbish the toilets, kitchens and gallery to create an income resource for South hill Park. South Hill Park must be the jewel in the crown of our

borough and it puts us on the map. With the loss of £244k grant funding of the arts over the next two years, this will be a very testing time for the SHP management and all who support and love it. I appreciate the increased publicity being given to SHP by the posters and notices on screens in the Council buildings.

Will the Council also use the SHP facilities as the venue of choice when meeting with outside business delegations and encourage local businesses to invest in the arts in their town?

I fully support the increase of £7.002m to enable Downshire Homes Ltd to purchase 10 properties for homeless households and 5 for households with learning disabilities. The reduction in the number of households placed in out of the Borough B&B is to be celebrated.

I cannot support the need for £20K to replace the lockers. The existing £1 coin will not disappear overnight and there are two very cheap alternative solutions to this proposed outlay.

As tickets are bought, the old £1 coin (or token now used that weighs the same) is paid for by the client. Or, one machine is installed to change the new £1 coin for the old one.

Also, with commissioning of the Sports Centre being now considered, why is new fitness equipment to be budgeted for? It should be the responsibility of the new management companies. I can understand the need to improve the greens on the golf course, as that may aid the tendering process. The toilet areas are the same.

I realise that the withdrawal of the DfE Education Services Grant will have a huge impact on the ability of the Council to support the schools in raising standards, financial, legal and HR matters. Schools will have to pay extra to buy in these services. But schools are also under pressure, having to fund increased wages, pension fund deficit, the new apprenticeship levy and inflation. For all state schools to have to fund the Apprenticeship levy, but all academies are exempt, seems totally unfair; as does the 85% tax rebate available for Academies.

Will the Council still have the capacity to organise the Schools Music Festival for which £10k has been budgeted?

The grants for High Needs and the Early Years will not be decided until March. The settlement last year resulted in a huge pressure on the Schools' budget. Is this again expected?

I am supportive of the fact that residents in the Council-owned temporary accommodation now also pay at the Local Housing Association level (80% of market rent), and that the Council is no longer able to charge out-of-work homeless households.

I fully understand the increase in pressures from the capacity in the local care home market and understand the objectives and vision for the new Resource Allocation System for adult social care packages. However, I still have grave reservations about its dependence on family, friends and the voluntary sector. I will monitor that regular checks are taken to ascertain that this support is consistent and what safeguards are in place should it fail.

The move to one care provider for Clement House seems very sensible but I thought all residents were made to understand that there would be residential care there 24/7. If this

care is given to Forest Care to manage, then they are not in the building and there is a time lag before help can arrive. I appreciate emergency services will not be affected.

I have been given some reassurance that the £21K cut for support for the Advice and Guidance to Young People, potentially NEET, will not affect the schools and areas where there is good uptake of this service. I will monitor this closely.

I was also assured that the reduction of £7k to the 'Aiming High' families is the last of the phased reduction in grant, as consulted on in 2014 and no more cuts are envisaged.

I was shocked to see the reduction in grant to 'Involve' at this time when the Council is depending more and more on volunteers for the provision of services. I believe this is because 'Involve' have been given a peppercorn rent in their new location for the next three years. Included in the Equality Assessment papers for this item are also the charities Bracknell Shopmobility and Citizens Advice Bureau but I now understand these are now not to be cut in 2017/18.

I fully support the move of the Council to Times Square.

From every department there is a need for a spend on IT. I understand that this is an ever-changing beast but surely it must be possible to find a system that serves the whole council and that does not 'fail to deliver' after a year and have to be amended. I was very impressed by the local business man who has redesigned the IT system for the whole Luton Council. Are we so different from them?

To close the huge funding gap, the Council has the choice to use balances, raise Council Taxes, or make further cuts.

I favour a mixture of the first two.

The government has agreed that the Adult Social Care precept can be raised by 3% in 2017/18 instead of last year's 2%. It can be raised a total of 6% before 2020- an interesting choice of timing and percentage. I agree with doing this but will this be spent on Adult Social Care?

I know the council can still raise the Taxes by 1.99% without having to organise a referendum.

I agree we should raise the Council Taxes by 4.99%, giving an increased revenue of £2.5m

The Council Tax Income is expected to be £50.37m for 2017/18 without this rise.

After all the grants are considered, I would support the balance being taken from the reserves.

In the Budget Papers it states that the Reserves are £10.00m and then late on it gives the estimated balance of £10.9m. I was very alarmed by the apparent dismissal of £0.9m, but have now been told this was a typing error and the General Reserves should also read £10.9m.

Cllr Mary Temperton

24 January 2017

Response from the Managing Director of BUPA UK Care Services

Re: Adult Care Home Placements in Bupa Care homes

As you finalise the budget-setting process for the next financial year, I wanted to reach out to you personally to reiterate our desire to agree with the Council, in a constructive and open way, sustainable care home fees that reflect the true cost of providing care.

We remain committed to providing high quality, personalised care to the residents that we care for in your area and we greatly value our relationship with the Council. We intend to work with your teams to ensure a sustainable care market where public funds for social care are used to best effect.

We will provide more detailed cost of care information to your commercial and commissioning teams but I wanted to take this opportunity to share our view of the care home market in your area and the pressures we are experiencing as a provider.

We continue to face significant additional staffing costs stemming from both increases to the National Living Wage and other reforms including pension auto enrolment. To illustrate this point, the National Living Wage will increase by 30p per hour (4.2%) from 1 April 2017 for more than 50% of our care home employees. In addition, registration and regulatory fees will also increase by 4% in the coming financial year. We support these changes but our fees must reflect these costs if services are to remain sustainable.

We appreciate that many of the cost increases outlined above will also impact the Council, placing further pressure on already strained resources. However, as the Care Quality Commission has stated, the sector is at a 'tipping point'. Without fee increases that reflect the rising cost of care provision, the sector's position will become even more precarious.

We welcome the limited changes for social care funding announced in the 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement, including the introduction of a £240m adult social care grant and the decision to allow councils to raise the social care precept by 3% rather than 2% in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

While we share the view of many in the sector that these measures fall well short of the additional funding needed to place the sector on a sustainable footing, we urge councils to make full use of these additional resources to help bridge the gap between fees paid and the true cost of care.

2

The LGA recently reported that the majority of councils are still paying below the floor price of £554 per week for providing care. If the current level of funding for residential and nursing care continues, services will increasingly become unsustainable, with serious implications for the ability of individual councils to deliver their responsibilities under the Care Act to maintain a sustainable and effective market for care.

We ask for your support when reviewing and approving budget proposals to ensure that the additional monies are passed on to providers of care in full to ensure we can deliver sustainable, high quality care.

In the meantime, if I or any of my team can support you as you finalise your budget-setting processes for the coming financial year, please don't hesitate to contact me.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>NHS continuing healthcare funding</p> <p>Continuing healthcare funding is where the NHS funds a package of care provided to an individual as they have been assessed as having a primary health need. Where appropriate, the Council will be more proactive in applying for this funding from NHS commissioners.</p>	-250		
<p>Cost of Adult Social Care packages</p> <p>There will be a continuing focus on managing the cost of care packages. This includes seeking a cultural change within the department to providing a more personalised approach to care, including greater use of external partners where appropriate. The new Resource Allocation System will also be in place for the start of the financial year and will provide a more robust methodology for estimating the cost of a care package for care managers.</p>	-180		
<p>Drugs and Alcohol Service</p> <p>The service is currently being re-commissioned and is expected to yield savings on the current price.</p>	-80		
<p>Forestcare</p> <p>A new business plan for Forestcare is being implemented, which includes an emphasis on growing the business and generating additional income through more sales.</p>	-75		
<p>Clement House</p> <p>The contract for care provision at Clement House will be re-tendered so that one provider provides the care to residents, rather than multiple providers having to travel, enter and exit the building. This should result in cost savings.</p>	-60		
<p>Re-tender of supporting people contract</p> <p>The housing supporting people contract will be re-tendered. The specification will be amended and support to young people and homeless households will now be provided by existing welfare and housing caseworkers.</p>	-30		
<p>Management restructure of welfare and housing service</p> <p>Restructure of management within the housing service, reducing the number of management positions.</p>	-20		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Blue badge applications</p> <p>Automation of Blue Badge applications and renewals using the UK Government website, thereby reducing staff costs.</p>	-15		
<p>Capacity in the local care home market</p> <p>The limited capacity in the local care home market is having a significant impact on the cost of residential and nursing placements. In particular, care home closures and poor CQC ratings have reduced the supply of beds, and there are examples of care homes handing back Council contracts so that spaces can be made available for self-funders.</p>	292		
<p>Demographic pressures</p> <p>Demand for adult social care services is expected to rise due to known carers who will no longer be able to provide care, known young people transferring to adult services, and rising demand from an ageing population.</p>	250		
<p>Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)</p> <p>There is a new statutory requirement from 2014/15 to perform DoLS assessments whenever a client may be deprived of their liberty. Grant funding was received in prior years but has now ended. Some funding has been secured from the Better Care Fund though not sufficient to cover all additional costs.</p>	60		
<p>Rental income from temporary accommodation</p> <p>It has been indicated by Government that the maximum housing benefit subsidy that can be claimed for Council temporary accommodation is to be set at Local Housing Association levels, which is lower than that currently charged. The Council will therefore receive less rental income as it will be unable to charge out-of-work homeless households.</p>	80		
<p>Adult Social Care Resource Allocation System (RAS)</p> <p>The RAS is a framework within which a person's social care needs are assessed and an estimate of the cost of meeting those needs is made. This estimate then informs the creation of the care package. The current internally developed RAS will be replaced by one widely used by other local authorities. Although there are licensing and maintenance costs, this will be a key element of achieving the savings required in Adult Social Care.</p>	37		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Mobile working</p> <p>Adult Social Care staff will work in a more flexible manner, allowing for a more efficient use of office space and more effective time management. There will be ongoing IT costs to support this new way of working.</p>	18		
<p>Transport for education</p> <p>The new policy for Education transport means that travel to college for Adult Social Care recipients aged over 16 is no longer Council funded. However, for those recipients already in college the funding will be maintained until they have completed their courses.</p>	14		
ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING TOTAL	41	0	0

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Additional income</p> <p>A number of services are exceeding their income targets, or identifying new opportunities for income generation, either through improved trading, or additional external contributions, and where this is expected to continue, budgets will be increased accordingly. This relates to Community Learning (£30,000) and aspects of support to schools (£15,000).</p>	-45		
<p>Revised delivery of services and support</p> <p>As part of the on-going process to improve efficiency, the Department continues to review services to consider alternative ways for their delivery or opportunities for cost reductions through reduced take up or general efficiencies.</p> <p>The main changes proposed this year concerning lower demand relate to: reduced use of Social Worker agency staff (£35,000), minimal demand for Higher Education fees for Looked after Children (£30,000), low uptake of Information, Advice and Guidance to young people (£21,000); lower numbers of Public Law Order Assessment cases (£8,000) as a consequence of a more stable workforce and general resource budgets supporting looked after children (£8,000).</p> <p>Other changes in response to service review and general efficiencies are: development work at Larchwood Short Break Unit has introduced efficiencies that will allow for the provision of additional services within the existing budget creating cost reductions elsewhere (£43,000), prioritisation of work within school organisation, sufficiency and admissions (£27,000), general Departmental resources relating to recruitment (£11,000), office materials and resources (£12,000), and training (£12,000) as well as securing full Health Service funding for the looked after children nurse service (£8,000). Savings are also continuing to be achieved through commissioning where a rigorous and challenging approach continues to result in savings against original quotes (£41,000).</p>	-102		
<p>Education Library Service</p> <p>The Education Library Service is a traded service, funded almost entirely from school income. Due primarily to pressures on school budgets, income has reduced consistently since 2010 and moving forward, with the service no longer being financially viable, closure has been agreed. The contribution made to council overheads from the service will no longer be received, resulting in a loss of income.</p>	30		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Conference and Review Team</p> <p>The Team holds responsibility for the statutory Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) role for managing allegations against people who work with children who are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or self employed. The LADO function is currently solely undertaken by the Conference and Review Team Leader, and is part of a wide range of duties for the post holder including responsibility for child protection conferences and independent reviewing of Children's Social Care (CSC) cases. There has been a significant increase in volume of work in these areas and there is no longer sufficient capacity to deliver the LADO service and a 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) post is proposed. This will be partially funded by reducing administrative hours by 0.4 FTE through use of mobile devices that allow professionals to be more self sufficient when out of the office.</p>	17		
<p>Looked After Children¹</p> <p>Based on the current costed schedule of known placements, a pressure has been identified to ensure the fulfilment of statutory duties for children and young people in care. This reflects the known number of children being looked after next year. There is significant turnover in the looked after population – over 100% - with varying placements costs depending on the age of the child and type of placement needed. A small number of placements are at a very high cost. The pressure also includes an increase in the number of Special Guardianship Orders and care leavers.</p>	650		
<p>Family Group Conferences (FGC)</p> <p>A family group conference is a process led by family members to plan and make decisions for a child who is at risk. The Council assists FGCs through an independent coordinator to prepare for, manage and document the meeting. The number of FGC's has increased from 56 in 2013/14 to 88 in 2015/16. FGC's have an evidenced track record of preventing cases escalating to more expensive aspects of the service. The pressure reflects current spend.</p>	15		
ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS SINCE DECEMBER			
<p>Childcare Solicitor Service</p> <p>Significant cost increases have arisen in 2016/17 through greater use of the Childcare Solicitor service (operated by Reading Borough Council as a Berkshire Joint Arrangement). The increase in cases is a national phenomenon and is expected to continue in future years.</p>	220		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
School Improvement Service Changes to the School Improvement Service form part of the School Support Services Transformation Project. Restructuring of the service will deliver savings of £0.140m in 2017/18. A number of income streams will be lost in 2019/20 which will reduce the saving to £0.070m	-140		70
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING TOTAL	491	0	70

¹ The pressure has increased by £0.410m compared to the budget consultation papers

CORPORATE SERVICES / CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Finance - Insurance</p> <p>Cancellation of those insurance policies (various all risks and loss of rent cover for commercial and industrial properties) where there has been a low level of claims in recent years and self insure.</p>	-19		
<p>Finance - Audit</p> <p>External audit fees continue to reduce in line with the tendering process undertaken previously and reducing the number of internal audit days delivered by the Council's external providers would create a saving.</p>	-18		
<p>Finance - Payroll</p> <p>Following the successful implementation of a new payroll system in 2015 the Council is moving towards the delivery of electronic payslips for the majority of its staff and saving printing costs.</p>	-10		
<p>Customer/Digital Services</p> <p>By replacing Sitemorse Web monitoring and SOCITM Performance Monitoring with an open source alternative, a saving can be achieved. The move from "M3" to "Uniform" will remove the need for "M3" licences in Customer Services. If "Uniform" is integrated with the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, this may remove the need for "Uniform" licences and so a further saving can be achieved. A further saving can be achieved by moving to the Amazon Web Hosting Service.</p> <p>Removal of the water dispensers in the reception area at Time Square and smaller efficiency savings across various operational budgets within Customer Services.</p>	-12		
<p>Local Tax Collection / Electoral Registration</p> <p>The number of Local Tax Collection bills produced has reduced with further reductions expected due to the uptake of online bills, and following the decision not to send leaflets with the council tax bills the postage budget can be reduced. In addition, with greater use of email, a reduction can be made on the canvass postage budget.</p>	-10		
<p>Chief Executive's Office / Community Engagement</p> <p>Reduction in administrative support for the Chief Executive's Office teams and general reduction in a range of supplies and services within the area. In addition, a reduction in the Community Centres' equipment budget.</p>	-19		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Chief Executive's Office</p> <p>Cancelation of the subscription to the Local Government Information Unit. Alternative sources of information about local government are available online, although it will be much more difficult to secure a digested summary of current issues.</p>	-10		
<p>Industrial & Commercial Properties</p> <p>In recent years the Peel Centre has provided more income than budgeted and it is expected that this can be replicated going forward. In addition to this, we are currently experiencing relatively low levels of voids at this site.</p>	-15		
<p>Operations Unit</p> <p>Due to the re-tender of the Home to School Transport contracts, which came into effect this new school year, a reduction in costs has been achieved. Alongside this, parents are now asked to contribute towards their child's Post 16 transport which has not been achieved previously. There have also been savings identified with regard to some more expensive routes out of the Borough no longer being required due to pupils moving schools.</p>	-155		
<p>Office Accommodation / Construction & Maintenance</p> <p>Due to the long term plan for the decommissioning of Easthampstead House, no further maintenance, unless deemed urgent, will be carried out on the property. In addition, due to under spends in previous years, a saving can be made within the consultancy budget held in Construction & Maintenance.</p>	-30		
<p>ICT Services</p> <p>Reductions across various supplies and services budgets, reflecting previous underspends and efficiencies. Potential desktop management software savings can be achieved if the software is rationalised or reused.</p>	-30		
<p>ICT Services</p> <p>There is a capital bid in the 2017/18 programme to replace the Skyline Radio Links which will remove the need for revenue funding.</p>	-13		
<p>Voluntary Sector Grants</p> <p>Reduction in grants to Involve, Victim Support and Berkshire Community Foundation.</p>	-40		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Human Resources</p> <p>Due to the current climate, a reduction in staff recruitment advertising is proposed.</p>	-6		
<p>Legal</p> <p>Small reductions in various supplies and services budgets reflecting previous underspends, and an increase in fees coupled with an over-achievement of the income target in previous years enabling a further saving to be identified.</p>	-5		
<p>Legal Services</p> <p>At the end of 2014/15 the Courts increased their costs considerably and as such, the budget has been overspent. This has previously been offset by additional income and smaller underspends from other areas; however going forward this will not be sustainable. This is a demand led service and so the spend cannot be managed downwards.</p>	10		
<p>Property Services</p> <p>Consultancy surveys are required for all lettable Council properties to ensure they meet Energy Performance Certificate standards to enable us to continue to lease out commercial properties.</p>	25		
CORPORATE SERVICES / CHIEF EXECUTIVE TOTAL	-357	0	0

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
Archives The council's share of savings identified by Reading Borough Council for the Archiving Service Joint Arrangement.	-8		
Community Arts & Cultural Services Removal of budget used in previous years to support events such as the VE Day celebrations and cultural partnerships.	-2		
Departmental IT Reduction of the Department's ICT budget. This could impact on the delivery of future software products.	-20		
Parks Open Space & Countryside Streamlining the process for creating leases / licenses for the use of Council land by utility companies and other operatives working in the public realm - i.e. siting of storage units, materials etc. on Council land.	-15		
Planning Policy Increase in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income budget. This will come from the 5% administration charge which can be taken from CIL and is based upon the projected income now the scheme is up and running.	-45		
Building Control Following the completion of officer training the Home Owner warranty scheme will bring in a small income each year.	-7		
Waste Management This is additional income at £40 a bin arising from new subscribers for brown bins.	-4		
Emergency Planning The vehicle has been transferred to the contractor Continental Landscapes Ltd (CLL) and therefore the budget is no longer required.	-3		
Amenity Maintenance This is additional income arising from the sale of advertising space on existing roundabouts.	-10		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Waste Management</p> <p>Income from the sale of bins for flats. The council will no longer provide free communal bins for flats and the developer or landlord will need to buy them.</p>	-16		
<p>Parks Open Space & Countryside</p> <p>A restructuring and regrading within Countryside and Parks Maintenance has generated a small overall saving.</p>	-3		
<p>Waste Management</p> <p>The Council will no longer wash the communal bins in flats. The landlords and managing agents are responsible for their properties. There is no obligation for the Council to offer this service.</p>	-13		
<p>Departmental IT</p> <p>Bracknell Forest Homes have agreed to pay for Elmhurst consultancy work provided by the home energy officer i.e. £400 towards a software licence and £1,600 towards staff costs.</p>	-2		
<p>Street Cleaning</p> <p>As the CLL budget has become embedded efficiencies mean that there is no longer a need for this level of funding for additional works.</p>	-20		
<p>Parks Open Space & Countryside</p> <p>The use of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGS) S106 resources to fund the remaining 0.5 FTE of a Ranger post.</p>	-14		
<p>Downshire Golf Complex</p> <p>Reduction in minor improvements, cost of goods sold, vehicle repairs, service contracts, print room and various smaller supplies and services budgets.</p>	-39		
<p>Bracknell Leisure Centre</p> <p>Minor restructure involving the deletion of the Business Development post. Should impact positively on line management of Platinum Sales Team, which is a key income line for the site. This will also give the Sales & Marketing Manager some resource in undertaking promotional tasks and being able to fulfil requirements of the role.</p>	-27		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Bracknell Leisure Centre</p> <p>Deletion of vacant part time Catering Supervisor post. Hours can be covered by assistants/casuals, thereby saving a portion of total cost.</p>	-4		
<p>Waste Management</p> <p>Savings arising from re3 local initiatives at recycling centres. Increased levels of recycling result in more tonnage being diverted from landfill. NB prices of materials go up and down and there is no certainty of income.</p>	-100		
<p>Environmental Enhancements</p> <p>As the new CLL contracts have become embedded there has been less need for this budget which was previously used to fund small scale environmental enhancements to help reduce maintenance costs.</p>	-10		
<p>Regulatory Services</p> <p>Formation of a joint regulatory services team with Wokingham and West Berkshire and stopping a number of non-mandatory duties and transferring others. 1 Senior manager and 2 front line post holders to be made redundant (2.5 Full Time Equivalent's - FTEs) plus 1 vacant front line and 1 support officer post (2FTE's) to be deleted</p>	-150		
<p>Easthampstead Park Conference Centre</p> <p>Income levels have been increasing on the back of capital improvement projects. Bookings have remained consistently higher allowing for the increased income budget.</p>	-50		
<p>Parks Open Space & Countryside</p> <p>The meadow contract has been let at a reduced cost. There are no issues foreseen in the delivery of the service, which is outside of the main CLL contract, but this will be monitored.</p>	-12		
<p>Bracknell Leisure Centre</p> <p>Bracknell Leisure Centre has made changes to its sales processes for Platinum Memberships. This has enabled the site to recover some of the business and income lost from the proliferation of local budget gyms.</p>	-75		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Planning Policy</p> <p>The Council is required to plan for Minerals and Waste. There are currently only out of date policies in place for minerals and waste across the Berkshire area. This is a strategic function which is to be taken forward with three other Berkshire Authorities (Wokingham, Reading and Windsor and Maidenhead). This is four year programme of work which will be undertaken by Hampshire County Council on behalf of the Councils. The Plan will be developed with eventual adoption by the four authorities in 2020. This work has already been identified in the Council's approved Local Development Scheme (LDS).</p>	70		
<p>Transport Development</p> <p>In order to maximise the efficiency of the overall transport system associated with the regenerated town centre, a dedicated travel webpage is considered highly desirable to enable the public to access information such as car park occupancy, real-time bus timetable information, road congestion levels etc.at a cost of £7,000.</p> <p>Engineers can only estimate the network impact of the town centre opening and therefore junction operation, car park Visible Message Signs and bus priority systems cannot be configured in advance. Contingency arrangements will need to be in place to cater for any variance in normal activity once patterns have settled and automation is in place (i.e. Urban Traffic Management Control engineer weekend stand-by rota) at a cost of £4,000.</p>	11		
<p>Highway Maintenance</p> <p>The previous decision by the Coroners Court on tree inspections, and the Councils response to it, has increased the frequency of inspections by the tree officers on highway trees.</p>	20		
<p>Highway Maintenance</p> <p>As the highway network grows an additional Inspector is required to cover the newly adopted areas and identify works required within the prescribed inspection frequencies.</p>	36		
<p>Waste Management</p> <p>The current rate of home building is in excess of predictions made when previously calculating the costs of waste disposal, recycling sites and new bin costs. The additional waste produced by those houses and flats will place a pressure on the Council.</p>	80		

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Waste Management</p> <p>There has been a significant change in the number and percentage of flats being built in the Borough to that envisaged when the waste contract was let. This is causing operational difficulties and in some cases the need for more frequent collections. The Contractor has been able to obtain a vehicle from another contract at no capital cost to the Council that that would be suitable for our use for the remainder of the contract term (March 2019). The needs of the Council relative to the waste service are currently under review for 2019 onwards relative to the nature of provision and the required trucks.</p>	110		
<p>Street Cleansing</p> <p>The full year effect arising from the cleansing of the new town centre public realm to a higher standard than has been the case pre the new town centre is £0.060m, this pressure is phased over two years with the additional £0.020m being realised in 2018/19. Discussions are still ongoing with BRP with regards to future years' costs.</p>	40	20	
<p>Waste Management</p> <p>Inspections undertaken by the Care Quality Commission over the last two years have resulted in a change of practice at local GP surgeries in respect of taking back sharps from patients and disposing of them as clinical waste. This change has given rise to a budget pressure for the Council who have a legal duty to collect waste.</p>	20		
<p>Art Review (South Hill Park)</p> <p>Reduction in annual grant made to South Hill Park (SHP). The Council is investing £190,000 in SHP to allow them to implement an agreed business plan which is expected generate income to offset the Council's reduction in grant. This will enable SHP to continue to operate and provide a comprehensive programme of events for the community.</p>	-100	-100	
<p>Library Review</p> <p>A two year programme of savings with year one including changes in management structures and delivering efficiencies in stock procurement and management and year two deriving efficiencies from technology and volunteering.</p>	-250	-150	

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
<p>Leisure Services Review</p> <p>Transfer of Edgbarrow and Sandhurst sports centres to the respective schools, will take effect from the 1st April 2017. In addition there will be a competitive procurement process leading to the potential outsourcing of three major leisure sites which is scheduled to commence in March 2018 bringing anticipated financial benefits, aligned with a reduction in both corporate and departmental support services.</p>	-300	-700	
<p>Town Centre Car Parking (excluding the Lexicon)</p> <p>Assumptions around the turnover of spaces in the town centre car parks, following the opening of the Lexicon shopping centre, as well as increases to car parking charges result in a projected increase in income.</p>	-225	-312	-162
ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES TOTAL	-1,137	-1,242	-162

COUNCIL WIDE

Description Impact	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
Council Wide Support Services			
Staff savings resulting from the transformation project reviewing support services.	-500	-300	-500
Commercial Property Investment Strategy			
A key project within the Transformation Programme which will deliver additional income from the investment in Commercial Property. Assuming an average net yield of 5% per annum this will require the Council to invest £20m per annum in Commercial Property during 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
Minimum Revenue Provision			
The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy now reflects the Council's intention to move from the equal instalments method to the annuity method for calculating the annual charge where this is based on the life of the asset.	-400		
ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS SINCE DECEMBER			
Duties previously funded by Education Services Grant			
The "Retained" statutory and regulatory duties element of the Education Services Grant has been transferred to the Dedicated Schools Grant central school block. This contribution (at £15 per pupil) will be used to fund existing statutory and regulatory "retained" duties that local authorities have for all schools, including academies. The split between Children, Young People and Learning and Corporate Services will be established during the year.	-260		
COUNCIL WIDE TOTAL	-2,160	-1,300	-1,500

TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to “have regard to” the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council’s capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 1.2 This report outlines the Council’s prudential indicators for 2017/18 – 2019/20 and sets out the expected treasury operations for this period. It fulfils four key legislative requirements:
- The reporting of the prudential indicators setting out the expected capital activities at Annex E(i) (as required by the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities).
 - The Council’s Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy at Annex E(ii), which sets out how the Council will pay for capital assets through revenue each year (as required by Regulation under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007);
 - The Treasury Management Strategy Statement which sets out how the Council’s treasury service will support the capital decisions taken above, the day to day treasury management and the limitations on activity through treasury prudential indicators. The key indicator is the Authorised Limit, set out in Annex E(iii), the maximum amount of debt the Council could afford in the short term, but which would not be sustainable in the longer term.
 - The Annual Investment Strategy which sets out the Council’s criteria for choosing investment counterparties and limiting exposure to the risk of loss. This strategy is in accordance with the DCLG Investment Guidance and is shown in Annex E(iv).
- 1.3 There are few changes between this report and that presented last year. The following highlights are noted.
- The Council’s primary investment objectives are the safeguarding of its principal whilst ensuring adequate liquidity. As global economies emerge from very uncertain times the Council will continue to use the highest quality counterparties and maintain short-duration maturities of less than 12 months. As such there are no changes to the Council’s Investment Criteria from the previous year.
 - Interest rates are unlikely to return to their pre-crisis level of 5% in the foreseeable future. Indeed interest rates are unlikely to rise above 1% in the next 24 months. As such the Council’s rate of return on investments is unlikely to be materially impacted by interest rate changes in the next 12 months.
 - The Council has embarked on a period of significant capital expenditure in the Borough that exceeds that which has gone before. This expenditure will require external borrowing and as such the Council will require a strategy for managing this – as laid out in the report. The Council is fortunate to be undertaking this expenditure at a time when borrowing rates are near an historical low. This expenditure is reflected in a number of the Prudential Indicators and has been allowed for in the General Fund Revenue Account.

The Capital Prudential Indicators 2017/18 – 2019/20

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to adopt the CIPFA Prudential Code and produce prudential indicators. Each indicator either summarises the expected capital activity or introduces limits upon that activity, and reflects the outcome of the Council's underlying capital appraisal systems. Within this overall prudential framework there is an impact on the Council's treasury management activity – as it will directly impact on borrowing or investment activity and as such the Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18 to 2019/20 complements these indicators. Some of the prudential indicators are shown in the Treasury Management Strategy to aid understanding.

The Capital Expenditure Plans

The Council's capital expenditure plans are summarised below and this forms the first of the prudential indicators. A certain level of capital expenditure is grant supported by the Government; any decisions by the Council to spend above this level will be considered unsupported capital expenditure. This capital expenditure needs to have regard to:

- Service objectives (e.g. strategic planning);
- Stewardship of assets (e.g. asset management planning);
- Value for money (e.g. option appraisal);
- Prudence and sustainability (e.g. implications for external borrowing and whole life costing);
- Affordability (e.g. implications for the council tax);
- Practicality (e.g. the achievability of the forward plan).

The revenue consequences of capital expenditure, particularly the unsupported capital expenditure, will need to be paid for from the Council's own resources. This capital expenditure can be paid for immediately (by applying capital resources such as capital receipts, capital grants, or revenue resources), but if these resources are insufficient any residual capital expenditure will add to the Council's borrowing need.

The key risks to the plans are that the level of Government support has been estimated and is therefore maybe subject to change. Similarly some estimates for other sources of funding, such as capital receipts, may also be subject to change over this timescale. For instance anticipated asset sales may be postponed due to external factors, similarly the proceeds from the Right-to-Buy sharing agreement with Bracknell Forest Homes will also be impacted on by the wider economy.

The Council is asked to approve the summary capital expenditure projections below. This now includes the gross investment plans of the Commercial Property Investment Strategy as agreed by Council in December 2016. This forms the first prudential indicator:

Capital Expenditure	2017/18 Estimate £000	2018/19 Estimate £000	2019/20 Estimate £000
Capital Expenditure	69,083	30,497	4,514
Financed by:			
Capital receipts	14,050	4,000	4,000
Capital grants & Contributions	19,008	3,728	3,209
Net financing need for the year	36,025	22,769	-2,695

The Council's Borrowing Need (the Capital Financing Requirement)

The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need. The capital expenditure above which has not immediately been paid for will increase the CFR. Due to the nature of some of the capital expenditure identified above (ie grant), an element will be immediately impaired or will not qualify as capital expenditure for CFR purposes. As such the net financing figure above may differ from that used in the CFR calculation.

The Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year through a revenue charge (the Minimum Revenue Provision - MRP), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments (VRP). No additional voluntary payments are planned.

The Council is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

	2017/18 Estimate £000	2018/19 Estimate £000	2019/20 Estimate £000
Capital Financing Requirement			
Opening CFR	111,851	167,128	188,497
Movement in CFR	54,937	21,013	-2,070

Movement in CFR represented by			
Net financing need for CFR purposes #	57,228	23,828	1,305
Less MRP/VRP and other financing movements	-2,291	-2,815	-3,375
Movement in CFR	54,937	21,013	-2,070

2017/18 includes impact of carry-forward from 2016/17 in addition to 2017/18 Capital Programme

CLG Regulations have been issued which require full Council to approve an MRP Statement in advance of each year. The Council is recommended to approve the MRP Statement attached in Annex E(ii)

Affordability Prudential Indicators

The previous sections cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators, but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances. The Council is asked to approve the following indicators:

Estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream.

This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Ratio	1.76%	2.81%	2.69%

The estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals in the Capital Programme Budget report.

Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the Council Tax

This indicator identifies the revenue costs associated with proposed changes to the three year capital programme compared to the Council's existing approved commitments and current plans. The assumptions are based on the budget, but will invariably include some estimates, such as the level of Government support, which are not published over a three year period.

	Forward Projection 2017/18	Forward Projection 2018/19	Forward Projection 2019/20
Council Tax - Band D	£16.30	£10.20	£0

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

The concept of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) was introduced when the Local Government Capital Finance System was changed on 1 April 1990. This required local authorities to assess their outstanding debt and to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year (the CFR) through a revenue charge (MRP)

Department for Local Government & Communities (DCLG) issued regulations in 2008 which require a local authority to calculate for the current financial year an amount of MRP which it considers “prudent”. The broad aim of a prudent provision is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits or in the case of borrowing supported by government, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of the grant. The Council can choose to charge more than the minimum.

A variety of options are provided to councils, so long as there is a prudent provision. The Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement

- For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 or which in the future will be Supported Capital Expenditure, the MRP policy will be:

Based on CFR – MRP will be based on the CFR

This option provides for an approximate 4% reduction in the borrowing need (CFR) each year.

- From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing (including PFI and finance leases) the MRP policy will be:

Asset life method - MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the regulations. Repayments included in annual PFI or finance leases are applied as MRP.

- For other capital expenditure funded from borrowing where there is an intention to repay the borrowing from future related receipts and there is a strong likelihood that this will happen, the MRP policy will be:

Deferral method - MRP will be deferred and the liability repaid through future capital receipts from disposing of the asset

There will be a presumption that capital receipts will be allocated to the appropriate assets in relation to the constraints of the medium term financial strategy.

The actual charge made in the year will be based on applying the above policy to the previous year’s actual capital expenditure and funding decisions. Therefore the 2017/18 charge will be based on 2016/17 capital out-turn.

In order to minimise the impact on the revenue budget whilst ensuring that prudent provision is made for repayment of borrowing, the Council intends on moving from the equal instalments method to the annuity method in calculating the annual charge over the estimated life of the asset.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

The Treasury Management service is an important part of the overall financial management of the Council's affairs. The prudential indicators in Annex E(i) consider the affordability and impact of capital expenditure decisions, and set out the Council's overall capital framework. The Treasury Management service considers the effective funding of these decisions. Together they form part of the process which ensures the Council meets its balanced budget requirement under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Council's treasury activities are strictly regulated by statutory requirements and a professional code of practice - 2011 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). This Council has adopted the revised Code.

As a result of adopting the Code the Council also adopted a Treasury Policy Statement. This adoption is the requirement of one of the prudential indicators.

The Code of Practice requires an annual strategy to be reported to Council outlining the expected treasury activity for the forthcoming 3 years. A key requirement of this report is to explain both the risks, and the management of the risks, associated with the treasury service. A further treasury report is produced after the year-end to report on actual activity for the year, and a new requirement of the revision of the Code of Practice is that there is a mid-year monitoring report.

This strategy covers:

- The Council's debt and investment projections;
- The Council's estimates and limits on future debt levels;
- The expected movement in interest rates;
- The Council's borrowing and investment strategies;
- Treasury performance indicators;
- Specific limits on treasury activities;

Debt and Investment Projections 2016/17 – 2019/20

The borrowing requirement comprises the expected movement in the CFR and any maturing debt which will need to be re-financed. As a result of the significant investment planned by the Authority over the next three years the Council will be required to borrow externally during the period 2017/18 to 2019/20. However the exact timing of this borrowing will depend on the progress made in completing the major schemes. As such this table below highlights the expected change in investment balances.

	2016/17 Estimated	2017/18 Estimated	2018/19 Estimated	2019/20 Estimated
External Debt				
Debt at 31 March	£20m	£85m	£111m	£114m
Investments				
Investments at 31 March	£0m	£0m	£0m	£0m

Limits to Borrowing Activity

Within the prudential indicators there are a number of key indicators to ensure the Council operates its activities within well defined limits. For the first of these the Council needs to ensure that its total borrowing net of any investments, does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2017/18 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years, but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue purposes.

The Borough Treasurer reports that the Council has complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in this budget report.

The Authorised Limit for External Debt

A further key prudential indicator represents a control on the overall level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.

This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although no control has yet been exercised.

The Council is asked to approve the following Authorised Limit:

Authorised limit	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Borrowing	£180m	£203m	£201m
Other long term liabilities	£16m	£16m	£15m
Total	£196m	£219m	£216m

Operational Boundary for External Debt

The Authority is also recommended to approve the Operational Boundary for external debt for the same period. The proposed Operational Boundary is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit but reflects directly the estimate of the most likely but not worst case scenario, without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit to allow for unusual cash movements.

Operational Boundary	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Borrowing	£169m	£190m	£189m
Other long term liabilities	£16m	£15m	£15m
Total	£185m	£205m	£204m

Borrowing in advance of need.

The Borough Treasurer may do this under delegated power where, for instance, a sharp rise in interest rates is expected, and so borrowing early at fixed interest rates will be economically beneficial or meet budgetary constraints. Whilst the Borough

Treasurer will adopt a cautious approach to any such borrowing, where there is a clear business case for doing so borrowing may be undertaken to fund the approved capital programme or to fund future debt maturities. Risks associated with any advance borrowing activity will be subject to appraisal in advance and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

Expected Movement in Interest Rates

The Council's treasury advisor, Capita Asset Services, has provided the following forecast:

	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17	Mar-18	Jun-18	Sep-18	Dec-18	Mar-19	Jun-19	Sep-19	Dec-19	Mar-20
Bank rate	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	0.75%
5yr PWLB rate	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.80%	1.80%	1.90%	1.90%	2.00%	2.00%
10yr PWLB rate	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.40%	2.40%	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%
25yr PWLB rate	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%
50yr PWLB rate	2.70%	2.70%	2.70%	2.80%	2.80%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%

The Monetary Policy Committee, (MPC), cut Bank Rate from 0.50% to 0.25% on 4th August in order to counteract what it forecast was going to be a sharp slowdown in growth in the second half of 2016. It also gave a strong steer that it was likely to cut Bank Rate again by the end of the year. However, economic data since August has indicated much stronger growth in the second half 2016 than that forecast; also, inflation forecasts have risen substantially as a result of a continuation of the sharp fall in the value of sterling after early August. Consequently, Bank Rate was not cut again in November or December and, on current trends, it now appears unlikely that there will be another cut, although that cannot be completely ruled out if there was a significant dip downwards in economic growth. During the two-year period 2017 – 2019, when the UK is negotiating the terms for withdrawal from the EU, it is likely that the MPC will do nothing to dampen growth prospects, (i.e. by raising Bank Rate), which will already be adversely impacted by the uncertainties of what form Brexit will eventually take. Accordingly, a first increase to 0.50% is not tentatively pencilled in, as in the table above, until quarter 2 2019, after those negotiations have been concluded, (though the period for negotiations could be extended). However, if strong domestically generated inflation, (e.g. from wage increases within the UK), were to emerge, then the pace and timing of increases in Bank Rate could be brought forward.

Economic forecasting remains difficult with so many external influences weighing on the UK. Our Bank Rate forecasts, (and also MPC decisions), will be liable to further amendment depending on how economic data and developments in financial markets transpire over the next year. Forecasts for average earnings beyond the three year time horizon will be heavily dependent on economic and political developments. Major volatility in bond yields is likely to endure as investor fears and confidence ebb and flow between favouring more risky assets i.e. equities, or the safe haven of bonds.

The overall longer run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to rise, albeit gently. An eventual world economic recovery may also see investors switching from the safe haven of bonds to equities.

The overall balance of risks to economic recovery in the UK remains to the downside, particularly with the current uncertainty over the final terms, and impact, of Brexit.

Downside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates currently include:

- Geopolitical risks in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, which could lead to increasing safe haven flows.
- UK economic growth and increases in inflation are weaker than we currently anticipate.
- Weak growth or recession in the UK's main trading partners - the EU and US.
- A resurgence of the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis.
- Weak capitalisation of some European banks.
- Monetary policy action failing to stimulate sustainable growth and combat the threat of deflation in western economies, especially the Eurozone and Japan.
- The potential for upside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates, especially for longer term PWLB rates include:
- The pace and timing of increases in the Fed. funds rate causing a fundamental reassessment by investors of the relative risks of holding bonds as opposed to equities and leading to a major flight from bonds to equities.
- UK inflation returning to significantly higher levels than in the wider EU and US, causing an increase in the inflation premium inherent to gilt yields.

Investment and borrowing rates

- Investment returns are likely to remain low during 2017/18 and beyond;
- Borrowing interest rates have been on a generally downward trend during most of 2016 up to mid-August; they fell sharply to historically phenomenally low levels after the referendum and then even further after the MPC meeting of 4th August when a new package of quantitative easing purchasing of gilts was announced. Gilt yields have since risen sharply due to a rise in concerns around a 'hard Brexit', the fall in the value of sterling, and an increase in inflation expectations. The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances, has served well over the last few years. However, this needs to be carefully reviewed to avoid incurring higher borrowing costs in later times when authorities will not be able to avoid new borrowing to finance capital expenditure and/or to refinance maturing debt;
- There will remain a cost of carry to any new long-term borrowing that causes a temporary increase in cash balances as this position will, most likely, incur a revenue loss – the difference between borrowing costs and investment returns.

Borrowing Strategy 2017/18

The Council is likely to move into a position of external borrowing by the end of 2016/17 however this will depend on largely on the progress made in the existing capital programme. As such the Capital Programme will require the council to extend its borrowing requirements from 2017/18 and beyond. The Borough Treasurer will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:

- if it is considered that there is a significant risk of a sharp fall in long and short term rates, or that long-term rates are unlikely to move over the medium term (e.g. due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation), then long term borrowings will be postponed, and short term borrowing will be considered and cash-flow managed on a daily basis.
- if it is felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper rise in long and short term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from a greater than expected increase in the anticipated rate to US tapering of asset purchases, or in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates are still lower than they will be in the next few years.
- Borrowing will be undertaken using a mix of maturities so that a balanced portfolio of debt is achieved – borrowing at a variety of durations so as to minimise the cost to the Council. Short-term maturities will be used to manage the immediate needs of the Council's cash positions and longer term borrowing will be undertaken to support the requirements of the capital programme.

As such the Authorised Limit for External Debt has been set to enable the Council to manage its cash flow effectively through the use of temporary borrowing, in the unlikely event that this should be necessary.

Investment Strategy 2017/18 – 2019/20

Investment Policy

The Council's investment policy has regard to the CLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") and the 2011 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code").

Key Objectives

The Council's investment strategy primary objectives are safeguarding the repayment of the principal and interest of its investments on time first and ensuring adequate liquidity second – the investment return being a third objective. Following the economic background outlined in the Treasury Management Strategy, the current investment climate has one over-riding risk consideration that of counterparty security risk. As a result of these underlying concerns officers are implementing an operational investment strategy which maintains the tightened controls already in place in the approved investment strategy.

Investment Counterparty Selection Criteria

The primary principle governing the Council's investment criteria is the security of its investments, although the yield or return on the investment is also a key consideration.

After this main principle the Council will ensure:

- It maintains a policy covering both the categories of investment types it will invest in, criteria for choosing investment counterparties with adequate security, and monitoring their security. This is set out in the Specified and Non-Specified investment sections below.
- It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. These procedures also apply to the Council's prudential indicators covering the maximum principal sums invested.

In accordance with the Investment Guidance, the Council will, in considering the security of proposed investments, follow different procedures according to which of two categories, Specified or Unspecified, the proposed investment falls into.

Specified Investments offer high security and high liquidity and are:

- ◆ Denominated, paid and repaid in sterling;
- ◆ Not long term investments, i.e. they are due to be repaid within 12 months of the date on which the investment was made;
- ◆ Not defined as capital expenditure; and
- ◆ Are made with a body or in an investment scheme which has been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency or are made with the UK Government or a Local Authority in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Non-Specified Investments are those which do not meet the definition of Specified Investments.

In accordance with guidance from the CLG and CIPFA, and in order to minimise the risk to investments, the Council has below clearly stipulated the minimum acceptable credit quality of counterparties for inclusion on the lending list. The creditworthiness methodology used to create the counterparty list fully accounts for the ratings,

watches and outlooks published by all three ratings agencies with a full understanding of what these reflect in the eyes of each agency. Using Capita's ratings service, potential counterparty ratings are monitored on a real time basis with knowledge of any changes notified electronically as the agencies notify modifications.

Furthermore, the Council's officers recognise that ratings should not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution and that it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To this end the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as "credit default swaps" and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings. This is fully integrated into the credit methodology provided by the advisors, Capita Asset Services in producing its colour codings which show the varying degrees of suggested creditworthiness.

Other information sources used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.

The aim of the strategy is to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which will also enable diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The intention of the strategy is to provide security of investment and minimisation of risk.

Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in appendix under the 'specified' and 'non-specified' investments categories.

Creditworthiness policy

This Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by Capita Asset Services. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
- CDS spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

This modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will therefore use counterparties within the following maturities .

Dark pink	5 years for Enhanced money market funds (EMMFs) with a credit score of 1.25
Light pink	5 years for Enhanced money market funds (EMMFs) with a credit score of 1.5
Blue	1 year (only applies to nationalised or semi nationalised UK Banks)
Orange	1 year
Red	6 months
Green	100 days
No colour	not to be used

Y	Pi1	Pi2	P	B	O	R	G	N/C
1	1.25	1.5	2	3	4	5	6	7
Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 2yrs	Up to 1yr	Up to 1yr	Up to 6mths	Up to 100days	No Colour

	Colour (and long term rating where applicable)	Money and/or % Limit	Time Limit
Banks	orange	£7m	1 yr
Banks – part nationalised	blue	£7m	1 yr
Banks	red	£7m	6 months
Banks	green	£7m	100 days
Banks	No colour	£0m	0 days
Debt Management Account Deposit Facility	AAA	£7m	6 months
Local authorities	n/a	£7m	1 yr
Money market funds	AAA	£7m	liquid
Enhanced money market funds with a credit score of 1.25	Dark pink / AAA	£7m	liquid
Enhanced money market funds with a credit score of 1.5	Light pink / AAA	£7m	liquid

Our creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information than just primary ratings and by using a risk weighted scoring system, does not give undue influence to just one agency's ratings.

Typically the minimum credit ratings criteria the Council use will be a short term rating (Fitch or equivalents) of short term rating F1, long term rating A-, viability rating of A-, and a support rating of 1 There may be occasions when the counterparty ratings from one rating agency are marginally lower than these ratings but may still be used. In these instances consideration will be given to the whole range of ratings available, or other topical market information, to support their use.

All credit ratings will be monitored in real time. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of our creditworthiness service.

- if a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
- in addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in credit default swap spreads against the iTraxx benchmark and other market data on a weekly basis. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of this external service. In addition this Council will also use market data and market information, information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of that supporting government

In the normal course of the council's cash flow operations it is expected that both Specified and Non-specified investments will be utilised for the control of liquidity as both categories allow for short term investments.

The use of longer term instruments (greater than one year from inception to repayment) will fall in the Non-specified investment category. These instruments will only be used where the Council's liquidity requirements are safeguarded however the current investment limits for 2017/18 restrain all investments to less than 1 year. Any amendment to this strategy will require the credit-criteria to be amended to include a long-term rating. This will be addressed through the formal approval by Council of a revised Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy.

Country and Sector Considerations

Due care will be taken to consider the country, group and sector exposure of the Council's investments. The current investment strategy limits all investments to UK Banks, Building Societies and Local Authorities, in addition to Sterling denominated AAA Money Market Funds.

Economic Investment Considerations

Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates. The UK Bank Rate is forecast to remain unmoved through to mid 2019.

The criteria for choosing counterparties set out above provides a sound approach to investment in "normal" market circumstances. Whilst Members are asked to approve this base criteria above, under the exceptional current market conditions the Borough Treasurer may temporarily restrict further investment activity to those counterparties considered of higher credit quality than the minimum criteria set out for approval. These restrictions will remain in place until the banking system returns to "normal" conditions. Similarly the time periods for investments will be restricted.

Examples of these restrictions would be the greater use of the Debt Management Deposit Account Facility (a Government body which accepts local authority deposits), Money Market Funds, and strongly rated institutions. The credit criteria have been amended to reflect these facilities.

Sensitivity to Interest Rate Movements

Future Council accounts will be required to disclose the impact of risks on the Council's treasury management activity. Whilst most of the risks facing the treasury management service are addressed elsewhere in this report (credit risk, liquidity risk, market risk, maturity profile risk), the impact of interest rate risk is discussed but not quantified. The table below highlights the estimated impact of a 1% change in interest rates to the estimated treasury management costs for next year.

	2017/18 Estimated + 1%	2017/18 Estimated - 1%
Revenue Budgets	£'000	£'000
Borrowing costs	350	-350

Treasury Management Limits on Activity

There are four further treasury activity limits, which were previously prudential indicators. The purpose of these are to contain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of an adverse movement in interest rates. However if these are set to be too restrictive they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs/improve performance. The indicators are:

Upper limits on variable interest rate exposure – This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position net of investments

Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure – Similar to the previous indicator this covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates.

Maturity structures of borrowing – These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits.

Total principal funds invested for greater than 364 days – These limits are set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end.

The Council is asked to approve the limits:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Interest rate Exposures			
	Upper	Upper	Upper
Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt	£180m	£203m	£201m
Limits on variable interest rates based on net debt	£180m	£203m	£201m
Maturity Structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2017/18			
	Lower	Upper	
Under 12 months	0%	100%	
12 months to 2 years	0%	100%	
2 years to 5 years	0%	100%	
5 years to 10 years	0%	100%	
10 years and above	0%	100%	
Maximum principal sums invested > 364 days			
Principal sums invested > 364 days	£m 0	£m 0	£m 0

Performance Indicators

The Code of Practice on Treasury Management requires the Council to set performance indicators to assess the adequacy of the treasury function over the year. These are distinct historic indicators, as opposed to the prudential indicators, which are predominantly forward looking. For 2017/18 the relevant benchmark will relate only to investments and will be the "7 Day LIBID Rate". The results of these indicators will be reported in the Treasury Annual Report.

Treasury Management Advisers

The Council uses Capita Asset Services as its treasury management consultants. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decision remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subject to regular review.

Member and Officer Training

The increased Member consideration of treasury management matters and the need to ensure officers dealing with treasury management are trained and kept up to date requires a suitable training process for Members and officers. Following the nomination of the Governance and Audit Committee to examine and assess the effectiveness of the Treasury Management Strategy and Policies, initial training was provided and additional training has been undertaken as necessary. Officer training is carried out in accordance with best practice and outlined in TMP 10 Training and Qualifications to ensure that all staff involved in the Treasury Management function are fully equipped to undertake the duties and responsibilities allocated to them

SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS

All investments listed below must be sterling-denominated.

Investment	Share/ Loan Capital?	Repayable/ Redeemable within 12 months?	Security / Minimum Credit Rating **	Circumstance of use	Maximum period
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility* (DMADF) * this facility is at present available for investments up to 6 months	No	Yes	Govt-backed	In-house	364 Days
Term deposits with the UK government or with Local Authority in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland with maturities up to 364 Days	No	Yes	High security although LAs not credit rated.	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days
Term deposits with credit-rated deposit takers (banks and building societies), including callable deposits, with maturities up to 364 Days	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days
Certificates of Deposit issued by credit-rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) : up to 364 Days. <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days
Gilts : up to 364 Days	No	Yes	Govt-backed	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days

Unrestricted

Investment	Share/ Loan Capital?	Repayable/ Redeemable within 12 months?	Security / Minimum Credit Rating **	Circumstance of use	Maximum period
Money Market Funds <i>These funds do not have any maturity date</i>	No	Yes	<i>AAA Rating by Fitch, Moodys or S&P</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	The period of investment may not be determined at the outset but would be subject to cash flow and liquidity requirements
Forward deals with credit rated banks and building societies < 1 year (i.e. negotiated deal period plus period of deposit)	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them. Tracking of all forward deals to be undertaken and recorded.	1 year in aggregate
Commercial paper <i>[short-term obligations (generally with a maximum life of 9 months) which are issued by banks, corporations and other issuers]</i> <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	9 months
Treasury bills <i>[Government debt security with a maturity less than one year and issued through a competitive bidding process at a discount to par value] Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	No	Yes	Govt-backed	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	1 year

NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS

All investments listed below must be sterling-denominated.

<u>Investment</u>	<u>(A) Why use it?</u> <u>(B) Associated risks?</u>	<u>Share/ Loan Capital?</u>	<u>Repayable/ Redeemable within 12 months?</u>	<u>Security / Minimum credit rating **</u>	<u>Circumstance of use</u>	<u>Maximum maturity of investment</u>
Deposits with Authority's Banker where credit rating has dropped below minimum criteria	Where the Council's bank no longer meets the high credit rating criteria set out in the Investment Strategy the Council has little alternative but to continue using them, and in some instances it may be necessary to place deposits with them, these deposits should be of a very short duration thus limiting the Council to daylight exposure only (i.e. flow of funds in and out during the day, or overnight exposure).	No	Yes	n/a	In-House	364 Days
Term deposits with credit rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) with maturities greater than 1 year	(A) (i) Certainty of rate of return over period invested. (ii) No movement in capital value of deposit despite changes in interest rate environment. (B) (i) Illiquid : as a general rule, cannot be traded or repaid prior to maturity. (ii) Return will be lower if interest rates rise after making the investment. (iii) Credit risk : potential for greater deterioration in credit quality over longer period	No	No	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	5 Years
Certificates of Deposit with credit rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) with maturities greater than 1 year <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	(A) (i) Although in theory tradable, are relatively illiquid. (B) (i) 'Market or interest rate risk' : Yield subject to movement during life of CD which could negatively impact on price of the CD.	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	5 years

Unrestricted

<u>Investment</u>	<u>(A) Why use it?</u> <u>(B) Associated risks?</u>	<u>Share/</u> <u>Loan</u> <u>Capital?</u>	<u>Repayable/</u> <u>Redeemable</u> <u>within 12</u> <u>months?</u>	<u>Security /</u> <u>Minimum Credit</u> <u>Rating?</u>	<u>Circumstance of</u> <u>use</u>	<u>Maximum</u> <u>maturity of</u> <u>investment</u>
Callable deposits with credit rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) with maturities greater than 1 year	(A) (i) Enhanced income ~ Potentially higher return than using a term deposit with similar maturity. (B) (i) Illiquid – only borrower has the right to pay back deposit; the lender does not have a similar call. (ii) period over which investment will actually be held is not known at the outset. (iii) Interest rate risk : borrower will not pay back deposit if interest rates rise after deposit is made.	No	No	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	<i>5 years</i>
UK government gilts with maturities in excess of 1 year <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	(A) (i) Excellent credit quality. (ii) Very Liquid. (iii) If held to maturity, known yield (rate of return) per annum ~ aids forward planning. (iv) If traded, potential for capital gain through appreciation in value (i.e. sold before maturity) (v) No currency risk (B) (i) 'Market or interest rate risk' : Yield subject to movement during life of sovereign bond which could negatively impact on price of the bond i.e. potential for capital loss.	No	Yes	Govt backed	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	<i>10 years including but also including the 10 year benchmark gilt</i>

Unrestricted

<u>Investment</u>	<u>(A) Why use it?</u> <u>(B) Associated risks?</u>	<u>Share/ Loan Capital?</u>	<u>Repayable/ Redeemable within 12 months?</u>	<u>Security / Minimum credit rating **</u>	<u>Circumstance of use</u>	<u>Maximum maturity of investment</u>
Forward deposits with credit rated banks and building societies for periods > 1 year (i.e. negotiated deal period plus period of deposit)	(A) (i) Known rate of return over period the monies are invested ~ aids forward planning. (B) (i) Credit risk is over the whole period, not just when monies are actually invested. (ii) Cannot renege on making the investment if credit rating falls or interest rates rise in the interim period.	No	No	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them. Tracking of all forward deals to be undertaken and recorded.	<i>5 years</i>
Deposits with unrated deposit takers (banks and building societies) but with unconditional financial guarantee from HMG or credit-rated parent institution : any maturity	(A) Credit standing of parent will determine ultimate extent of credit risk	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	<i>1 year</i>

Reserves & Balances Policy Statement

As part of the financial planning process the Council will consider the establishment and maintenance of reserves and balances. In setting these, account is taken of the key assumptions underpinning the budget and financial strategy, together with the Council's financial management arrangements. Key factors considered include;

- Cash flow
- Assumptions on inflation and interest rates
- Level and timing of capital receipts
- Demand led pressures
- Planned economies
- Risk associated with major projects
- Availability of other funding (e.g. insurance)
- General financial climate

Reserves and Balances can be held for a number of purposes

General Balances

Balance	Purpose	Policy	Value
General Fund	Provides general contingency for unavoidable or unforeseen expenditure and to cushion against uneven cash flows and provides stability in longer term financial planning.	Policy based on a risk assessment of budget and medium term financial plans. Historically £4m has been considered to be the minimum prudent level.	March 14 £9.813m March 15 £10.961m March 16 £12.730m March 17 £10.953m March 18 £8.385m

Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked Reserves are sums of money which have been set aside for specific purposes. These are excluded from general balances available to support revenue or capital expenditure. The Council has the following earmarked reserves:

Reserve	Purpose	Policy	Value
Insurance and other Uninsured Claims	This provides cover for the excess payable on claims under the Council's insurance policies (self insurance). It also provides for any potential future claims not covered by existing policies, including contractual disputes and legal claims.	Needs to be at a level where the provision could sustain claims in excess of current claims history	March 14 £2.639m March 15 £2.731m March 16 £2.666m March 17 £2.666m March 18 £2.666m
Budget Carry Forward	Used to carry forward approved unspent monies to the following year.	Budget Carry Forwards are permitted only in accordance with the scheme set out in financial regulations.	March 14 £0.719m March 15 £0.202m March 16 £0.315m March 17 £0.000m March 18 £0.000m
Cost of Structural Change	The reserve gives an opportunity to fund the one-off additional costs arising from restructuring before the benefits are realised.	This reserve will be used to meet organisational wide and departmental restructures where there are demonstrable future benefits.	March 14 £1.664m March 15 £1.469m March 16 £1.555m March 17 £1.147m March 18 £0.647m
Schools' Balances	These funds are used to support future expenditure within the Dedicated Schools Block and include individual school balances.	Balances are permitted to be retained by Schools under the Schools Standards & Framework Act 1998. Policies are set and the reserves are managed by schools and the LEA has no practical control over the level of balances.	March 14 £4.371m March 15 £4.013m March 16 £3.333m March 17 £2.407m March 18 £2.407m
Discretionary School Carry Forwards	The statutory requirement to carry forward school balances has been extended to cover those held for Pupil Referral Units and the Schools Specific Contingency as set out in the financial regulations.	Budget Carry Forwards are permitted in accordance with the scheme set out in financial regulations.	March 14 £0.068m March 15 £0.074m March 16 £0.074m March 17 £0.064m March 18 £0.064m

Reserve	Purpose	Policy	Value
Unused Schools Budget Balance	The Schools Budget is a ring fenced account, fully funded by external grants, the most significant of which is the Dedicated Schools Grant. Any under or overspending remaining at the end of the financial year must be carried forward to the next year's Schools Budget and as such has no impact on the Council's overall level of balances.	This reserve is held for specific accounting reasons. The funds in this reserve are ring fenced and cannot be used for any other purpose.	March 14 £0.950m March 15 £0.208m March 16 £1.373m March 17 £1.212m March 18 £1.032m
SEN Resource Units	An earmarked reserve set up in 2012/13 from the under spend on the Schools Budget to fund building adaptations required to develop SEN (special education needs) resource units.	Part of the unused Schools Budget balance, but earmarked for a particular purpose. The funds are therefore ring fenced. The reserve has been approved by the Executive member for Children, Young People and Learning.	March 14 £0.490m March 15 £0.490m March 16 £0.316m March 17 £0.289m March 18 £0.216m
School Meals Re-tender	An earmarked reserve set up in 2013/14 from the under spend on the Schools Budget to cover the costs of the re-tender exercise.	Part of the unused Schools Budget balance, but earmarked for a particular purpose. The funds are therefore ring fenced. The reserve has been approved by the Executive member for Children, Young People and Learning.	March 14 £0.040m March 15 £0.040m March 16 £0.040m March 17 £0.040m March 18 £0.040m
School Expansion Rates	An earmarked reserve set up in 2013/14 from the under spend on the Schools Budget to help finance the increase in Business Rates arising from school expansions. School budgets are normally set on a provisional figure and the reserve will absorb the differences between provisional and actual figures.	Part of the unused Schools Budget balance, but earmarked for a particular purpose. The funds are therefore ring fenced. The reserve has been approved by the Executive member for Children, Young People and Learning.	March 14 £0.112m March 15 £0.196m March 16 £0.445m March 17 £0.595m March 18 £0.745m
School Diseconomy Costs	An earmarked reserve set up in 2016/17 from the under spend on the Schools Budget to help finance the medium term cost pressure that will arise from new schools being built. These will	Part of the unused Schools Budget balance, but earmarked for a particular purpose. The funds are therefore ring fenced. The reserve has been approved by the Schools Forum.	March 17 £0.300m March 18 £0.300m

Reserve	Purpose	Policy	Value
	generally open with relatively low pupil numbers and will therefore need additional financial support until pupil numbers reach a viable level.		
Education Library Service	A joint arrangement with other Berkshire authorities for the Education Library Service. This reserve is used for the provision of future equipment.	The reserve is held in order to finance the renewal or maintenance of specific items of equipment and reduces pressure on maintenance budgets in one particular year. Use of the reserve is subject to the agreement of the Council's participating in the joint arrangement. The service ended in 2016/17 and the reserve was closed.	March 14 £0.089m March 15 £0.063m March 16 £0.028m March 17 £0.000m
Repairs & Renewals	The Council has accumulated funding in an earmarked reserve from service charges paid by tenants at Longshot Lane, Forest Park and Liscombe.	The reserve is held in order to finance future improvement works thereby reducing pressure on maintenance budgets.	March 14 £0.051m March 15 £0.066m March 16 £0.014m March 17 £0.014m March 18 £0.014m
Building Regulation Chargeable Account	A statutory ring fenced account which over time must breakeven.	This reserve is held for specific accounting reasons. The funds in this reserve are ring fenced and cannot be used for any other purpose. The account is currently in deficit and therefore there is no balance on the reserve.	March 14 £0.000m March 15 £0.000m March 16 £0.000m March 17 £0.000m March 18 £0.000m
Commuted Maintenance of Land	Money is received and set aside for the ongoing maintenance of land transferred to the Council under Section 106 agreements.	The reserve will be used to cover the cost of maintaining land transferred to the Council under Section 106 agreements.	March 14 £0.239m March 15 £0.643m March 16 £1.104m March 17 £1.116m March 18 £0.966m
S106 and Travel Plan Monitoring	Money is received and set aside to cover the costs of monitoring developers' compliance with Section 106 agreements, including any travel plan requirements.	The reserve will be used to cover the cost of monitoring developers' compliance with Section 106 agreements, including any travel plan requirements.	March 14 £0.109m March 15 £0.120m March 16 £0.120m March 17 £0.150m

Reserve	Purpose	Policy	Value
			March 18 £0.180m
Property Searches Chargeable Account	A reserve created for a statutory ring fenced account which over time must breakeven.	This reserve is held for specific accounting reasons. The funds in this reserve are ring fenced and cannot be used for any other purpose.	March 14 £0.117m March 15 £0.133m March 16 £0.154m March 17 £0.154m March 18 £0.154m
Business Rates Equalisation	A reserve to manage the volatility in business rates income expected to result from the localisation of business rates in April 2013.	The reserve will be used to smooth the impact of changes in business rate income on the annual budget including levy payments and further appeals. The sum set aside for the 2015/16 Collection Fund deficit accounts for £6.084m of the total.	March 14 £0.000m March 15 £13.700m March 16 £11.798m March 17 £0.000m March 18 £7.460m
Transformation	A reserve to support investment in service innovation and improvements.	The reserve will be used to meet the upfront costs of transformation.	March 14 £0.500m March 15 £0.480m March 16 £1.399m March 17 £0.500m March 18 £0.000m
Demographic Pressures and Projects	A reserve to fund future demographic pressures and projects within Adult Social Care.	The reserve will be used to smooth the impact of demographic changes and to meet the upfront cost of projects designed to create efficiencies and service improvements.	March 14 £0.709m March 15 £0.477m March 16 £0.477m March 17 £0.477m March 18 £0.377m
Revenue Grants Unapplied	A reserve to hold unspent revenue grants and contributions where there are no outstanding conditions.	The reserve will be used to match the grant income to the associated expenditure.	March 14 £1.941m March 15 £2.083m March 16 £2.333m March 17 £2.333m March 18 £2.333m

Reserve	Purpose	Policy	Value
Early Intervention	A reserve to support initiatives that focus on early intervention and preventative work.	The reserve will be used to meet the upfront cost of initiatives focusing on early intervention and preventative work.	March 14 £0.353m March 15 £0.289m March 16 £0.259m March 17 £0.229m March 18 £0.229m
School Masterplans and Feasibility Studies	A reserve to meet the cost of masterplans and feasibility studies for schools expansion.	Any upfront costs incurred prior to a decision being taken to construct an asset may need to be met from revenue.	March 14 £0.500m March 15 £0.500m March 16 £0.500m March 17 £0.500m March 18 £0.500m
Repairs and Maintenance	A reserve to address 1D priorities (urgent works required to assets which are life expired and/or in serious risk of imminent failure) which are revenue rather than capital in nature.	The reserve will be used for high priority revenue repairs and maintenance. The reserve is no longer required.	March 14 £0.494m March 15 £0.187m March 16 £0.039m March 17 £0.000m March 18 £0.000m
Members Initiatives	A reserve to fund another round of small projects (£0.015m per member) based on members' knowledge of local ward priorities or in conjunction with partners and other stakeholders.	The reserve will be used for local ward priorities identified by members	March 14 £0.630m March 15 £0.207m March 16 £0.089m March 17 £0.000m March 18 £0.000m
Public Health Reserve	Under the conditions of the Public Health grant, any under spend of the ring fenced grant can be carried over via a reserve into the next financial year.	The reserve will be used to fund Public Health priorities and projects.	March 14 £0.286m March 15 £0.399m March 16 £0.380m March 17 £0.500m March 18 £0.300m
Better Care Fund Reserve	A new reserve to help meet the cost of Better Care Fund priorities and projects.	The reserve will be used to fund Better Care Fund priorities and projects.	March 15 £0.945m March 16 £1.328m March 17 £0.050m March 18 £0.000m

Unusable Revenue Reserves

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes and do not represent usable resources for the Council.

Balance	Purpose	Policy	Value
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	A reserve required to reflect Collection Fund changes included in the SORP 2009. The balance represents the difference between the Council Tax income included in the Income and Expenditure Account and the amount required by regulation to be credited to the General Fund.	This balance is held for specific accounting reasons.	March 14 £6.474m March 15 -£5.851m March 16 -£5.611m March 17 -£3.500m March 18 £0.000m
Accumulated Absences Account	A reserve which absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year (e.g. annual leave and flexi-time entitlement carried forward at 31 March). Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.	This balance is held for specific accounting reasons.	March 14 -£5.108m March 15 -£5.692m March 16 -£5.598m March 17 -£5.598m March 18 -£5.598m
Pensions	Reflects the Council's share of the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund's assets and liabilities. Contributions will be adjusted to ensure any projected deficit is funded.	This balance is held for specific accounting reasons.	March14 -£164.072m March15 -£223.895m March16 -£214.650m March17 -£214.650m March18 -£214.650m

PROVISIONAL BUDGET SUMMARY STATEMENT
Subject to amendment in the light of final budget decisions

Line		2016/17	2017/18
		£'000	£'000
	Bracknell Forest's Expenditure		
1	Adult Social Care and Health	37,550	36,100
2	Children, Young People and Learning	27,234	28,842
3	Chief Executives /Corporate Services	7,770	7,242
4	Environment, Culture & Communities	34,113	31,691
5	Corporate Wide Items (to be allocated)	1,294	(1,197)
6	Sub-Total	107,961	102,678
7	Non Departmental Expenditure		
8	Contingency provision	1,000	2,000
9	Debt Financing Costs (Minimum Revenue Provision)	1,853	1,550
10	Levying Bodies	108	110
11	Interest	4	1,368
12	Pension Interest Cost & Administration Expenses	7,455	7,455
13	Other Services	425	249
14	Business Rates Growth	(2,694)	(4,145)
15	Contribution from Capital Resources	(300)	(300)
16	Capital Charges	(13,844)	(13,844)
17	Contribution from Pension Reserve	(14,152)	(14,152)
18	Contribution to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(12,702)	9,060
19	New Homes Bonus grant	(3,899)	(2,796)
20	Local Services Support Grant	(3)	(4)
21	Transition Grant	(934)	(914)
22	Net Revenue Budget	70,278	88,315
23	Movement in General Fund Balances	(5,174)	(2,542)
24	Net Revenue Budget after use of balances	65,104	85,773
25	Less - External Support		
26	Business Rates	(15,404)	(15,719)
27	Revenue Support Grant	(11,283)	(7,081)
28	Collection Fund Adjustment – Council Tax	(425)	(613)
29	Collection Fund Adjustment – Business Rates	11,803	(9,113)
30	Bracknell Forest's Council Tax Requirement	49,795	53,247
31	Collection Fund		
32	Bracknell Forest's Requirement	49,795	53,247
33	divided by the Council Tax Base ('000)	43.77	44.58
34	Council Tax at Band D (excluding Parishes)		
35	Bracknell Forest	£1,137.60	£1,194.39

Departmental Virements over £50,000

Debit	Credit	Explanation
£'000	£'000	
		<u>Corporate Services / CX Office</u>
		The Devolved Staffing Budgets (DSB) have been realigned to reflect in year staff turnover and amendments to staffing structures. In order to balance the DSB it has been necessary to identify underspends within non-DSB budgets to vire to the DSB budgets.
80		Operations Unit - DSB
	-10	Finance - Non DSB
	-70	Operations Unit - Non DSB
80	-80	Total

Virements between Departments

Total	Explanation
£'000	
	<u>Adult Social Care, Health and Housing</u>
25	An allocation from the Structural Changes Reserve to finance additional redundancy costs for Heathlands
-2	Savings identified on the Fire Alarm contract. This is a saving that is to be attributed to the Facilities Management Category Strategy savings target.
	<u>Corporate Services / CX Office</u>
8	Savings identified on the Fire Alarm contract. This is a saving that is to be attributed to the Facilities Management Category Strategy savings target.
	<u>Children, Young People and Learning</u>
-3	Savings identified on the Fire Alarm contract. This is a saving that is to be attributed to the Facilities Management Category Strategy savings target.
32	An allocation from the Structural Changes Reserve to finance redundancy costs resulting from the 2016/17 in-year savings
	<u>Environment, Culture and Communities</u>
38	Transfer from the Commuted Maintenance of Land Reserve to undertake necessary land works.
-3	Savings identified on the Fire Alarm contract. This is a saving that is to be attributed to the Facilities Management Category Strategy savings target.
	<u>Non-Departmental</u>
-95	Transfers from Reserves
0	Total Virements

Local Council Tax Discount Scheme Full Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

This Full Equality Impact Assessment looks at the Council's proposals to revise the elements of the Local Council Tax Discount Scheme. It is based on primary research with people aged 18 or over living in the borough, regardless of whether or not they are currently liable to pay any level of Council Tax, together with organisations operating in the borough. That consultation commenced on 28 September 2016 for a twelve week period, and will end on 29 November 2016.

Given the nature of the survey and the limited number of respondents in some categories of protected groups there is insufficient data to test the significance of any differences of responses according to the category of protected characteristic.

Following the changes to the Council Tax Discount Scheme for 2016-2017 for which a full Equalities Impact Assessment was conducted it was agreed that a full Equalities Impact Assessment would be undertaken for the changes proposed for 2017-2018.

Background

The following changes to the Local Council Tax Discount scheme are proposed,

The maximum Council Tax Discount that anyone will be entitled to will be 80%.

The actual level of council tax discount would be based on a banding system applied to net household income, with each income band having a fixed discount, rather than at present where the Council Tax discount is reduced by 21pence for every extra £1.00 of applicable income above the threshold for the maximum Council Tax Discount. This change, will be easier for claimants and potential claimants to understand, and will not discourage people from increasing their earnings, and it will make the system easier to administer.

The maximum discount of 80% would be applied if the claimant or his or her partner receives a disability benefit entitling them to either a Disability Premium, and Enhanced Disability Premium or a Severe Disability Premium. Other households would receive a discount based upon their net income and would fall into one of seven bands. Additionally any Carer's allowance would be disregarded in calculating a claimant's net income.

Self employed rules and rules governing Child Maintenance payments would remain as under the 2016-2017 rules as would rules in deciding what other income and capital is taken into account in determining the net level of weekly income. Self employed rules would however use the National Living Wage rather than the Minimum Wage.

The proposed bandings are shown in the table below:

Band	Discount	Weekly Net Household Income
A	80%	Entitled to a Disability Premium
1	75%	Up to £80.00 or receiving a passported benefit
2	70%	£80.01 to £140.00

3	60%	£140.01 to £200.00
4	50%	£200.01 to £260.00
5	40%	£260.00 to £320.00
6	30%	£320.00 to £380.00
7	20%	£380.01 to £440.00

The Council set up a series of questions on its consultation portal to encourage the community to respond to the proposed changes to the local Council Tax Discount scheme. All existing Council Tax Discount Scheme customers were individually written to encouraging them to respond to the proposals. Customers who visited Time Square were offered the opportunity to go on line or complete a hard copy of the consultation questions. Social media was used to promote the consultation as was the Council's website.

Consultation Responses

Unless otherwise stated the tables below report the responses are summarised below by percentage according to the characteristics of the respondent. Responses from those who did not provide information about the protected characteristic in question e.g. Age, are not included. "Do not know" responses are omitted consequently the percentages may not total 100%

Summary of all Responses

182 responses were received by 28 October. All the responses were from individuals and none were from organisations.

Proposal 1

Q1. The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme compared with what it spends on other services.

Proposal / Question	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
Balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount with what is spent on other services			
1	50.27	16.18	27.93

There was broad agreement with this proposal with almost twice as many people agreeing with the proposal as disagreeing with it.

Proposal 2

Income and Banding

The proposed change would mean that a claimant's net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.01 per week will not be entitled to a deduction.

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Proposal / Question		Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Income and Banding				
2	Seven Income Bands with 10% difference between each band	50.27	16.18	27.93
3	Scheme based on net income of claimant and partner	46.35	12.64	37.19
4	Maximum discount for disabled vulnerable groups	78.57	9.34	10.45
5	Discount is retained providing income remains within the banding group	67.95	14.36	10.44
6	Households with passported benefits remain in the band for the first year until benefits are re-assessed or person moves to Universal Credit	46.15	17.04	20.34

Proposal 3:

The Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, would be disregarded in the calculation of net income for banding

Generally, regardless of protected characteristic, most people thought these suggestions to be either fair or they were equivocal.

The suggestions considered most fair were that the maximum discount would be available for disabled vulnerable groups and that the level of discount would be retained providing that household income remains within the banding group.

Proposal / Question		Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Carers Allowance Disregarded				
7	Carer's allowance is disregarded	56.05	9.89	26.38

Demographic Details

75.27% of the responses were from individuals where a member of the household is currently liable for some level of Council Tax.

The majority 65.93% of respondents were of working age.

A small minority 10 or 8% described themselves as being of pensionable age

A larger minority 17.59% were receiving either a Carers Allowance or a Disability allowance or both

The demographics of the 171 responses received by 26 October are set out in the following table:

Demographic	Number Responding	% of Respondents
Liable for Council Tax	137	75.27
Of Working Age	120	65.93
In employment	133	73.08
Of pensionable age	10	5.49
In Receipt of Carers Allowance	8	4.40
In receipt of Disability Benefit	24	13.19
No response	3	1.65

Note that individuals may have classified themselves as belonging to belong to more than one category.

The tables the percentages below show the percentages of respondents in each category who agreed, disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with each question. The totals may not add up to 100% since “do not know” responses are omitted.

Detailed Responses According to Protected Characteristic

The tables below are based upon the responses 171 responses received from individuals by 26 October and are reported according to the following Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation
- Health Problem or Disability
- Day to Day Activities Limited by Health or Disability

The consultation responses have been broken down into the elements of the community who may be adversely affected by the proposals. The figures reported in the following tables do not show 100% return due to non- inclusion of “do not know” responses.

The tables the percentages below show the percentages of respondents in each category who agreed, disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with each question.

The totals may not add up to 100% since “do not know” responses are omitted.

Age

It should be remembered that the proposals will only directly affect working age households.

8 respondents 4.68% did not provide their age

Proposal 1:

Q1.The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme compared with what it spends on other services.

Regardless of age there was an overall general agreement that the Council should balance expenditure on the Council Tax Discount Scheme against its spend on other services, with 50% either agreeing or strongly agreeing to the proposal, 17% disagreeing but a substantial minority, 24% neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the proposal.

Only the 65 to 79 year old age group showed less than 50% support for balancing the amount spent on the Council Tax Discount Scheme against its spend on other services, and even here the responses for those with a definite view were equally split between those in favour and those not in favour of the proposal.

Age Group	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
18-34	65	26	9
35-49	50	25	25
50 - 64	69	21	11
65 - 79	38	25	38
80 and over	50	13	38

Proposal 2 Income and Banding

The proposed change would mean that a claimant’s net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.00 per week would not be entitled to a discount.

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Q2. Creating a model with seven income bands with a difference of 10% discount between bands.

Age Group	Thought it was fair %	Thought it was neither Fair nor Unfair %	Thought it was Unfair %
18-34	34.56	17.19	28.13
35-49	45.09	19.61	25.49
50 - 64	59.46	16.22	35.15
65 - 79	37.50	12.50	50.00
80 and over	62.50	0.00	37.50

Overall there was general agreement with the suggestion of banding although 65 to 79 year olds were less enthusiastic about this.

Q3. Creating a scheme based on the net income of the claimant and their partner rather than upon needs

Only the 50 to 64 year old respondents were more likely to consider this suggestion to be fair. Responses from other age groups were more likely to be either equally spread or to think it would be unfair

Age Group	Thought it was Fair %	Thought it was neither Fair nor Unfair %	Thought it was Unfair %
18-34	40.00	16.93	40.01
35-49	46.16	9.62	40.39
50 - 64	60.52	13.16	31.57
65 - 79	37.5	12.5	50.00
80 and over	50.00	12.5	37.5

Q4. Providing the maximum discount for vulnerable disability groups

Most respondents thought it was fair that vulnerable disability groups should be given the maximum discount

Age Group	Thought it was Fair %	Thought it was neither Fair nor Unfair %	Thought it was Unfair %
18-34	76.92	15.39	7.7
35-49	73.08	7.7	15.38
50 - 64	76.32	7.89	15.78
65 - 79	100.00	0.00	0
80 and over	100.00	0.00	0

Q5. Allowing households to retain their discount as long as their income remains in the relevant band

Most respondents thought that this would be fair

Age Group	Thought it was Fair %	Thought it was neither Fair nor Unfair %	Thought it was Unfair %
18-34	61.54	21.54	9.23
35-49	67.30	11.54	15.38
50 - 64	78.94	13.16	7.89
65 - 79	100.00	0	0
80 and over	62.5	0	12.5

Q6. Allowing households with passported claims to be placed in Band 1 during the first year and then placing them in the appropriate net income band when they are reviewed or moved to Universal Credit

Respondents, especially those aged 65 and over, were generally more likely to think it would be fair that people receiving qualifying benefits could retain their banding until they were either re-assessed or moved onto Universal Credit

Age Group	Thought it was fair %	Thought it was neither Fair nor Unfair %	Thought it was Unfair %
18-34	39.99	26.16	21.54
35-49	49.99	15.39	13.46
50 - 64	47.18	7.89	23.66
65 - 79	62.5	12.5	25.00
80 and over	62.5	12.5	25.00

Proposal 3:

Q7. Disregarding Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, from the calculation of net income for banding.

Respondents of all ages were generally more likely to think this was fair than unfair.

Age Group	Thought it was Fair %	Thought it was neither Fair nor Unfair %	Thought it was Unfair %
18-34	55.39	16.93	23.08
35-49	57.7	7.7	26.93
50 - 64	52.6	5.26	28.94
65 - 79	50.00	0.00	50.00
80 and over	62.5	12.5	25.00

Gender

7 of the respondents, or 4% did not provide their gender.

Proposal 1:

Q1.The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme

compared with what it spends on other services.

Regardless of gender there was an overall general agreement that the Council should balance expenditure on the Council Tax Discount Scheme against its spend on other services, with around 60% of both genders agreeing to the proposal, and under 20% of both genders disagreeing with the proposal. However a substantial minority of both genders neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

Gender	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
Male	63.27	22.45	14.37
Female	58.26	24.35	17.39

Proposal 2

The proposed change would mean that a claimant's net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.00 per week would not be entitled to a discount

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Q2. Creating a model with seven income bands with a difference of 10% discount between bands

The majority of respondents thought this was fair and there was little difference between men and women, although men were slightly more likely to think this was fair.

Gender	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Male	52.17	13.09	23.92
Female	50.44	19.13	26.96

Q3. Creating a scheme based on the net income of the claimant and their partner rather than upon needs

Men were more likely to think this was fair and although more women thought it was fair than unfair less than 50% thought it was definitely fair

Gender	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Male	57.13	12.24	24.94
Female	43.48	14.78	39.13

Q4. Providing the maximum discount for vulnerable disability groups
Regardless of gender a large majority of people thought that it was fair that vulnerable disability groups should be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount.

Gender	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Male	75.50	10.20	10.20
Female	78.26	9.57	12.18

Q5. Allowing households to retain their discount as long as their income remains in the relevant band

Men were more likely to think that this was fair than women, although more women were likely to think it would be definitely fair than otherwise.

Gender	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Male	53.06	16.32	16.32
Female	43.48	17.39	21.75

Q6. Allowing households with passported claims to be placed in Band 1 during the first year and then placing them in the appropriate net income band when they are reviewed or moved to Universal Credit

A clear majority of both men and women thought this was a fair suggestion.

Gender	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Male	75.51	8.16	75.51
Female	66.09	18.26	11.31

Proposal 3:

Q7. Disregarding Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, from the calculation of net income for banding.

Men and women both thought that this would be fair.

Gender	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Male	53.05	8.15	28.57
Female	55.66	11.88	25.23

Ethnicity

165 of the 171 respondents identified themselves as belonging to one of 11 ethnic groups; 8 ethnic groups were not represented at all. 6 respondents did not identify themselves as belonging to any ethnic group. The table below shows the distribution of respondents by ethnicity. The frequencies for some ethnic groups are very small and caution should therefore be exercised at this point in interpreting the percentages of specific ethnic groups who are either in favour or not in favour of a particular proposal or any aspect of that proposal.

Ethnicity of Respondents	Number	% of total
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	140	81.87
Irish	1	0.58
Gipsy / Irish Traveller	0	
Show People/ Circus	0	
Any Other White Background	10	5.85
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	1	0.58
White and Black African Mixed	0	
White and Asian Mixed	0	
Indian	2	1.17
Pakistani	1	0.58
Nepali	0	
Bangladeshi	0	
Chinese	2	1.17
Filipino	1	0.58
Any Other Asian Background	1	0.58
African	4	2.34
Caribbean	1	0.58
Any Other Black	0	
Arabic	1	0.58
Other Ethnic Group	0	
Not Stated	6	3.51

Proposal 1:

Q1. The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme compared with what it spends on other services.

Most ethnic groups thought either agreed with this proposal or were evenly balanced in their responses.

The only group thinking this was definitely unfair was the "Other Asian", but there was only one respondent in this ethnic group.

Ethnicity of Respondents	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	59.29	25	15.72
Irish	100	0	0
Gipsy / Irish Traveller			
Show People/ Circus			
Any Other White Background	50	40	10
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	100	0	0
White and Black African Mixed			
White and Asian Mixed			
Indian	50	0	50
Pakistani	0	100	0
Nepali			
Bangladeshi			
Chinese	50	50	0
Filipino	100	0	0
Any Other Asian Background	0	0	100
African	50	0	50
Caribbean	100	0	0
Any Other Black			
Arabic	100	0	0
Other Ethnic Group			

Proposal 2

The proposed change would mean that a claimant's net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.00 per week would not be entitled to a deduction

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Q2. Creating a model with seven income bands with a difference of 10% discount between bands

Most respondents thought this would be fair.

Only respondents identifying themselves as either African or of Any Other Asian Background thought this would be unfair; in both cases although 100% thought it would be unfair the numbers were very small, 4 and 1 respectively.

Ethnicity of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	52.56	16.06	25.00
Irish	0	0	100.00

Gipsy / Irish Traveller			
Show People/ Circus			
Any Other White Background	70.00	20.00	10.00
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	100	0	0
White and Black African Mixed	50.00	0	50.00
White and Asian Mixed			
Indian	missing	missing	missing
Pakistani	0	0	0
Nepali			
Bangladeshi			
Chinese	50.00	50.00	0.00
Filipino	0	100.00	0
Any Other Asian Background	0	0	100.00
African	0	0	100.00
Caribbean	100.00	0	0
Any Other Black			
Arabic	0	100.00	0
Other Ethnic Group			

Q3. Creating a scheme based on the net income of the claimant and their partner rather than upon needs

Responses to this question were mixed, and even for the largest ethnic group, English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish, fewer than 50% were definitely in favour of this suggestion.

Five ethnic groups definitely thought that this suggestion was unfair:

- Irish
- Any Other Asian Background
- African
- Arabic

Note that all of these groups had 4 or fewer respondents, mainly only 1 or 2 and care should be exercised in saying that these responses are representative of those of the given ethnic group as a whole.

Ethnicity of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	47.86	15.00	35.01
Irish	0	0	100.00
Gipsy / Irish Traveller			
Show People/ Circus			
Any Other White Background	80.00	0	10.00
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	100.00	0	0
White and Black African Mixed			
White and Asian Mixed			
Indian	0	50.00	50.00
Pakistani	0	0	0
Nepali			
Bangladeshi			
Chinese	50.00	0	0

Filipino	0	0	100.00
Any Other Asian Background	0	0	100.00
African	0	0	100.00
Caribbean	100.00	0	0
Any Other Black			
Arabic	0.00	0.00	100.00
Other Ethnic Group			

Q4. Providing the maximum discount for vulnerable disability groups

Most Ethnic Groups considered this to be a fair suggestion with the exception of the Arabic group for whom there was only 1 respondent.

Ethnicity of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	76.12	12.15	10.63
Irish	100.00	0	0
Gipsy / Irish Traveller			
Show People/ Circus			
Any Other White Background	90.00	0	0
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	100.00	0	0
White and Black African Mixed			
White and Asian Mixed			
Indian	100.00	0	0
Pakistani	100.00	0	0
Nepali			
Bangladeshi			
Chinese	50.00	0	50.00
Filipino	100.00	0	0
Any Other Asian Background	100.00	0	0
African	75.00	0	25.00
Caribbean	100.00	0	0
Any Other Black			
Arabic	0	0	100.00
Other Ethnic Group			

Q5. Allowing households to retain their discount as long as their income remains in the relevant band

Most ethnic groups thought this was either a fair suggestion or were neutral. Three of the smallest ethnic groups thought it was definitely unfair:

- Irish
- Any other Asian Background
- Arabic

However each of these groups had only one respondent.

Ethnicity of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	70.71	15.71	9.95
Irish	0	0	100.00
Gipsy / Irish Traveller			
Show People/ Circus			
Any Other White Background	80.00	0	0
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	100.00	0	0
White and Black African Mixed			
White and Asian Mixed			
Indian	50.00	50.00	0
Pakistani	100	0	0
Nepali			
Bangladeshi			
Chinese	50.0	0	50.00
Filipino	100.00	0	0
Any Other Asian Background	0	0	100.00
African	25.00	50.00	0.00
Caribbean	100.00	0.00	0.00
Any Other Black			
Arabic	0	0	100.00
Other Ethnic Group			

Q6. Allowing households with passported claims to be placed in Band 1 during the first year and then placing them in the appropriate net income band when they are reviewed or moved to Universal Credit

Most respondents thought this suggestion was fair or not definitely unfair.

Only three groups thought it was unfair:

- White and Black Caribbean Mixed
- Any Other Asian Background
- Arabic

Ethnicity of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	47.14	17.86	20.00
Irish	100.00	0	0
Gipsy / Irish Traveller			
Show People/ Circus			
Any Other White Background	50.00	10.00	0
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	0.00	0.00	100.00
White and Black African Mixed			
White and Asian Mixed			
Indian	50.00	0.00	50.00
Pakistani	0	0	0
Nepali			
Bangladeshi			
Chinese	100.00	0	0
Filipino	100.00	0	0

Any Other Asian Background	0	0	100.00
African	0	50.00	25.00
Caribbean	100.00	0	0
Any Other Black			
Arabic	01	0	100.00
Other Ethnic Group			

Proposal 3:

Q7. Disregarding Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, from the calculation of net income for banding.

Most respondents thought this was a fair suggestion with only two ethnic groups thinking it would definitely be unfair:

- Any Other Asian Background
- Arabic

Ethnicity of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	55.00	11.93	27.86
Irish	100.00	0	0
Gipsy / Irish Traveller			
Show People/ Circus			
Any Other White Background	50.00	10.00	0
White and Black Caribbean Mixed	100.00	0	0
White and Black African Mixed			
White and Asian Mixed			
Indian	50.00	50.00	0
Pakistani	0	0	0
Nepali			
Bangladeshi			
Chinese	0	0	50.00
Filipino	100.00	0	0
Any Other Asian Background	0	0	100.00
African	0	50.00	25.00
Caribbean	100.00	0	0
Any Other Black			
Arabic	0	0	100.00
Other Ethnic Group			

Religion

8 of the respondents or 4.86% of the total did not state their religion.

Numbers in some religious groups were very small so care must be exercised in interpreting the views of those respondents as being representative of that religious group as a whole.

The numbers are shown below.

Religion of Respondents	Number	% of total
None	85	49.71
Christian	66	38.60
Buddhist	1	0.58
Jewish	2	1.17
Hindu	1	0.58
Muslim	2	1.17
Sikh	0	0.0
Other	6	3.51
Not stated	8	4.68

Proposal 1:

Q1. The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme compared with what it spends on other services.

Most respondents agreed with this suggestion regardless of religion. The only group who disagreed with this suggestion was the Hindu group of whom there was only 1 respondent and caution should be exercised in attributing this view to the Hindu group as a whole.

Religion of Respondents	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
None	65.88	20.00	14.12
Christian	51.52	30.30	18.18
Buddhist	100.00	0	0
Jewish	100	0	0
Hindu	0	0	100
Muslim	50.00	50.00	0
Sikh			
Other	33.33	33.33	33.33

Proposal 2

The proposed change would mean that a claimant's net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.00 per week would not be entitled to a discount.

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Q2. Creating a model with seven income bands with a difference of 10% discount between bands.

3 people did not answer this question

Most people, regardless of religion considered this to be a fair suggestion, with the exception of those describing their religion as "Other", where 2/3 of the respondents considered the suggestion to be unfair

Religion of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair%	Unfair %
None	56.09	13.42	24.39
Christian	50.00	21.221	24.25
Buddhist	100.00	0	0
Jewish	50.00	50.00	0
Hindu	100	0	0
Muslim	0	50.00	0
Sikh			
Other	33.33	0	66.67

Q3. Creating a scheme based on the net income of the claimant and their partner rather than upon needs

Most people considered this suggestion to be fair or were neutral.

The groups considering this to be definitely unfair were:

- Hindu
- Other

Religion of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
None	54.11	12.94	30.58
Christian	43.95	18.18	37.88
Buddhist	100.00	0	0
Jewish	50.00	0	50.00
Hindu	0	0	100.00
Muslim	0	0	50.00
Sikh			
Other	33.00	0	66.67

Q4. Providing the maximum discount for vulnerable disability groups

Regardless of religion most people considered this to be a fair proposal; only Muslims were equally divided in their responses between definitely fair and definitely unfair.

Religion of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
None	76.47	11.77	10.59
Christian	66.75	10.61	12.13
Buddhist	100.00	0	0
Jewish	100.00	0	0
Hindu	100.00	0	0
Muslim	50.00	0	50.00
Sikh			
Other	83.33	0	16.67

Q5. Allowing households to retain their discount as long as their income remains in the relevant band

Most respondents regardless of religion thought this was a fair proposal; only those describing their religion as "Other" were more inclined to think this was and unfair rather than a fair proposal.

Religion of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
None	70.59	15.30	9.41
Christian	69.70	16.67	7.59
Buddhist	100.00	0	0
Jewish	100.00	0	0
Hindu	100.00	0	0
Muslim	50.00	0	50.00
Sikh			
Other	33.33	0	66.67

Q6. Allowing households with passported claims to be placed in Band 1 during the first year and then placing them in the appropriate net income band when they are reviewed or moved to Universal Credit

The majority of people regardless of their religion considered this to be a fair proposal.

Only three groups thought it was a definitely unfair proposal:

- Hindu
- Muslim
- Other

Religion of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
None	47.05	18.83	17.67
Christian	50.01	18.18	13.64
Buddhist	100.00	0	0
Jewish	100.00	0	0
Hindu	0	0	100.00

Religion of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Muslim	0	0	50.00
Sikh			
Other	0	0	100.00

Proposal 3:

Q7. Disregarding Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, from the calculation of net income for banding.

Most respondents thought this was a definitely fair proposal, with only more Muslims than otherwise thinking it was a definitely unfair proposal.

Religion of Respondents	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
None	54.11	14.11	27.07
Christian	56.07	7.58	27.28
Buddhist	0	0	0
Jewish	100.00	0	0
Hindu	100.00	0	0
Muslim	0	0	50.00
Sikh			
Other	66.67	0	33.33

Sexual Orientation

9 of the respondents did not disclose any information about their sexual orientation. Again numbers in some categories are small so high so percentages should not be taken as fully representative of people of these specific sexual orientations

Sexual Orientation	Number	% of Total
Heterosexual / Straight	149	87.13
Gay Man	3	1.75
Lesbian / Gay Woman	1	0.58
Bisexual	2	1.17
Prefer Not to Say	7	4.09
Not Stated	9	5.26

Proposal 1:

Q1 The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme compared with what it spends on other services.

The majority of respondents regardless of sexual orientation agreed with this proposal and no group overwhelmingly disagreed with this proposal.

Sexual Orientation	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
Heterosexual / Straight	57.05	26.85	16.11
Gay Man	100.00	0	0
Lesbian / Gay Woman	100.00	0	0
Bisexual	50.00	50.00	0
Prefer Not to Say	71.43	0	28.57

Proposal 2

The proposed change would mean that a claimant's net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.00 per week would not be entitled to a discount.

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Q2. Creating a model with seven income bands with a difference of 10% discount between bands.

Most respondents, regardless of sexual orientation thought this was a fair proposal; only Lesbian / Gay women considered this to be definitely unfair, and there was only one respondent in this group.

Sexual Orientation	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Heterosexual / Straight	34.73	15.75	26.42
Gay Man	33.33	33.33	0
Lesbian / Gay Woman	0	0	100.00
Bisexual	50.00	50.00	0
Prefer Not to Say	74.44	0.00	28.57

Q3. Creating a scheme based on the net income of the claimant and their partner rather than upon needs

Most respondents, regardless of sexual orientation thought this was a fair proposal; only Lesbian / Gay women considered this to be definitely unfair, and there was only one respondent in this group.

Sexual Orientation	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Heterosexual / Straight	45.63	13.42	36.92
Gay Man	66.67	0	0
Lesbian / Gay Woman	0	0	100.00
Bisexual	0	100.00	0
Prefer Not to Say	57.14	14.29	14.29

Q4. Providing the maximum discount for vulnerable disability groups

Most respondents, regardless of sexual orientation thought this suggestion was definitely fair.

Sexual Orientation	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Heterosexual / Straight	65.18	10.06	11.41
Gay Man	100.00	0	0
Lesbian / Gay Woman	100.00	0	0
Bisexual	100.00	0	0
Prefer Not to Say	57.14	28.57	14.29

Q5. Allowing households to retain their discount as long as their income remains in the relevant band

Most respondents, regardless of sexual orientation thought this suggestion was definitely fair or were equivocal.

Sexual Orientation	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Heterosexual / Straight	69.80	14.10	11.40
Gay Man	100.00	0	0
Lesbian / Gay Woman	0	0	0
Bisexual	50.00	50.00	0
Prefer Not to Say	71.43	14.29	14.29

Q6. Allowing households with passported claims to be placed in Band 1 during the first year and then placing them in the appropriate net income band when they are reviewed or moved to Universal Credit

Most respondents, regardless of sexual orientation thought this suggestion was definitely fair or were equivocal. Only those describing themselves as Bisexual thought it was either unfair or were equivocal, and there were only 2 respondents in this group

Sexual Orientation	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Heterosexual / Straight	46.31	17.45	20.82
Gay Man	33.33	0	33.33
Lesbian / Gay Woman	0	0	0
Bisexual	0	50.00	50.00
Prefer Not to Say	57.16	14.29	0.00

Proposal 3:

Q7. Disregarding Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, from the calculation of net income for banding.

Most respondents, regardless of sexual orientation thought this suggestion was definitely fair or were equivocal. Only those describing themselves as Bisexual thought it was either unfair or were equivocal, and there were only 2 respondents in this group.

Sexual Orientation	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Heterosexual / Straight	55.04	10.07	26.84
Gay Man	33.33	33.33	33.33
Lesbian / Gay Woman	100.00	0	0
Bisexual	50.00	0	50.00
Prefer Not to Say	57.14	0	28.58

Health Problem or Disability Lasting or Expected to Last for 12 Months or More

6 respondents or 3.51% chose not to say whether or not they had a long term disability or health condition.

35 or 20.475 of respondents said they had a long term health condition or disability and 130 or 76.02% said that they did not.

Proposal 1

Q1 The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme compared with what it spends on other services.

Most respondents either agreed with this proposal or were equivocal. Interestingly people without a long term disability or health problem were more likely to agree with this proposal than those with a disability or long term health problem.

Have a Health Problem or Disability	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
Yes	37.14	37.14	25.71
No	64.62	21.54	13.84

Proposal 2

The proposed change would mean that a claimant's net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.00 per week would not be entitled to a discount.

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Q2. Creating a model with seven income bands with a difference of 10% discount between bands.

Overall the majority of respondents considered this proposal fair or were equivocal and whether or not the respondent had a disability or health problem only a minority considered the proposal to be definitely unfair.

Have a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	51.43	8.57	34.30
No	51.97	18.89	23.62

Q3. Creating a scheme based on the net income of the claimant and their partner rather than upon needs

Overall the majority of respondents considered this proposal fair or were equivocal and whether or not the respondent had a disability or health problem only a minority considered the proposal to be definitely unfair.

Have a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	45.71	14.29	40.00
No	52.31	13.85	33.85

Q4. Providing the maximum discount for vulnerable disability groups.

Overwhelmingly respondents considered this to be a fair suggestion regardless of whether or not they themselves had a disability or long term health problem.

Have a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	85.72	8.57	5.71
No	74.61	10.77	13.09

Q5. Allowing households to retain their discount as long as their income remains in the relevant band

Overwhelmingly respondents considered this to be a fair suggestion regardless of whether or not they themselves had a disability or long term health problem.

Have a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	82.85	8.57	5.71
No	66.15	16.16	12.31

Q6. Allowing households with passported claims to be placed in Band 1 during the first year and then placing them in the appropriate net income band when they are reviewed or moved to Universal Credit

Most respondents considered this to be a fair suggestion or were equivocal regardless of whether or not they themselves had a disability or long term health problem.

Have a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	45.71	11.43	25.72
No	46.16	19.24	18.46

Proposal 3:

Q7. Disregarding Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, from the calculation of net income for banding.

Most respondents considered this to be a fair suggestion or were equivocal regardless of whether or not they themselves had a disability or long term health problem.

Have a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	59.99	0	33.43
No	53.08	13.85	25.38

Day to Day Activities are Limited Because of Respondent's Health Problem or Disability

28 people or 16.37% of respondents considered that their day-to-day activities were impaired by a health problem or disability; 136 people said that their day to day activities were not impaired and 7 people, 4.09% did not say whether or not their day to day activities were impaired by a health problem or disability.

Proposal 1

Q1 The Council should balance the amount spent on Council Tax Discount scheme compared with what it spends on other services.

The majority of respondents agreed with this suggestion or were equivocal regardless of whether or not their day to day activities were limited by health or disability.

Only a minority in each case disagreed with the proposal.

Day to Day Activities are Limited by a Health Problem or Disability	Agreed %	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed %	Disagreed %
Yes	42.85	28.57	27.57
No	61.76	24.26	13.97

Proposal 2

The proposed change would mean that a claimant's net income and that of their partner would determine their entitlement to a Council Tax Discount.

Households with a net income above £440.00 per week would not be entitled to a discount

Households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount based upon their income where the claimant or their partner also qualify for a Disability Premium will be placed in Band A and will be entitled to the maximum Council Tax Discount of 80%.

All other households qualifying for a Council Tax Discount will be placed in one of seven bands based upon their net income.

Q2. Creating a model with seven income bands with a difference of 10% discount between bands.

The majority of respondents either considered this to be a fair proposal or were equivocal regardless of whether or not their day to day activities were limited by disability or a long term health problem.

Day to Day Activities are Limited by a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	46.43	17.86	32.14
No	52.63	17.29	20.10

Q3. Creating a scheme based on the net income of the claimant and their partner rather than upon needs

The majority of respondents either considered this to be a fair proposal or were equivocal regardless of whether or not their day to day activities were limited by disability or a long term health problem.

Day to Day Activities are Limited by a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	46.43	10.71	42.85
No	47.06	14.71	33.83

Q4. Providing the maximum discount for vulnerable disability groups

Regardless of whether or not respondents' day to day activities were limited by disability or a long term health problem, the overwhelming majority considered this proposal to be either fair or were equivocal.

Day to Day Activities are Limited by a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	85.71	3.57	10.71
No	75.00	11.76	11.77

Q5. Allowing households to retain their discount as long as their income remains in the relevant band

Regardless of whether or not respondents' day to day activities were limited by disability or a long term health problem, the overwhelming majority considered this proposal to be either fair or were equivocal

Day to Day Activities are Limited by a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	78.57	7.14	14.28
No	67.65	16.17	10.26

Q6. Allowing households with passported claims to be placed in Band 1 during the first year and then placing them in the appropriate net income band when they are reviewed or moved to Universal Credit.

The majority of respondents either considered this to be a fair proposal or were equivocal regardless of whether or not their day to day activities were limited by disability or a long term health problem.

Day to Day Activities are Limited by a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	49.99	14.29	28.57
No	46.33	16.92	18.38

Proposal 3:

Q7. Disregarding Carer's Allowance, currently £62.10 per week for those providing 35 hours per week or more care and earning £110.00 or less net per week, from the calculation of net income for banding.

The majority of respondents either considered this to be a fair proposal or were equivocal regardless of whether or not their day to day activities were limited by disability or a long term health problem.

Day to Day Activities are Limited by a Health Problem or Disability	Fair %	Neither Fair nor Unfair %	Unfair %
Yes	53.57	0	39.29
No	54.41	13.23	24.26

Further Comments

58 respondents had provided further comments by 28 October. These included 2 respondents who said they had no further comments or not applicable.

The responses from the remaining 56 respondents are shown in the table below. Note that some respondents made more than one comment to make and the total number of comments therefore exceeds 56.

	Type of Comment						
	General Support	General Disagreement	Encourages People to Live on Benefits	Penalises those who Work / Provide Incentive to Work	Support for People with Severe disabilities / Pensioners	Not clear about how it will work/ Want more Evidence	Other
Number	8	15	8	8	7	13	14

The most frequent comments were related to disincentivising those who work and rewarding those who do not

Conclusions

Most of the respondents were either broadly in favour of the proposed Council Tax Discount Scheme regardless of their protected characteristics.

Two proposals were considered to be fair by less than 50% of respondents:

- that the scheme be based upon net income of the claimant and partner and
- that households with passported benefits remain in Band 1 for the first year or until re-assessed or moved to universal Credit

Where the proposal was considered to be unfair it was nevertheless considered to be so by fewer than 40% of respondents.

The proposals considered to be most fair were that the maximum discount should be provided for vulnerable disabled groups and that the discount should be retained providing that net income remains within the banding group.

The numbers of respondents in some of the categories of protected groups are very small and so although 100% of a particular group might consider a proposal to be unfair there were generally only 1 or 2 members of this particular protected group. The largest subgroup where 100% thought a proposal unfair were those describing their religion as "Other" and there were 6 respondents in this group, comprising 3.51% of the total number of respondents.

Whilst it may be possible to provide more definitive statistical analysis when the consultation has closed the very small numbers of respondents to date in most of the categories within each protected group suggest that there is no specific group defined as a protected group who could definitely be said to consider any of the proposals to be unfair.

Voluntary Sector Core Grants Full Equality Impact Assessment Report



1. Introduction

Following the local government finance settlement announced in December 2015 Bracknell Forest Council had to find additional revenue savings of £1.601m. This included a proposed 10% reduction in the core grants awarded by the council to the voluntary sector. These grants go to five organisations; Involve, Citizens Advice Bureau, Shopmobility, Victim Support and Berkshire Community Foundation.

The aim of this proposal is to make a saving of £38,181. The proposal is consistent with the messages in the Council Plan and the new narrative that the council must live within its means. It is also consistent with the guidelines within the DCLG Revised Best Value Guidance which says that authorities should seek to avoid passing on disproportionate reductions by not passing on larger reductions to the voluntary and community sector and small businesses than they take on themselves.

This Full Equality Impact Assessment Report looks at the issues, considerations and conclusions around the proposed 10% reduction to the voluntary sector core revenue grants. Each voluntary organisation has been asked to respond to the consultation and offered the opportunity for a meeting to discuss any concerns further.

This report shows that for the most part there will be a neutral impact on equalities. Where there are impacts it is anticipated that any of those that are adverse can be mitigated.

2. Background

Bracknell Forest Council is facing a very difficult budget with savings of £11m needed in the financial year 2016/17, and further savings of £26m needed over the next four years. In order to meet this challenge the council will be reviewing the cost, quality and delivery mechanism of all its services over the next 3 years.

Currently the core grant budget is £381,810 and this is awarded to five voluntary sector organisations:

- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) (**£185,880**)
- Involve Community Services (**£141,010**)
- Bracknell Shopmobility (**£32,800**)
- Victim Support (**£17,000**)
- Berkshire Community Foundation (BCF) (**£5,120**)

All the organisations effected have been consulted and have set out the impact on their organisation in the response to the consultation.

A brief overview of each organisation is set out below;

Involve Community Services

Involve are the central support organisation for voluntary, community and faith groups in Bracknell Forest. They provide this support in a number of ways:

- Infrastructure support: providing new and existing Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) organisations with constitutional, management, administrative, developmental and networking information and working as an activist and advocate of the sector.
- Training support: sourcing, brokering and providing training for volunteers and VCFS organisations.
- Funding support: on sources of grant funding and with applications
- Volunteer support: recruiting and matching volunteers to volunteering opportunities.

Citizen's Advice (CAB)

Bracknell and District Citizens Advice is an independent, voluntary organisation. They provide comprehensive advice to help people with a variety of problems, including benefits, work, debt and money, consumer, relationships, housing, discrimination, law and rights, tax, healthcare and education. They also offer specialist help in the areas of benefits, debt, employment and tax.

Shopmobility

Bracknell Shopmobility are a charity based in Bracknell town centre. Their aim is to assist people with mobility impairments, whether temporary or permanent to get around the town centre. They have a range of scooters and wheelchairs available for hire.

Berkshire Community Foundation (BCF)

Berkshire Community Foundation raises funds to support small voluntary and community groups. BCF grants totalled £902,000 in 2014/15, across Berkshire. Approximately £50,000 of that was awarded to groups in Bracknell Forest.

In March 2015, the Foundation's Community Capital Fund stood at £8,251,000.

Victim Support

Victim Support is the independent charity for people affected by crime and traumatic events in England and Wales. Their teams provide individual, independent, emotional and practical help to enable people to cope and recover from the effects of crime. Thames Valley Victim Support has a three year contract between Berkshire, Surrey and Sussex from the Police and Crime Commissioner, who is their main funder.

3. Methodology and Sources of Data

In order to understand the impact of the proposal a full 12 week consultation has been undertaken. A consultation questionnaire was developed and made available on line via the council's consultation software (Objective). A paper copy was provided to Shopmobility who have limited online access.

In addition to the questionnaire all the organisations were offered the opportunity for a meeting with the Head of Performance and Partnerships. This offer was taken up by BCF and CAB and meetings were held on 13 April and 14 April 2016 respectively. CAB also requested that the Assistant Chief Executive attend the meeting and this was arranged.

This was a targeted consultation aimed at the five organisations affected by the proposal; therefore access to the questionnaire was made available via a web link supplied directly to the organisations and was not available to the public.

The consultation ran between 24 February 2016 and 17 May 2016.

4. Assessment of Impact on Equality strands

It is expected that most protected characteristics will not be adversely or positively affected however CAB reported that they did not record information relating to all groups so some could still be affected disproportionately but they did not have specific evidence. The impact on the protected characteristics of a potential reduction of funding by 10% has been identified as follows:

Disability Equality

We have no evidence of an adverse impact on this group at this time however CAB reported that in 2014/15 22% of their clients identified as being disabled or having a long term health problem. This is larger than the 4.9% in the overall population but there are no specific negative impacts detailed. Shopmobility highlighted that people with disabilities might be affected as they are their core clients but did not specify how.

Racial Equality

We have no evidence of an adverse impact on this group at this time.

Gender Equality

We have no evidence of an adverse impact on this group at this time. CAB reported that 57% of their clients are female in comparison to 50.3% in the wider population but there are no specific negative impacts detailed.

Sexual Orientation Equality

We have no evidence of an adverse impact on this group at this time.

Gender Re-assignment Equality

We have no evidence of an adverse impact on this group at this time.

Age Equality

We have no evidence of an adverse impact on this group at this time. CAB reported that 20.6% of CAB clients were over 60 compared to 11.5% in the overall population but there are no specific negative impacts identified.

Religion and Belief Equality

We have no evidence of an adverse impact on this group at this time.

Pregnancy and Maternity Equality

We have no evidence of a negative impact on this group at this time.

Marriage and Civil Partnership Equality

We have no evidence of a negative impact on this group at this time.

Other groups (e.g. low income families, carers, armed forces etc)

Given the close correlation between debt and low income families, 16% of CAB client issues for 2014/15 related to debt and nearly one third of benefits queries related to working and child tax credits.

5. Monitoring Arrangements

Quarterly monitoring meetings are held with four of the five organisations, an annual meeting is held with Berkshire Community Foundation. These meetings will continue in 2016/17 and through these meetings the impact of a reduction in the grant will be monitored.

A Conditions of Grant document is agreed between the council and each organisation. This document sets out the service that the council expects to be delivered for the grant. If the decision is made to reduce the grants by 10% then these documents will need to be revised to reflect any changes the organisations need to make to accommodate the reduction.

6. Consultation & Engagement

A consultation was undertaken to fully understand the impact of the proposals for everyone concerned. There were 4 responses to the consultation, of which 1 was by email (Shopmobility), and 3 were received via the on line questionnaire (involve, BCF and CAB).

6.1 Summary of all Responses

Citizens Advice (CAB)

CAB responded to the online questionnaire saying that having considered all areas of the budget, there was little scope for finding savings in relation to non-pay costs, so to save cost savings equal to 10% would require a reduction in salary costs which could mean shorter opening hours or a reduction in services offered on some days. Fewer clients would be helped and less complex cases taken on including those requiring appeal and representation at tribunal. To help to minimise reductions in the service, in the face of the proposed cuts, the CAB are going to undertake a service review to ensure they are delivering the most effective service possible

Involve

Involve responded to the online questionnaire and explained that due to growing income in other areas they would be able to manage a 10% reduction with minimal impact on the organisation. They did highlight that the increased rental rates for accommodation in Bracknell town centre may make this more difficult to manage in the future, and the council is working with Involve to explore alternative accommodation options.

Shopmobility

An email response was received from the Chair of Shopmobility on 23 March 2016 advising that they had discussed the proposal and did not feel there would be a significant impact. However any further reductions in the future would need more serious consideration. They also returned the questionnaire by post but it did not add any information not already covered in the email.

Berkshire Community Foundation (BCF)

At the meeting held on 13 April 2016 BCF confirmed that a 10% reduction in grant from Bracknell Forest Council on its own would not have any significant impact. They did raise their concerns that they are experiencing a cumulative reduction to their core funding - specifically reductions in their core funding from Wokingham Borough Council and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The combined effect of these reductions may impact on their ability to award as many grants. Subsequent to the meeting BCF responded to the online survey saying that a reduction in core costs would impact on BCF's potential to award grants to small groups in Bracknell Forest.

Victim Support

No response received.

6.2 Next Steps

Should Council vote to approve this reduction in core grants on 13 July 2016 the following steps will be taken;

- 20 July 2016 – All organisations notified of the decision (following 5-day call in period after council on 13 July 2016)
- October 2016 – Q3 grant payment amounts adjusted accordingly
- January 2017 – Q4 grant payment amounts adjusted accordingly
- Ongoing – quarterly monitoring meetings with each organisation against the agreed Conditions of Grant documents.

In addition, a review of the core grants is being undertaken to identify where savings could be made for 2017/18 and beyond.

7 Publication of Equality Impact Assessment

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 aims to make public authorities more transparent, accountable and increase public debate and involvement. Under the Act the Council makes available to the public a vast amount of information via its Publication Scheme. All completed EIA screening forms are published and available to the public on a quarterly basis. The EIA's are usually published with the Executive papers.

8 Conclusions

A decision to reduce the core grants by 10% will have a largely neutral impact. For the CAB there may be some adverse impacts on disability, age and gender because of the profile of their clients but this is largely not disproportionate to the overall population of the borough

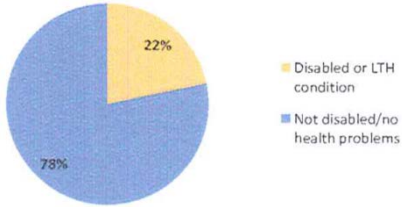
This proposal brings an anticipated annual saving of £38,181.

There may be a short term negative impact in the media, however there has been no negative coverage of the proposal and consultation. In the future, the review of core grants may generate some negative reaction.

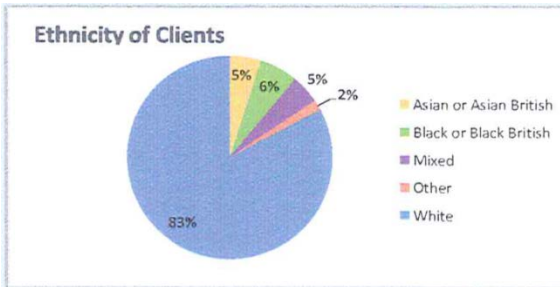
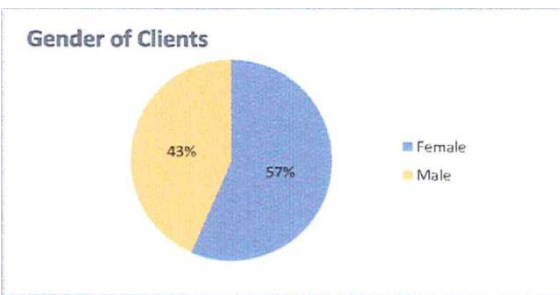

NOTE:

For reference the initial equalities screening record forms are attached below.

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form - CAB

Date of Screening: 04/02/2016	Directorate: Chief Executive's Office		Section: Performance & Partnerships						
1. Activity to be assessed	The proposal to reduce Bracknell Forest Council's annual grant to Citizen's Advice by 10% would reduce the annual grant from £185,880 to £161,292. If approved this would be a reduction of £18,588.								
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change								
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing								
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Genny Webb								
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Genny Webb, John Ainsworth, Kellie Williams, Vicky Kurlus								
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) help people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice.								
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	CAB provide advice to help people with a variety of problems, including benefits, work, debt and money, consumer, relationships, housing, discrimination, law and rights, tax, healthcare and education.								
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data						
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	May disproportionately affect residents who receive disability related benefits and who may be affected by forthcoming benefit changes.						
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Disability</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Disability Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disabled or LTH condition</td> <td>22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not disabled/no health problems</td> <td>78%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>				Category	Percentage	Disabled or LTH condition	22%	Not disabled/no health problems	78%
Category	Percentage								
Disabled or LTH condition	22%								
Not disabled/no health problems	78%								

145

<p>9. Racial equality</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No impact – CAB clients are representative of the overall makeup of the borough in terms of ethnic background.</p>	 <p>Ethnicity of Clients</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnicity</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>83%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black or Black British</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian or Asian British</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ethnicity	Percentage	White	83%	Black or Black British	6%	Asian or Asian British	5%	Mixed	5%	Other	2%																												
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Other	2%																																											
<p>10. Gender equality</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Although there are a slightly larger proportion of women accessing CAB services, this is unlikely to have a disproportionate impact.</p>	 <p>Gender of Clients</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Gender</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>57%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>43%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Gender	Percentage	Female	57%	Male	43%																																		
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<p>11. Sexual orientation equality</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No impact identified at this time</p>	<p>No particular sexual orientation will be disproportionately affected.</p>																																								
<p>12. Gender re-assignment</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No impact identified at this time</p>	<p>Gender re-assigned people will not be disproportionately affected.</p>																																								
<p>13. Age equality</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No impact on a specific age group – The majority of clients using the CAB service are of working age.</p>	 <p>Age range of clients</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Range</th> <th>Number of Clients</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>10-14</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>15-19</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>20-24</td><td>121</td></tr> <tr><td>25-29</td><td>201</td></tr> <tr><td>30-34</td><td>200</td></tr> <tr><td>35-39</td><td>244</td></tr> <tr><td>40-44</td><td>254</td></tr> <tr><td>45-49</td><td>228</td></tr> <tr><td>50-54</td><td>218</td></tr> <tr><td>55-59</td><td>143</td></tr> <tr><td>60-64</td><td>145</td></tr> <tr><td>65-69</td><td>116</td></tr> <tr><td>70-74</td><td>64</td></tr> <tr><td>75-79</td><td>54</td></tr> <tr><td>80-84</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>85-89</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>90-94</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>95-99</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Range	Number of Clients	10-14	1	15-19	13	20-24	121	25-29	201	30-34	200	35-39	244	40-44	254	45-49	228	50-54	218	55-59	143	60-64	145	65-69	116	70-74	64	75-79	54	80-84	29	85-89	17	90-94	8	95-99	2	0	0
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90-94	8																																											
95-99	2																																											
0	0																																											
<p>14. Religion and belief equality</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No impact identified at this time</p>	<p>No particular religion or belief will be disproportionately affected.</p>																																								

15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	There may be an impact on clients who use CAB to access advice on maternity benefits and rights, as this can be a time when new parents face added financial pressures.	Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process with CAB.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No impact. May be some minimal regarding advice given on divorce and related financial impact.	Marriage and civil partnership will not be disproportionately affected.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	Those on lower incomes may be affected as CAB provide financial information and guidance and a large proportion of their clients are people on lower incomes. Data will need to be gathered from the CAB during the consultation process.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	Further data needed from CAB as identified above.			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	No	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Provider information is needed regarding the impact of this proposal on the service and consultation data. Assessment of whether there are other services or organisations available to the affected service users that provide a similar service.			
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	<p>This funding reduction may have an impact on one or more groups with protected characteristics and therefore needs a full impact assessment.</p> <p>The council will carry out a full impact assessment and a 12 week consultation to determine the impact of this budget reduction on people with protected characteristics.</p>	
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.				
Action		Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria

Conduct a 12 week consultation and produce a full impact assessment	Feb-May 2016	Head of P&P	Production of full EIA report.
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	N/A		
26. Chief Officers signature.	Signature:	Genny Webb	Date: 16/02/2016

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form - Involve

Date of Screening: 04/02/2016	Directorate: Chief Executive's Office		Section: Performance & Partnerships
1. Activity to be assessed	The proposal to reduce Bracknell Forest Council's annual grant to Involve by 10% would reduce the annual grant from £141,010 to £126,909. If approved this would be a reduction of £14,101.		
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Genny Webb		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Genny Webb, John Ainsworth, Kellie Williams, Vicky Kurlus		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Involve are the central support organisation for voluntary, community and faith groups in Bracknell Forest.		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	Involve work to empower and strengthen Community Capacity in Bracknell Forest by promoting and supporting the development of the voluntary, community and faith sector. They aim to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community.		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	We need to look at the membership list regarding organisations dealing with disabilities. Involve run a supported volunteering service for people with disabilities that may be affected.
9. Racial equality	Y	N	May have an impact – depends which services are affected.
			Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Involve.

10. Gender equality	Y	N	May have an impact – depends on member organisations and the services that will be affected.	Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Involve.
11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	May have an impact depending of data.	Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Involve.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	No impact identified at this time– numbers are very small.	Gender re-assigned people will not be disproportionately affected.
13. Age equality	Y	N	Potential impact on volunteering – Significant proportion of volunteers are older.	Data on volunteering would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Involve.
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	Potential impact if the support provided to the Faith and belief forum is affected.	Information on how this may be affected would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Involve.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Pregnancy and maternity will not be disproportionately affected.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Marriage and civil partnership will not be disproportionately affected.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	Carers may be affected – more data would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Involve.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	Further data is needed from Involve as identified above.			

20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	No
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Provider information is needed regarding the impact of this proposal on the service and consultation data.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	<p>This funding reduction may have an impact on one or more groups with protected characterises and therefore needs a full impact assessment.</p> <p>The council will carry out a full impact assessment and a 12 week consultation to determine the impact of this budget reduction on people with protected characteristics.</p>
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Conduct a 12 week consultation and produce a full impact assessment	Feb-May 2016	Head of P&P	Production of full EIA report.
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	N/A		
26. Chief Officers signature.	Signature: Genny Webb		Date: 16/02/2016

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form - Shopmobility

Date of Screening: 04/02/2016	Directorate: Chief Executive's Office		Section: Performance & Partnerships	
1. Activity to be assessed	The proposal to reduce Bracknell Forest Council's annual grant to Shopmobility by 10% would reduce the annual grant from £32,800 to £29,520. If approved this would be a reduction of £3,280.			
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change			
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing			
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Genny Webb			
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Genny Webb, John Ainsworth, Kellie Williams, Vicky Kurlus			
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Bracknell Shopmobility is based in Bracknell Town Centre. They assist people with mobility impairments, temporary or permanent, to get around the locality.			
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	Shopmobility is designed to benefit individuals with mobility impairments so they are able to get around the town centre area using motorised scooters or wheelchairs.			
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.		What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
		Y	N	Adverse impact
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular ethnic group will be disproportionately affected.
9. Racial equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process to demonstrate the service is used equally by all genders.
10. Gender equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process to demonstrate the service is used equally by all genders.

11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular sexual orientation will be disproportionately affected.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Gender re-assigned people will not be disproportionately affected.
13. Age equality	Y	N	Adverse impact	Most clients are older people
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular religion or belief will be disproportionately affected.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Pregnancy and maternity will not be disproportionately affected.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Marriage and civil partnership will not be disproportionately affected.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	None			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	Further data needed from Shopmobility as identified above.			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	No	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Proportion of service users by gender. Proportion of service users by age group. Provider information is needed regarding the impact of this proposal on service and consultation data.			

22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	<p>Shopmobility has a total estimated income of £52,600 in 2016/17 and a total estimated expenditure of £54,950. A loss of 3,280 represents 6.2% of the total estimated budget for Shopmobility. A reduction in funding may have an impact on one or more groups with protected characteristics and therefore needs a full impact assessment.</p> <p>The council will carry out a full impact assessment and a 12 week consultation to determine the impact of this budget reduction on people with protected characteristics.</p>	
<p>23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.</p>				
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria	
Conduct a 12 week consultation and produce a full impact assessment	Feb-May 2016	Head of P&P	Production of full EIA report.	
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A			
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	N/A			
26. Chief Officers signature.	Signature: Genny Webb		Date: 16/02/2016	

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form - BCF

Date of Screening: 04/02/16		Directorate: Chief Executive's Office		Section: Performance & Partnerships	
1. Activity to be assessed		The proposal to reduce Bracknell Forest Council's annual grant to Berkshire Community Foundation by 10% would reduce the annual grant from £5,120 to £4,608. If approved this would be a reduction of £512.			
2. What is the activity?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change			
3. Is it a new or existing activity?		<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing			
4. Officer responsible for the screening		Genny Webb			
5. Who are the members of the screening team?		Genny Webb, John Ainsworth, Kellie Williams, Vicky Kurlus			
6. What is the purpose of the activity?		Berkshire Community Foundation (BCF) raise funds for, and make grants to, local charities and community groups across Berkshire.			
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?		BCF use their local knowledge to connect supporters to the groups and communities they want to help, to try and make sure their donations bring the greatest benefit to those most in need. Last year BCF supported a range of projects in Berkshire, addressing issues such as child poverty, unemployment, social isolation and homelessness.			
Protected Characteristics		Please tick yes or no		Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.		Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	
9. Racial equality		Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	
10. Gender equality		Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	
				What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data	
				People with a disability will not be disproportionately affected.	
				No particular ethnic group will be disproportionately affected.	
				No particular gender group will be disproportionately affected.	

11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular sexual orientation will be disproportionately affected.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Gender re-assigned people will not be disproportionately affected.
13. Age equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular age group will be disproportionately affected.
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular religion or belief will be disproportionately affected.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Pregnancy and maternity will not be disproportionately affected.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Marriage and civil partnership will not be disproportionately affected.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	None identified at this time.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	None			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	No	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	N/A			

22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	<p>A £512 reduction to the annual grant will not significantly impact on BCF's capacity to award grants to community groups. In March 2015, the Foundation's Community Capital Fund stood at £8,251,000 and grants totalled £902,000 in 2014/15, across Berkshire.</p> <p>The council will carry out a full impact assessment and a 12 week consultation to determine the impact of this budget reduction on people with protected characteristics.</p>	
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.				
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria	
Conduct a 12 week consultation and produce a full impact assessment.	Feb-May 2016	Head of P&P	Production of full EIA report.	
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A			
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	N/A			
26. Chief Officers signature.	Signature: Genny Webb			Date: 16/02/2016

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form – Victim Support

Date of Screening: 04/02/2016	Directorate: Chief Executive's Office		Section: Performance & Partnerships	
1. Activity to be assessed	The proposal to reduce Bracknell Forest Council's annual grant to Victim Support by 10% would reduce the annual grant from £17,000 to £15,300. If approved this would be a reduction of £1,700.			
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change			
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing			
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Genny Webb			
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Genny Webb, John Ainsworth, Kellie Williams, Vicky Kurlus			
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Victim Support is a national charity that works to support people who have been victims of crime. The office in Bracknell provides support to the Thames Valley area.			
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	The service is designed to benefit people who have been victims of crime.			
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data	
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	People with a disability will not be disproportionately affected.
9. Racial equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular ethnic group will be disproportionately affected.
10. Gender equality	Y	N	Depending on the type of crime, women could be disproportionately affected.	Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Victim Support to show if the service is used predominantly by women.

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11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular sexual orientation will be disproportionately affected.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Gender re-assigned people will not be disproportionately affected.
13. Age equality	Y	N	Depending on the type of crime, older people may be disproportionately affected.	Data would need to be gathered through the consultation process with Victim Support to show if the service is used predominantly by a particular age group.
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	No particular religion or belief will be disproportionately affected.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Pregnancy and maternity will not be disproportionately affected.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No impact identified at this time.	Marriage and civil partnership will not be disproportionately affected.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	None			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	Further data needed from Victim Support as identified above.			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	No	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Proportion of service users who are female Proportion of service users who are older			

22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	<p>Victim Support had a budgeted income of £40,522,000 and a budgeted expenditure of £45,663,000 nationally. Victim Support in Thames Valley is primarily funded by a contract with the Police and Crime Commissioner. Given the national context and financial position of the charity, a reduction of £1,700 may not have a significant impact on Victim Support services in Bracknell Forest, however more information is needed.</p> <p>The council will carry out a full impact assessment and a 12 week consultation to determine the impact of this budget reduction on people with protected characteristics.</p>
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Conduct a 12 week consultation and produce a full impact assessment	Feb-May 2016	Head of P&P	Production of full EIA report
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	N/A		
26. Chief Officers signature.	Signature: Genny Webb		Date: 16/02/2016

Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: June 2016	Directorate: Adult Social Care & Health	Section: Commissioning & Resources
1. Activity to be assessed	Drug & Alcohol Recovery Service	
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Jillian Hunt	
5. Who are the members of the EIA team?	Neil Haddock, Alison Cronin, Jillian Hunt	
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p>The current drug & alcohol service is due to be recommissioned. The service being commissioned will support residents of Bracknell Forest to access suitable and stable accommodation, remain in or return to education employment and training, support families to build resilience and avoid family breakdown, improve their health and well being and divert adults and young people from engaging in criminal behaviour. In this commissioning round, for the first time, young peoples services will be included making this an integrated service. This impact assessment will ensure that the changes to service delivery will not adversely impact any person using the services who falls into one of the nine Protected Characteristics Group as outlines in The Equality Act 2010.</p>	
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	Any resident of Bracknell Forest who misuses drugs and/or alcohol, their families, friends or carers.	
8. a Racial equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N There is neither a positive or neutral impact related to Racial Equality in respect of this activity. People from other racial backgrounds already access the current services and steps are taken to ensure that they do not feel excluded.
8. b What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc.	Nationally the ethnicity of people using our services is monitored. In 2015/16 90.6% of adults in treatment were white British. In previous years the percentage of white British has been higher at 93% which is more reflective of the ethnic breakdown of the population generally. People who use our services from other ethnic backgrounds have been involved in consultations.	
9. a Gender equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y √	N Women are already an under represented group within our treatment population. The impact of this activity should have a positive impact on this as the new service provider will be expected to increase the number of options for outreach services and also extend the opening hours for the service which will benefit all of the people who use our services.
9. b What evidence do you have to support this?	Only 29.9 % of the adults in treatment were female which is similar to the National picture in 2015/16. However this was an increase over the previous year when only 26% were female. For young people there are fewer females in treatment (19%).	
10. a Disability equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N There is a neutral impact related to disability equality in respect of this activity. The current services take into account learning, physical, sensory, and mental health disabilities when delivering services and this will continue to be the case.
10. b What evidence do you have to support this?	Information is available in a range of mediums, the building is accessible to people with physical disabilities and there is a mental health practitioner within the team. The new service provider will be expected to continue to ensure that this is the case. Currently less than 1% of our treatment population are disabled.	

	People who experience difficulties in accessing the service may be visited at home and transport is provided to allow them to access New Hope		
11. a Age equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N	There is a neutral impact in relation to age equality in respect of this activity. This service is for people who live in Bracknell and misuse drugs and/or alcohol. There is no upper age limit to using the services.
11. b What evidence do you have to support this?	Parents with young children who do not have child care arrangements in place can be seen in a separate building to ensure that children do not come into contact with the wider treatment population. Integrating the service will build more resilience. Nationally the drug using population is ageing and this is also the case locally. In 2015/16 8.9% of the adult treatment population were aged between 18 and 24 60.9 % 25-44, 20.4% were aged 45- 59 and 6.7 % were over 60. Of the young people in treatment during the same year 26% were 13 -14, 25% were 15, 32% were 16 and 18% were 17.		
12. a Religion and belief equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N	There is a neutral impact in relation to religion and belief equality in respect of this activity. Service providers are required to ensure that they take into account the differing needs in respect of religion or belief.
12. b What evidence do you have to support this?	As a service we celebrate different religions festivals with events which people who use the services can attend and learn more about customs and beliefs. Each year we hold an event to celebrate Dwali as this is a festival celebrated by staff members. Members of staff prepare authentic Indian food for people to sample and provide information on Dwali. We also ensure that the diaries that we provide to people who use the services contain the dates of all the major religious festivals.		
13. a Sexual orientation equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N	There is neither a positive or negative impact in relation to sexual orientation in respect of this activity. People are not excluded from services due to their sexual orientation.
13. b What evidence do you have to support this?	National data is collected in respect of sexual orientation to ensure that there is equality of access.		
14. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders) and on promoting good community relations.	There are specific services for carers and these will continue to form part of the new contract. There are specific outcomes in respect of reducing offending/re-offending.		
15. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	The focus on increasing the number of women in treatment as women are underrepresented in treatment which is a national trend.		
16. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	There is no difference in the impact on any of the nine protected characteristics groups as a result of the launch of this pilot.		
17. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N √	No
18. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?			

19. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N √	There is a neutral impact on eight of the nine protected characteristic group. There will be a positive impact in respect of female services users but there will not be an adverse impact related to this.
20. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Increase the number of outreach option available to increase the number of women accessing the service.	April 2017 – contract end	Commissioner/Service provider	An increase in the percentage of women accessing the service
Continue to ensure that the service providers provide the Council with equality monitoring data by protected characteristics.	Ongoing	Commissioner/Service provider	Regular equality monitoring reports
21. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Adult Social Care & Health, Substance Misuse Strategy		
22. Have any current actions to address issues for any of the groups or examples of good practice been identified as part of the screening?	No		
23. Chief Officers signature.	Signature:		Date:
24. Which PMR will this screening be reported in?			

When complete please send to abby.thomas@bracknell-forest.gov.uk for publication on the Council's website.

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TO: EXECUTIVE
14 FEBRUARY 2017

LEARNING IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK
Director of Children, Young People & Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Historically the LA has not used its statutory powers with under performing schools.
- 1.2 The strategy needs updating to ensure the Headteacher and Governing body, on the leadership team of a school are held accountable for pupil outcomes through implementation of DfE guidance.
- 1.3 The purpose of the report is for the Executive to agree the development of the Learning Improvement Strategy Framework.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **For the Executive to AGREE the Learning Improvement Strategy Framework.**
- 2.2 **To agree the process of consultation and co-production of the Learning Improvement Strategy Framework.**
- 2.3 **To commence using statutory powers and intervention as stated within the Schools Causing Concern: Statutory guidance for local authorities, Department for Education (DfE) 2016 from 1 March 2017.**
- 2.4 **To consider governance arrangements for this statutory action.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 All LAs have a legal duty to promote high standards and the fulfilment of children and young people's potential. Under section 13A of the Education Act 1996 LAs must:
 - Promote high standards in schools and other providers
 - Ensure fair access to opportunity for education and training
 - Promote the fulfilment of learning potential
- 3.2 Additionally the Children Act 2004 established a statutory chief officer post (Director of Children's Services (DCS) and Lead Member for Children in every upper tier LA, with responsibilities for education as well as social care services. In respect of education the DCS must ensure:
 - Fair access to schools for every child
 - Provision of suitable home to school transport
 - Promote a diverse supply of strong schools
 - Promote high quality early years provision
 - Access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure time activities
 - Children and young people participate in decision making
 - Participation of children and young people in education or training
- 3.3 The proposed Learning Improvement Strategy Framework ensures working in partnership with schools to fulfil our statutory duties.

- 3.4 The Local Authority is consistently praised and recognised in Ofsted reports for its level of support to schools. It is now necessary to build on this work and ensure that DfE guidance with regard to schools causing concern is followed fully.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 Currently 67.2% of pupils are in good or better primary school. This places the LA 152 out of 152.
- 5.2 Secondary schools appear in a stronger position with 100% of pupils being in a good or better school.
- 5.3 Currently there are a number of schools that are vulnerable based upon pupil outcomes in July 2016.
- 5.4 The gap for disadvantaged pupils is not narrowing across all Key Stages.
- 5.5 The LA has a clear duty to intervene when standards in a school are not good enough. This duty is informed by Schools Causing Concern: Statutory guidance for local authorities, Department for Education (DfE) 2016. Triggers for intervention in a school can include:
- Unacceptably low standards – standards below the floor for either attainment or progress
 - Low standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils
 - A sudden drop in performance
 - Historic performance
 - Standards are unacceptably low in relation to expected outcomes or pupils' prior attainment
 - Standards at the school are below the expected standards of schools in similar circumstances
 - A serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed, where standards are, or are likely to be prejudiced
 - Evidence of very poor financial management
 - Circumstances where the safety of pupils and/or staff are compromised
- 5.6 When intervention is necessary the LA will work with school leaders (including governors) to develop a robust action plan that will achieve rapid progress. The LA will support and challenge the school to achieve progress against this action plan. Where underperformance persists and is not being rapidly addressed by school leaders a range of intervention approaches will be deployed.
- 5.7 Where school leadership is deemed to be weak and there is a lack of engagement with support that is offered, the LA will use the full range of statutory powers at its disposal to secure improvement. This could include the following: a pre warning notice, warning notice, additional governors, removal of the Governing Body and implementation of an Interim Executive Board to replace it.
- 5.8 The Council's priority is raising attainment and ensuring all school leaders provide high quality education for their pupils. This applies to all Bracknell Forest schools.

- 5.9 In the case of underperforming academies, the LA will liaise directly with the DfE's Academies Division, The Regional Schools Commissioner and the Education Funding Agency. The concerns will be raised following the same process as articulated in the Learning Improvement Strategy Framework, however, any follow up action will be led by The Regional Schools Commissioner.
- 5.10 Additionally the Council may use its democratic mandate to call academy leaders of underperforming schools to council scrutiny committees to account for performance in their schools to the elected representatives of the citizens of Bracknell Forest.
- 5.11 Schools will be aware of the key focus areas and how they can work in partnership with the LA.
- 5.12 There will be increased accountability of senior leaders including governors resulting in improved outcomes for all young people.
- 5.13 The LA is currently developing a strong package of support services to help schools deliver outcomes for children under this Framework.

6 RISKS

- 6.1 The new framework is preventing schools going into decline. If procedures are not followed rapidly then some schools may be inspected by Ofsted, fail an inspection and therefore become forced academies.
- 6.2 The current restructure of the School Improvement Team could result in not having all roles recruited to by April 2017 to carry out the required support and challenge as outlined in this Framework.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 S 13 A Education Act 1996 places the LA under a duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in its schools and learning institutions in respect of education and training of children and young people. This Section applies to all children and young people up to age 20 and young people between 20 and 25 who have an education health and care plan maintained by the LA. Following the Children and families Act a pupil is classed as a child until statutory school leaving age then until, age 25 as a young person for the purpose of educational functions under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The LA has set out the powers at its disposal to make improvements , where necessary , within the main body of the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 7.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this report.

8 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 8.1 Representatives from Headteacher groups, all senior leaders within Children, Young People & Learning.

Method of Consultation

- 8.2 Meeting and workshops.

Background Papers

Appendix A - Learning Improvement Strategy

Contact for further information

Rachel Morgan, Children, Young People & Learning - 01344 354037
rachel.morgan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Learning Improvement Strategy

Unlocking Opportunities for all Children

Foreword

This strategy sets out clearly how we will all work together to make a real, positive and lasting difference for all children in Bracknell Forest. It recognises what we have achieved so far through joint working but it also poses us a clear and real challenge on how to take our collective leadership and involvement to the next level. Bracknell Forest is a Borough where there will be much change in the years ahead both in terms of regeneration and new housing. We need to be sure that our children are well placed to take full advantage of all of the opportunities on offer to be active, fulfilled and engaged citizens of the future.

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Cllr Gareth Barnard
Executive Member
Children, Young People & Learning

January 2017

As Director of Children, Young People and Learning, it is my great pleasure to be part of ***Unlocking opportunities for all children***, the learning improvement strategy.

This document sets the key priorities for children and young people up to the age of 25. It is rooted in a determination to make Bracknell Forest a great place to be a child.

We want the best start in life for all children in Bracknell Forest. This will be achieved through inspirational leadership which will ensure high quality school places for all of our children. A curriculum that is designed to allow children to develop their talents, maximises potential and empowers them to lead independent lives into adulthood. We want children to be proud to succeed and to experience an education that meets their individual needs. We know that this will ensure that children thrive in their learning and no-one is left behind.

We want the best possible outcomes and the brightest future for all children. Therefore we must all ensure that children enter adulthood confident and equipped to meet life's challenges and opportunities. **Working together towards a better future for all children**

Nikki Edwards
Director
Children, Young People & Learning



How are we doing and what next?

To improve the overall attainment of Bracknell Forest schools to above national average and above the mid-point of our statistical neighbour group by 2018.

171

To significantly narrow gaps in attainment for vulnerable groups, ensuring their attainment is at least comparable to similar children in the rest of the country

100% of secondary schools are now good or better. 74% of primary schools are good or better which is below the national average of 86%. Pupil outcomes at the end of the EYFS, Year 1 phonics screening check and KS1 are above national averages. Pupil outcomes at KS2 are broadly average for the combined score for reading, writing and mathematics at 52% compared to 53% nationally. Progress measures are -0.2 for Reading, + 0.1 writing and - 0.8 mathematics. Outcomes at KS4 are broadly in line with national with the Attainment 8 score at 51.2 compared to 49.8 nationally. The Progress 8 score is 0.09 compared to -0.03.

Narrowing the gap remains a key concern as the gap across all stages is wider than national in all subjects.

How are we doing and what next?

To raise aspirations for the most able pupils in all subjects.

Outcomes at the end of KS1 are positive for the most able pupils with the percentage of pupils achieving greater depth in all subjects being above predicted national benchmarks. Outcomes at the end of KS2 for most able pupils are broadly average in the combined reading, writing and mathematics score. The percentage of pupils at A Level attaining (A*-B) increased from 50% to 53% in 2016.

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To have no schools failing to meet the national floor standard

One primary school is below the national floor standard Two primary schools and one secondary are deemed to be coasting based upon 2016 criteria



All children have the Opportunity to.....

Access inspirational leadership

Recognising equality
for all pupils

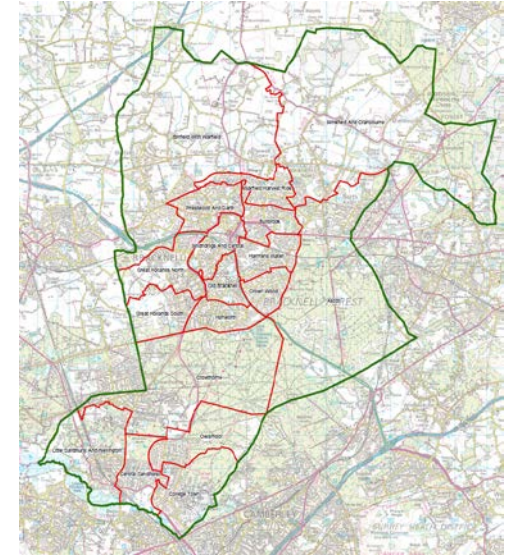
Ensure values and a
moral purpose that is
focussed on providing
a world class
education for the
pupils they serve

Ensure leaders
develop at all levels
within schools and
settings, including
governance

Commitment to the
children locally and
across Bracknell Forest
to develop a strong
community of learners

Progress and
attainment at all stages of
learning will be above
national average, ultimately
first quartile
of all authorities
nationally

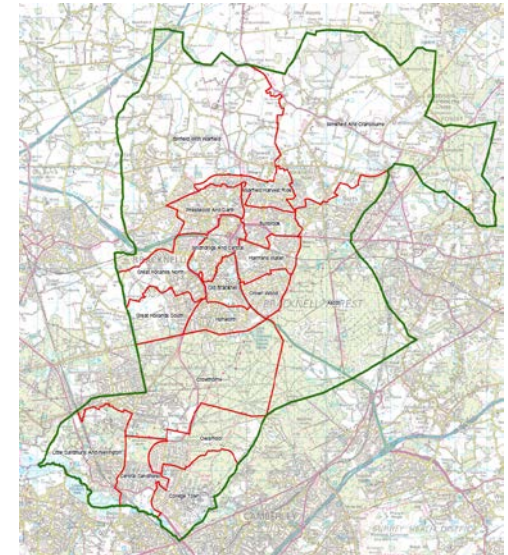
All children at every
stage in their
learning, achieve
age-related
expectations



All children have the Opportunity to.....

Get the best start in life

175



All children have the Opportunity to.....

Access a high quality school place

Alternative provision with focussed pathways for children who require non mainstream education

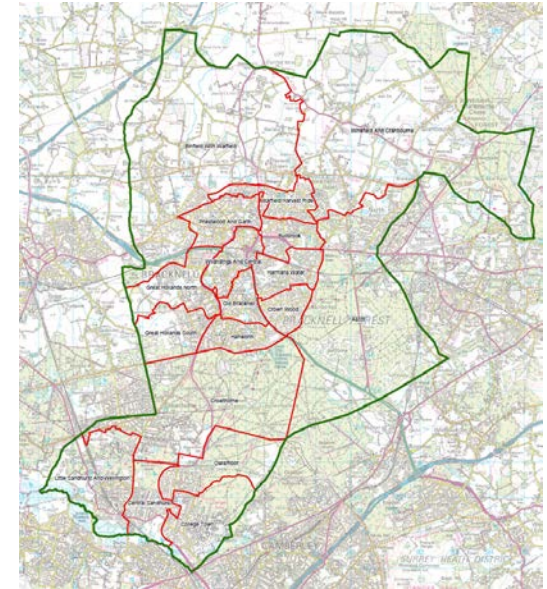
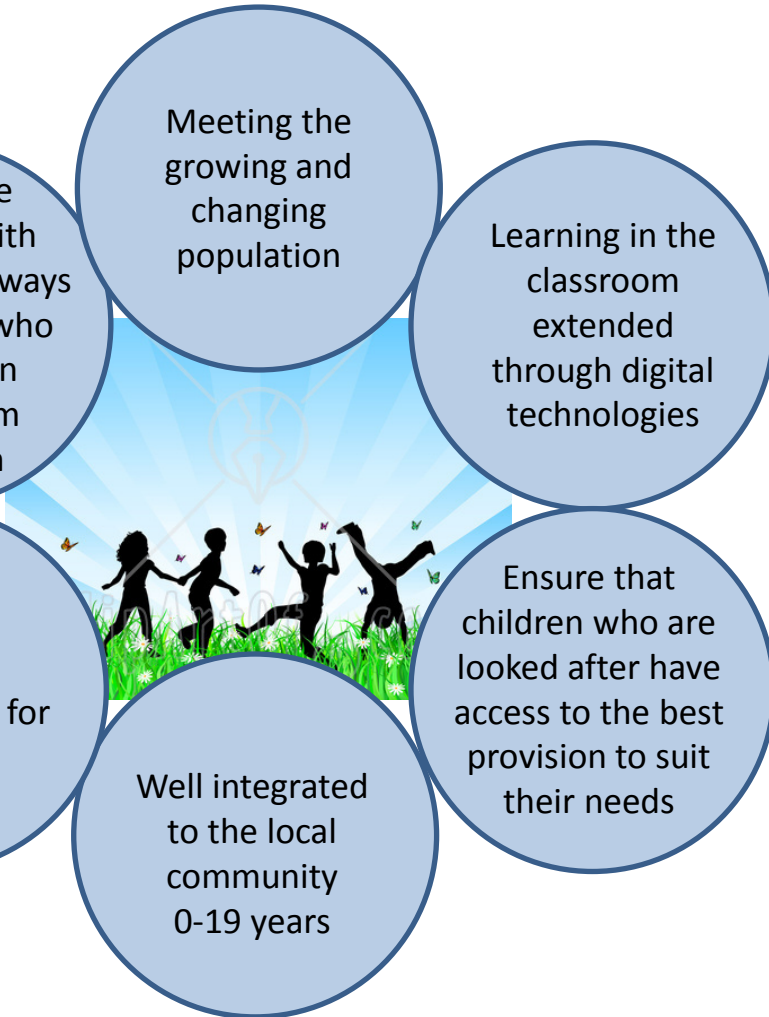
Meeting the growing and changing population

Learning in the classroom extended through digital technologies

Safe and inspiring environment for learning

Well integrated to the local community 0-19 years

Ensure that children who are looked after have access to the best provision to suit their needs



All children have the Opportunity to.....

Experience a curriculum that develops talent, maximises potential and empowers transition into adulthood

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Provide a relevant health and wellbeing service to ensure children and young people are safe and empowered to make the best choices for life

Work with schools and settings to promote quality first teaching including attracting staff through recruitment and retention initiatives

Children experience a relevant, engaging and enriching curriculum

In partnership, develop, sign post and promote professional development to strengthen teaching to deliver deeper learning in children of all ages including career advice
Post 16

Safeguard children and young people; Children are ready to learn, attending school

Recognise and encourage the voice for children and young people to inform curriculum innovations



All children have the Opportunity to.....

Thrive in learning and not be 'left behind'

Children have access to career opportunities in their adulthood

Barriers to learning are addressed, ensuring no child is 'left behind'

Everyone holds consistently high expectations for all learners

YOUR
*Learning
Journey*



Strive to ensure education in Bracknell Forest is equitable. The same opportunities for all, regardless of background

Circumstances of birth or upbringing will not impact on the educational achievement of our children

Children are supported to be resilient and empowered (to lead independent lives)



All children have the Opportunity to.....

Be proud to succeed

179

Ensure the LA know each school through designing and delivering a service package that can be tailored for each school to offer bespoke support

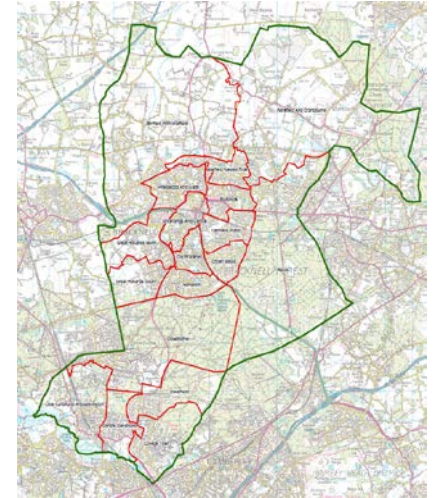
Support and challenge schools through detailed knowledge of each school, including data analysis

Grow a talent base of the strongest leaders who can inspire staff and drive improvement

Celebrate and share the best practice, recognising success

Develop targeted, traded offer that provides training, events and opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge

Grow and strengthen collaborative relationships between settings, schools, businesses, teaching schools and LA



Ofsted judgements will place Bracknell Forest first regionally and in the top quartile nationally

Children from more disadvantaged backgrounds in Bracknell Forest will achieve and attain the same standard as their non-disadvantaged peers nationally

All young people will have the opportunity to attend a good or outstanding local provision

All children and young people in Bracknell Forest will be equipped with the skills and abilities to prepare for the next phase in their learning journey and adulthood

Unlocking these opportunities will create success

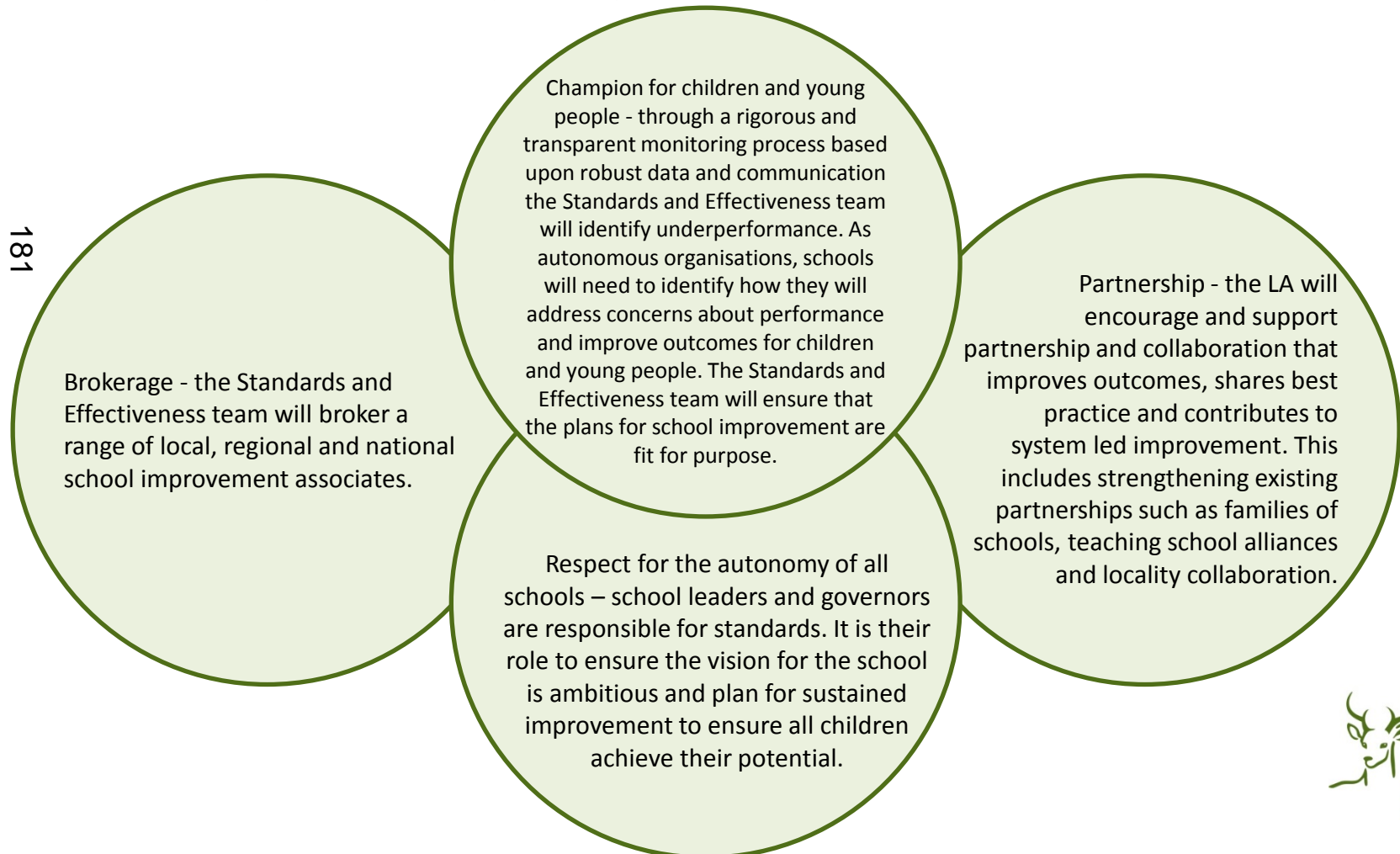
Bracknell Forest acknowledged as a place where all children are proud to succeed

Values and a moral purpose that is focussed on providing a world class education for all Bracknell Forest pupils

The Bracknell Forest approach to School Improvement

The LA has a range of statutory duties in order to promote high standards and fulfilment of children and young people's potential. The Learning and Achievement team leads on the council's statutory duties regarding school improvement. All LA work will be subject to quality assurance.

The LA's school improvement activity is underpinned by a number of core functions:



LA Role in Monitoring and Challenge

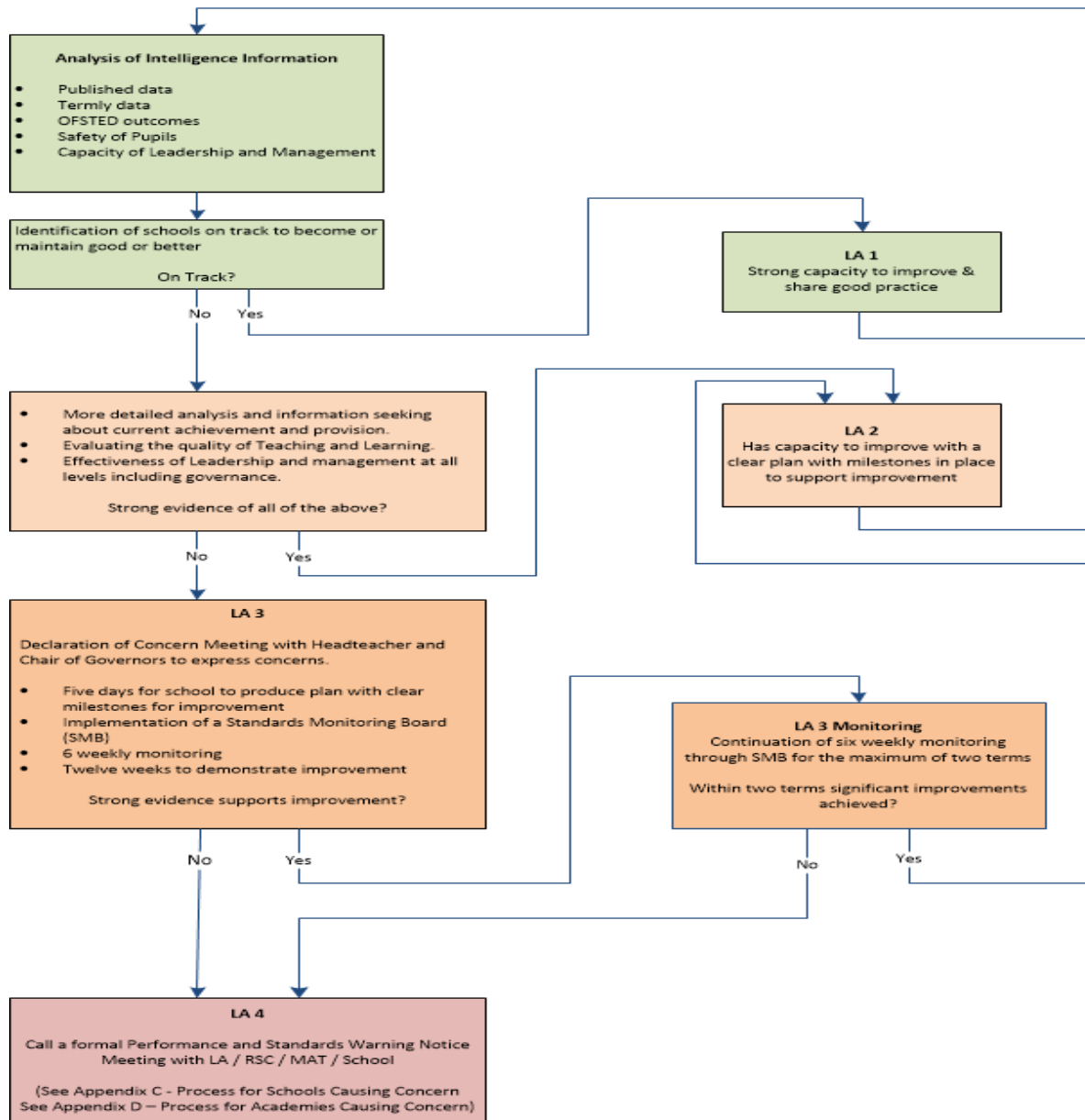
The LA has a clear duty to intervene when standards in a school are not good enough. This duty is informed by Schools Causing Concern: Statutory guidance for local authorities, Department for Education (DfE) 2016. Triggers for intervention in a school can include:

- Unacceptably low standards – standards below the national standard for either attainment or progress
- Low standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils
- A sudden drop in performance
- Historic performance
- Standards are unacceptably low in relation to expected outcomes or pupils' prior attainment
- Standards at the school are below the expected standards of schools in similar circumstances
- A serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed, where standards are, or are likely to be prejudiced
- Evidence of very poor financial management
- Circumstances where the safety of pupils and/or staff are compromised

Each school and academy will have an attached Standards and Effectiveness Partner (STEP) who will work with senior leaders including governors to review the school's progress each term. The LA category and support package will be clearly identified with the school and STEP on a termly basis.

The following flow charts specify actions to be taken by the LA should the need arise.

The Local Authority role in Monitoring and Intervention to ensure High Standards in all Schools



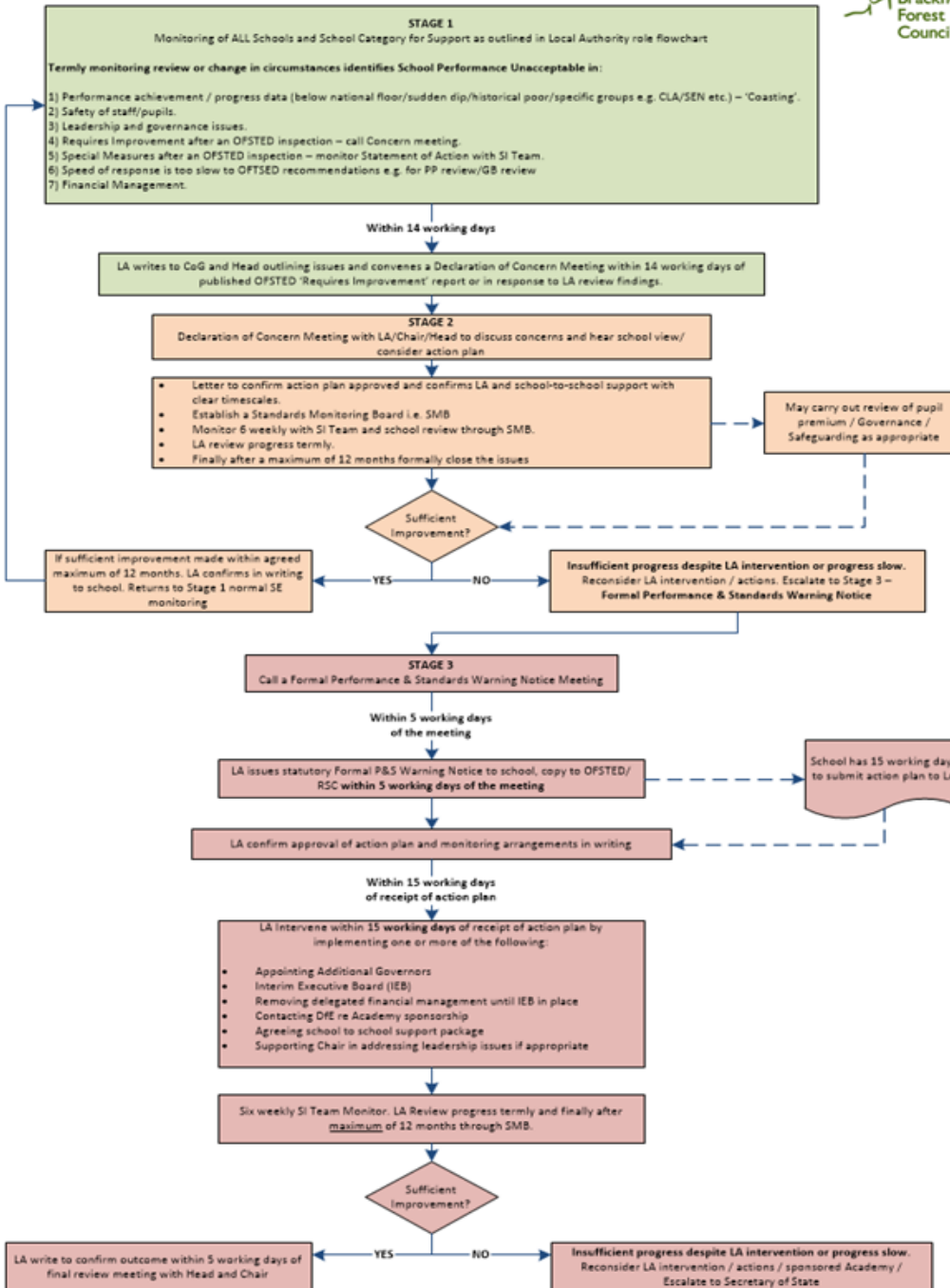
How the LA Categorises Schools and the Levels of Support Available

Categorisation and Level of Support

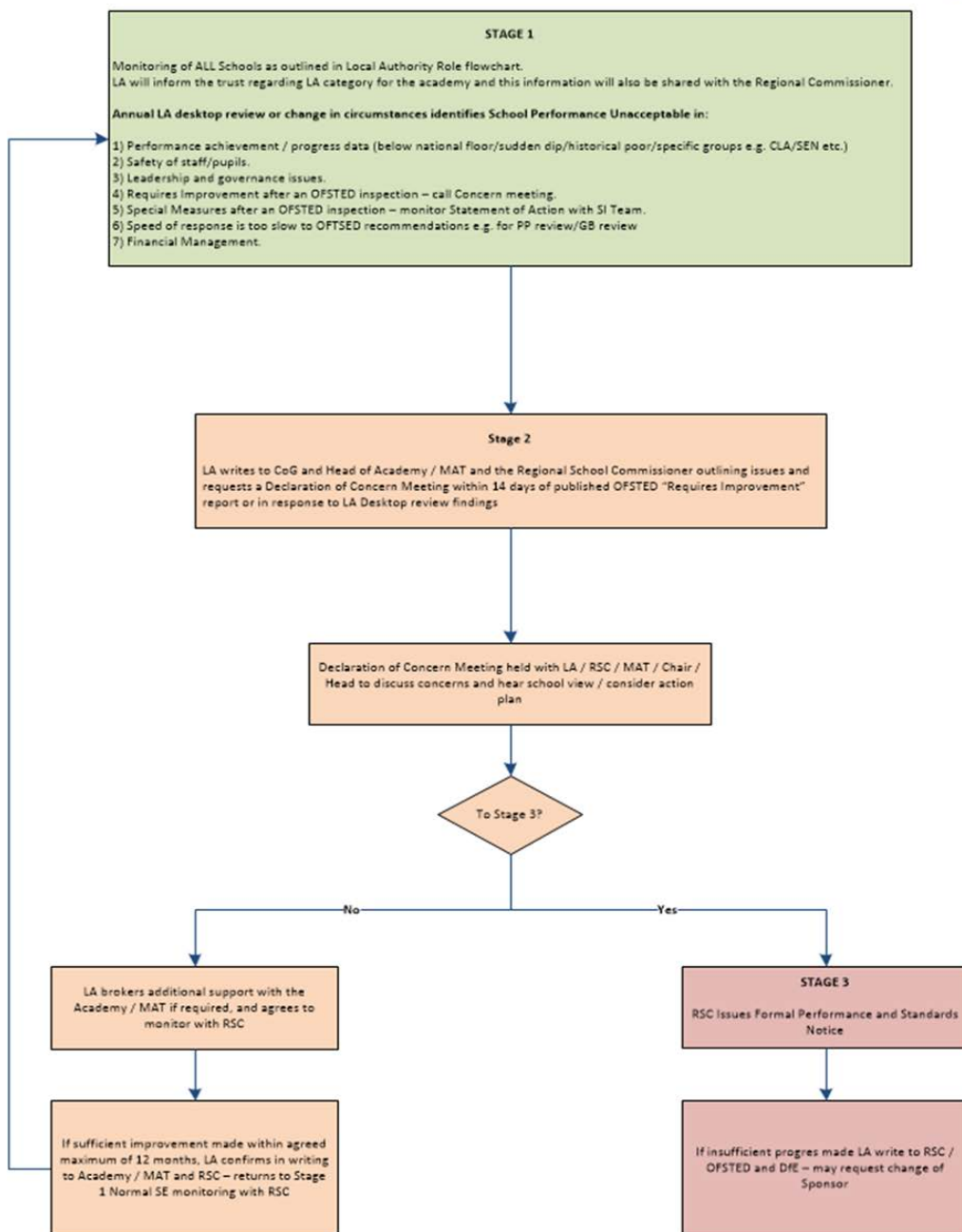
1	A school with no issues of concern will be in Category 1. Such a school will be judged to be capable of self-improvement on the basis of termly monitoring. Such schools are likely to have been judged as outstanding by Ofsted or have very many outstanding features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The support of a School Improvement Adviser each half term. To be invited to participate in action research. To be encouraged to lead by example in embedding outstanding aspirations across the borough and offer support to other schools. To support sector lead improvement.
2	A school with very few issues of concern will be in Category 2. These will be in the nature of an alert, where speedy resolution is judged to be likely. Such schools are likely to have been judged good with some outstanding features by Ofsted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The support of a School Improvement Adviser each half term. To have additional support brokered by the LA as required. To be encouraged to be actively involved in clusters, networks or alliances which offer mutual support. To be asked to offer support to other schools and share good practice where the school has particular capacity to do so.
3	<p>Schools are deemed to require an enhanced level of support and monitoring if, as a result of LA monitoring or external inspection, up to three issues have been identified from the following list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage is lower than might have been expected and/or is below floor standards. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The school falls substantially below its published targets, or consistently sets unchallenging targets. Inadequate access to learning opportunities hinder the learning of pupils with a disability or special educational need. The LA is receiving significant complaints from parents, staff, governors or pupils. The School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP) is seriously deficient. The exclusion rate in the school is considerably high. Pupil attendance is unsatisfactory. A substantial number of reported racial harassment incidents. Concerns regarding health & safety or pupil welfare. The effectiveness of the Governing Body is of concern. The behaviour of pupils in the school is adversely affecting pupils' learning and progress. High staff absence or turnover, or low staff morale. The school's budget setting process and management of resources are causing concern. Any additional factor which has an adverse impact on educational standards e.g. bullying. <p>Such schools are likely to have been judged as 'requiring improvement' (possibly with some good features) by Ofsted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A formal meeting 'Declaration of Concern' will take place between the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the Director of Children, Young People and Learning or his/her representative (normally the relevant responsible officer) and the Head of Standards and Effectiveness. School will provide a plan to tackle the identified weaknesses and establish clear milestones for improvement. School will be monitored through a Standards Monitoring Board (SMB) every 6 weeks. School be will given 12 weeks to show improvement against agreed actions. If no improvement become an LA category 4. If school is showing improvement then will continue to be monitored for another 12 weeks. Impact evaluated to ensure school is on track to being judged good at its next inspection. If school has not made progress pre warning letter sent and move to a category 4. The support of a School Improvement Adviser on a fortnightly basis for a term. To monitor the impact of the School Improvement Plan and observe Teaching and Learning through lesson observations, data analysis and book scrutinies. Additional support will be brokered as appropriate between the LA and school. To participate in (LAMI's) LA Monitoring inspections with LA officers. For the school to be discussed at Schools Causing Concern meetings to ensure LA officers understand the challenges facing the school and release the appropriate level of support. To receive support from experts in other schools – NLEs, LLEs, SLEs – school will have to pay for this support. To receive support from good and outstanding schools, including academies, which can be brokered by the LA. To receive access to some courses in the LA's CPD offer free of charge.
4	<p>Schools will be judged to require a higher level of support and monitoring if, in the light of enhanced monitoring at Category 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns are not being addressed within the agreed time scale, or; There are more than three areas causing concern (as defined under Category 3), or; There are serious concerns about the effectiveness of the senior management, or; <p>Ofsted inspection has resulted in the school being identified as one requiring significant improvement and assessed as having 'serious weaknesses'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a school is causing concern, it could also expect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> issue of warning notice de-delegation of the school's budget establishment of an Interim Executive Board (IEB) appointment of additional governors forced academisation For a school issued with serious weaknesses or special measures the LA will produce an action plan to be submitted to Ofsted within the required timescale. To be supported to establish structural solutions (such as federation or collaboration). To be supported to establish academy status with a sponsor that is right for the school. To receive support for establishing effective senior leadership, this may involve establishing interim or acting up arrangements.

Category Level of Support	Meaning	Which Schools this generally supports
1	Very light touch	Outstanding
2	Light touch	Good or Requires Improvement with leadership judged as good
3	High level of monitoring	Good or requires improvement
4	Intensive monitoring	Requires improvement or inadequate

Flowchart of the Process for Schools Causing Concern



Flowchart of the Process for Academies



**TO: EXECUTIVE
14 FEBRUARY 2017**

**LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2017 - 2020
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Council retains a number of significant duties in respect of flood risk management. Bracknell Forest Council identified as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) must comply with the Floods and Water Management Act (FWMA) (2010) and manage present and future flood risk holistically and in a sustainable manner.
- 1.2 The FWMA places responsibilities on Lead Local Flood Authorities to maintain and update an Asset Register, to designate structures, to investigate flooding incidents and to be the responsible authority for Surface Water flooding and Groundwater flooding.
- 1.3 The preparation of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) is also one of the key duties placed on the LLFA. The current LFRMS is dated 2013 – 2016 (version 1) and has therefore required review and update for 2017 – 2020 (version 2) – see Annex 1.
- 1.4 Balanced against a backdrop of increased national public awareness of flooding (most notably due to the widespread floods of winter 13/14) and decreasing resource levels the LFRMS must be used to determine how flood risk is to be managed in a way that is proportionate to the local level of risk. The borough has been classified as at low risk of flooding (from fluvial, groundwater or surface water) and we are fortunate enough not to have the significant flood related issues that some of our neighbouring authorities have.
- 1.5 Progress with respect to meeting objectives has been perhaps slower than anticipated but delivery of our requirements under the FWMA has to be done so proportionate to the level of risk. Since the production of the initial LFRMS document resource levels to deal with flood related issues within the community are now at 50% as one of the drainage engineer posts was made redundant in April 2016. The borough does not have a specific flood risk manager and the flood risk management function is within ECC, in the emergency planning, highways asset management and the development management team.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Executive approves the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017-2020 attached as Annex 1 prior to issue.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure the Council meets its statutory obligation with respect to the duties placed upon it as LLFA.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 As LLFA the Council has a duty to continue to deliver the requirements of the FWMA, including the LFRMS. There are no alternative options.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 In order to ensure that the LFRMS works towards meeting the criteria of managing flood risk we have identified three overarching principles of MAINTAINANCE, IMPROVEMENT and PREVENTION. These are supported via 9 specific objectives (page 11 of the LFRMS) and action plan highlights how these objectives will continue to be delivered (page 12 of the LFRMS).
- 5.2 Formal engagement with the Environment Agency is more limited due the national changes in responsibility and the LLFA becoming responsible for surface water and ground water flooding, however we do liaise with them with respect to specific local operational issues and in discussion for potential schemes. Likewise operational contact with Thames Water has been variable in the past but has improved due to a change in personnel.
- 5.3 The main forum for monitoring the objectives is via the internal flood liaison meeting which meets twice a year. In addition opportunities are also sought to progress objectives via internal engagement with relevant services, as examples recent activities include a focus around the approach to enforcement and consideration of water quality within the Borough. We will encourage Parishes to be self enabling and where they wish to work with us on a one to one basis to address specific concerns and potential schemes we will do so under the engagement objective. Winkfield PC is very proactive in this area.
- 5.4 There have been no significant updates or changes with the exception of Schedule 3 of the FWMA which related to a SuDs approval board, this was abandoned by the Government in December 2014. The FWMA sought to ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems were adopted and maintained by Local Authorities so as to reduce the risk of failure of systems due to maintenance. Instead changes were implemented via the National Planning Policy Framework. The Environment Agency are now only a Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications which fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3. From April 2016 the LLFA became the statutory consultee for all Major Developments, with a duty to consider sustainable drainage provisions. The duty to adopt SUDS schemes has been removed and SUDS will remain largely in private ownership. The developer may maintain the SUDS themselves or get a third party to maintain the system
- 5.5 The Strategy has also been updated with additional signposting to Environment Agency flood warnings, surface water flood maps and fluvial flood zones which will assist residents if they are trying to find out information. Over recent years the Council has received an increase in calls where residents are trying to source information about flooding within their area, this relates to both house sales and insurance premiums.
- 5.6 The updated strategy has been circulated to Thames Water, the Environment Agency and to the Parishes for consultation and comment by the end of January 2017.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 Not applicable to this report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 Not applicable to this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 An EIA has been completed in relation to Version 1 of the LFRMS.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 Not applicable to this report.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 Parish Councils, Risk Management Authorities. Consultation to take place during December.

Method of Consultation

7.2 Web site.

Representations Received

7.3 Not applicable at this time.

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Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017-2020





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Version	Date	Amendments
Version 1.1	March 2015	Amendments to the original version to take into account of the changes regarding the Suds process.
Version 2	Dec 2016	Revised and updated version 2017-2020

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Foreword

Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) recognises that flooding is an important matter for residents, businesses and road users.

Flooding can have a significant detrimental impact on the lives of residents and others. Homes can be ruined along with valuable possessions - potentially resulting in residents feeling constantly vulnerable in their own homes wondering when the next incident might take place. Traffic can be badly affected, bringing great inconvenience to road users and potential damage to vehicles and roads. Important recreational sites may be inaccessible to residents for long periods of time perhaps resulting in the disruption of normal family life.

This strategy explains what is being done to manage 'local flood risk' against a background of more limited resources. It provides information about the forms of flooding and the organisations involved. It explains the roles and responsibilities of the major organisations involved in flood risk. It also highlights and summarises the information available on flooding in the Borough so that it is more easily accessible and therefore can be used more effectively.

The primary focus of this strategy is local flooding. To members of the public suffering from flooding its cause is irrelevant, but each source of flooding may have a number of different organisations responsible for it. This strategy seeks to clarify how organisations will work together and establish objectives set for the next three years. These objectives will be achieved dependant upon information and resources that are available, where the risk is greatest and in relation to what funding can be attained.

Assessing levels of risk from flooding is a difficult task. We propose to take a pragmatic approach to flood risk and ensure we do nothing to make it worse and where possible take steps to reduce the impact in the future. In working with others, the council will also utilise its own assets such as highways, parks and countryside and amenity land to optimise their use in reducing the impact of flooding. Our sustainable planning policies and highway network management and design will also ensure new developments take full account of flooding risks.

Extreme weather events which cause flooding are clearly not something that can be controlled and the objectives identified in this strategy seek to manage flood risk, since it cannot be removed entirely.

This strategy is a statement of intent as to what the council as a whole is working towards to manage flood risk within the Borough, and its implementation is intended to be of tangible benefit to local residents and businesses and to those passing through our borough.

Councillor Iain McCracken
Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection

Cllr Chris Turrell
Executive Member for Planning and Transportation

 **Mr Mrs Dorothy Hayes, MBE**
Executive Member for Environment



1 Introduction and objectives

1.1 The purpose of this strategy

The Government introduced the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 which identified Local Authorities as the “lead local flood authority”, enabling them to manage local risk in a more coordinated way. The responsibilities relate to local flood risk, namely from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses (smaller rivers, streams and ditches). Flood risk from all other rivers (known as main rivers) remains the responsibility of the Environment Agency.

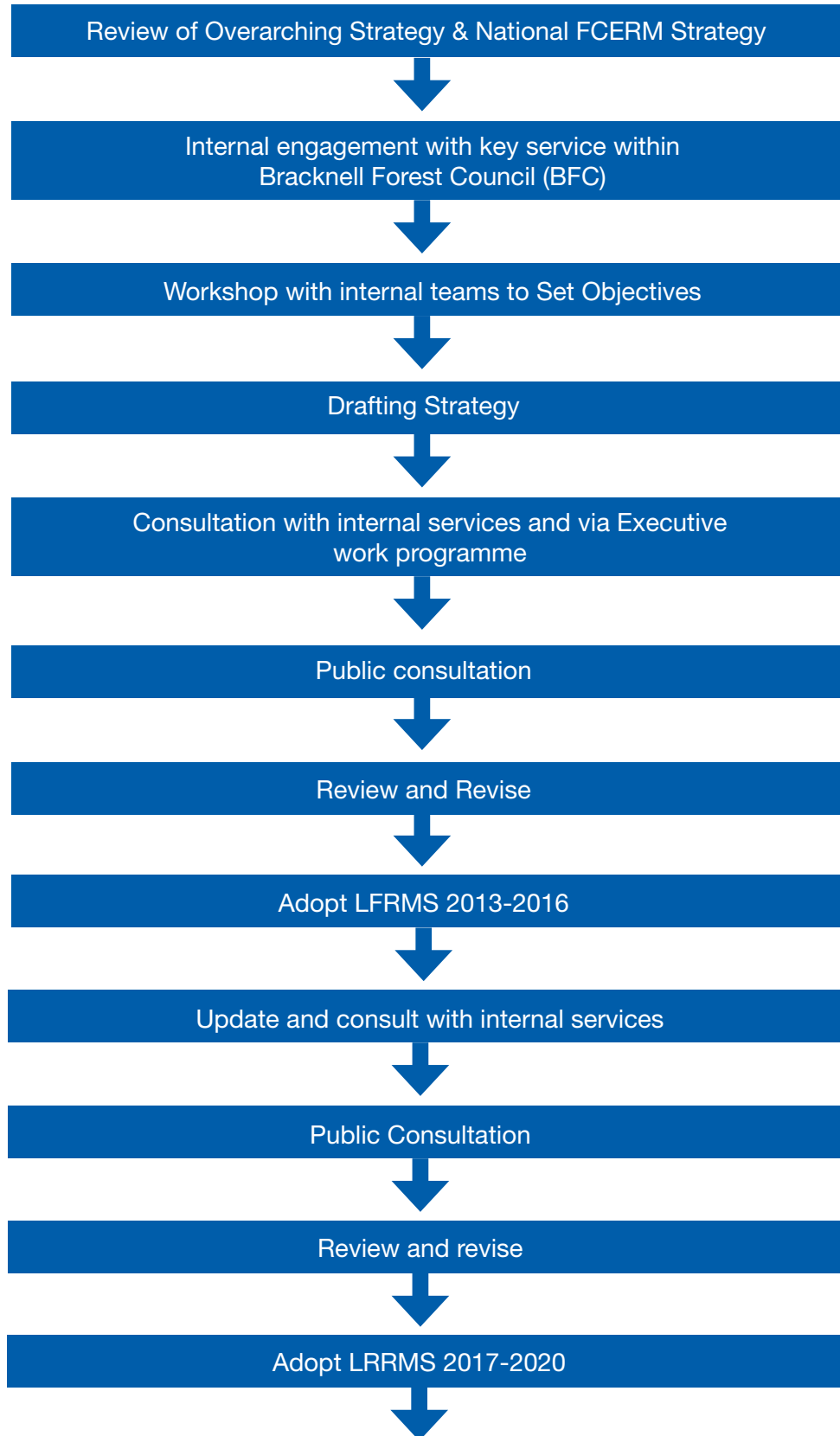
The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LRMS) for Bracknell Forest aims to increase awareness of local flood risk issues. It sets out how partners are working together to reduce flood risk.

Bracknell Forest Borough is assessed as being at a low risk of flooding. Where flooding has been experienced it has been of a short duration in relation to intense rainfall. However communities do not always distinguish between different types of flood risk, as the impact is their key concern. We cannot stop flooding. Extreme weather events are on the increase and our intention is that the impact of flood incidents is as minimal as possible.

This strategy starts with Chapter 1 as an overview of the legislation that underpins flood risk management. It is followed by Chapter 2 which provides clarification on roles and responsibilities of the organisations involved in flood risk management. Chapter 3 provides a summary of flood risk within the Borough. Chapter 4 provides information on options and funding mechanisms and details our objectives and measures for managing flood risk. The strategy is supported by a number of annexes which detail how we manage our duties. These are held separately in annexes so they can be updated independently of the strategy should the need arise.

1.2 How the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LRMS) has been produced and updated

The process for developing the Local Strategy has been produced in a number of stages which are identified below.



The Pitt Review

Sir Michael Pitt carried out an independent review of national flood risk management practices after the widespread floods during the summer of 2007 in which over 50,000 households were affected and damages exceeded £4 billion. The Pitt Review was published in June 2008 and called for urgent and fundamental changes to the way flood risk was being managed. The report contained 92 recommendations for the Government, Local Authorities, Local Resilience Forums and other stakeholders which were based around the concept of local authorities playing a major role in the management of local flood risk, through coordination with all relevant authorities.

Many of the recommendations within the Pitt review have now been implemented through the FWMA (2010), which places a great deal of responsibility on the upper tier local authorities which includes unitary authorities such as Bracknell Forest, especially under their role as LLFA. The role of the Environment Agency remains largely unchanged; however they now have the role of overseeing all sources of flooding.

Whilst some of the recommendations of the Pitt Review have been implemented through the FWMA, critically Schedule 3 which related to adoption of Sustainable Drainage schemes has been abandoned by the Government.

The FWMA places responsibilities on Lead Local Flood Authorities to maintain and update an Asset Register, to designate structures and to be the responsible authority for Surface Water flooding and Groundwater flooding.

The EU Floods Directive

The EU Flood Directive (2007/60/EC) for the assessment and management of flood risks came into force on 26 November 2007. This Directive requires Member States to assess if all watercourses and coast lines are at risk from flooding, to map the flood extent and assets at risk in these areas and to take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce this flood risk.

All Lead Local Flood Authorities have had to produce a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) which involved collecting information on past and predicted future floods from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) does not have areas of significant flood risk identified as part of this process.

1.3 The Flood & Water Management Act (2010)

The Flood & Water Management Act (2010), gained royal assent on the 8th April 2010 and provides legislation for the management of risks associated with flooding. The FWMA was instigated as a result of the Pitt review which looked at the widespread severe flooding during the summer of 2007.

The Act reinforces the need to manage flooding holistically and in a sustainable manner. It also places a number of new roles and responsibilities on councils which are designated as LLFAs. The preparation of this Flood Risk Management Strategy is just one of the duties placed upon LLFAs.

The Act defines various bodies as 'risk management authorities' and lists them as the following:



- A Lead Local Flood Authority;
- The Environment Agency;
- A district council for an area for which there is no unitary authority;
- An internal drainage board;
- A water company; and
- A highway authority.

The Act defines a number of duties which are detailed in Chapter 2 of this document.

1.4 Relationship to other documents

There are a number of other documents of relevance and that may have bearing on the Local Strategy and these are identified below:

Table 1.0: How other plans and strategies fit into the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Document	Description	What has the document been used for within the production of the Local Strategy?
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	This is National Planning Policy in relation to the requirements for development and flood risk. The NPPF provides clearer guidance on how flood risk should be considered within the planning process.	The Strategy has been informed by the general principles of the NPPF.
Technical Note NPPF	This is the technical guidance in implementing the NPPF	The Strategy has used the technical guidance and information in the preparation of potential options for managing flood risk.
Bracknell Forest Core Strategy	The Local Authorities policy document in relation to planning and Bracknell's vision for development in the future. The Core Strategy for Bracknell was adopted in February 2008; this sets out the planning framework for Bracknell up to 2026. The Core Strategy makes up part of the Local Development Framework and sets up a number of Planning Policies to help guide development within the Borough.	The policies and information on regeneration and development proposals have been reviewed to ensure that there is no conflicts between the Local FRM Strategy and the Core Strategy
Bracknell Forest SFRA (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment)	An evidence base used to inform the Spatial Planning process. Bracknell SFRA was completed in August 2010 and is used as an evidence base to assess flood risk for spatial planning purposes and for individual flood risk assessments.	This document has been reviewed to understand the existing flood risk information for Bracknell. 
Bracknell Forest PFRA (Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment)	This is a high level document required under the EU Floods Directive. This document covers local sources of flood risk and makes an assessment of the risk from these sources within Bracknell.	The information collected as part of this process has been used to provide baseline information. 
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Plan (FCERM)	This is the Overarching guidelines for flood risk management within the UK	The Local Strategy has been aligned with the National Strategy.
Catchment Flood Management Plan	Provides a catchment approach to managing Flood risk and provides key policies and actions on the catchment scale.	Used to provide background information and to ensure the policies within the Local Strategy align with the catchment policies identified for the catchment Bracknell sits within.
Thames River Basin Management Plan	Provides information on water quality and quantity within the borough and measures to improve them in line with the Water Framework Directive.	Used to understand the existing baseline and links to the requirements of the Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP)

CFMPs provide an overview of flood risk across a river catchment. They consider all types of flooding and consider the impacts of climate change. CFMPs have been produced by the Environment Agency and are to be used as a tool that informs the management of flood risk on a river catchment basis.

Bracknell Forest falls within the Thames CFMP Region Sub-area 7: Expanding town in floodplain locations for areas around the Upper and Middle Blackwater. It also falls within Sub-area 1: Towns and villages in open floodplain (north and west). This means there are two policy options for the two distinct types of areas within Bracknell Forest.

Policy option 4: Areas of low, moderate or high flood risk where we are already managing the flood risk effectively but where we may need to take further actions to keep pace with climate change.

Policy option 6: Areas of low to moderate flood risk where we will take action with others to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits.

National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England and Wales

The FWMA 2010 requires the Environment Agency to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England.

The overall aim of the Strategy is to ensure the risk of flooding is properly managed by using the full range of options in a coordinated way. The government will work with individuals, communities and organisations to reduce the threat of flooding by:

- Understanding the risks of flooding, working together to put in place long-term plans to manage these risks and making sure that other plans take account of them;
- Avoiding inappropriate development in areas of flood risk and being careful to manage land elsewhere to avoid increasing risks;
- Building, maintaining and improving flood management infrastructure and systems to reduce the likelihood of harm to people and damage to the economy, environment and society;
- Increasing public awareness of the risk that remains and engaging with people at risk to make their property more resilient; and
- Improving the detection, forecasting and issue warnings of flooding, planning for and co-ordinating a rapid response to flood emergencies and promoting faster recovery from flooding.

The FWMA states that Local Strategies must be consistent with the National Strategy. Being consistent with the National Strategy means acting in accordance with the overall aims and objectives, and in particular with the following six 'guiding principles':

- Community focus and partnership working;
- A catchment 'cell' approach;
- Sustainability;
- Proportionate, risk-based approached;
- Multiple benefits; and

- Beneficiaries should be allowed and encouraged to invest in local risk management.

There is an aspiration that public authorities cooperate to manage flood risks.

River Basin Management Plan

Bracknell lies within the Thames River Basin. The Thames River Basin Management Plan is about the pressures facing the water environment in this river basin district, and the actions that will address them.

It has been prepared in consultation with a wide range of organisations and individuals. There are a number of main river watercourses that are within the borough (as seen in Annex A, figure A.1). The European Water Framework Directive came into force in December 2000. It gives an opportunity to plan for and deliver a better water environment, focussing on ecology and protecting and enhancing water quality.

The table below provides a summary of the quality information for these watercourses. The information below is taken from survey reports completed by the Environment Agency which provide information on water quality and measures to improve it in line with the Water Framework Directive.

Table 1.1: Water body existing status

Water body	Chemical quality	Ecological quality	Hydromorphological status	Overall Risk
Bull Brook	Does not require assessment	Moderate Potential	Heavily Modified	At risk
Cut (Ascot to Bull Brook confluence at Warfield)	Does not require assessment	Moderate Potential	Heavily Modified	At risk
Cut at west Bracknell	Does not require assessment	Moderate Potential	Heavily Modified	At risk
Cut (Binfield to River Thames confluence) and Maidenhead Ditch	Good	Poor Potential	Heavily Modified	At risk

Within the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) there are a number of measures that are currently now in place that can improve the status of the watercourse. The Cut and Bull Brook are classified as a heavily modified water bodies and the mitigation measures are focused around:

- Attenuate flows to limit detrimental effects of the features within the water body (drainage);
- Improvements and retention of marginal aquatic vegetation;
- Removal of obsolete structures and;
- Improve the in-channel morphology.

1.5 What is flooding and flood risk?

What is a Flood? The FWMA identifies a flood as:

'including any case where land not normally covered by water becomes covered by water.'
It does not matter whether the flood is caused by:

- *heavy rainfall*
- *a river overflowing its banks being breached*
- *a dam overflowing or being breached*
- *tidal waters*
- *groundwater*

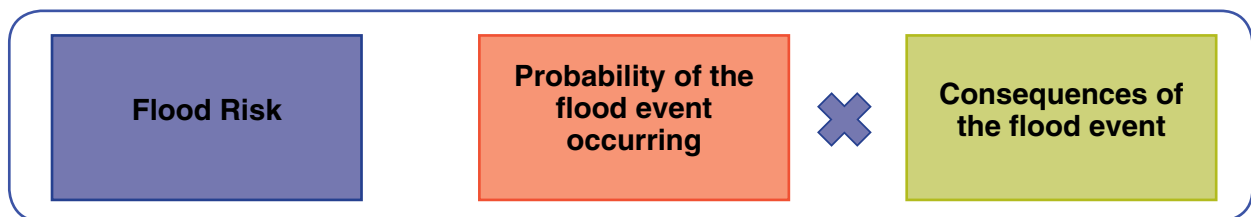
a flood does not include:

- A flood from any part of a sewerage system, unless wholly or partly caused by an increase in the volume of rainwater entering or otherwise affecting the system or
- A flood caused by a burst water main

The European Union (EU) Floods Directive defines a flood as a covering by water of land not normally covered by water. Flooding can occur relatively quickly and these are often referred to as flash floods, others can develop over a longer period of time. Floods can also recede at different rates and can be limited to local areas or be spread over whole river valleys. Although flooding can occur in unwanted areas, some areas such as balancing ponds that can be wet or dry are designed to flood in times of high flows.

Flood risk is the combination of flooding probability and the potential adverse consequences of the flood event (in relation to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economy). The probability or likelihood of flooding is described as the chance that a location will flood in any one year. If a location has a 1.3% chance of flooding each year, this can also be expressed as having a 1 in 75 chance of flooding in that location in any year.

This does not mean that if a location floods one year, it will definitely not flood again for the next 74 years.



Flooding is a natural phenomenon, the effects of which can be made worse by poor management of the environment and landscape. The effects of flooding in the future may also be made more severe due to the impact of climate change, especially if nothing is done in relation to the risks.

Factors that contribute to flooding can be meteorological in nature such as rainfall, hydrological such as groundwater level or human factors including occupation of the floodplain, changes in land use activities and structural flood control measures.

Rainfall and the consequential flooding are largely unpredictable in location and severity, and dealing with these uncertainties will be challenging. This is the type of flooding that Bracknell is most familiar with.

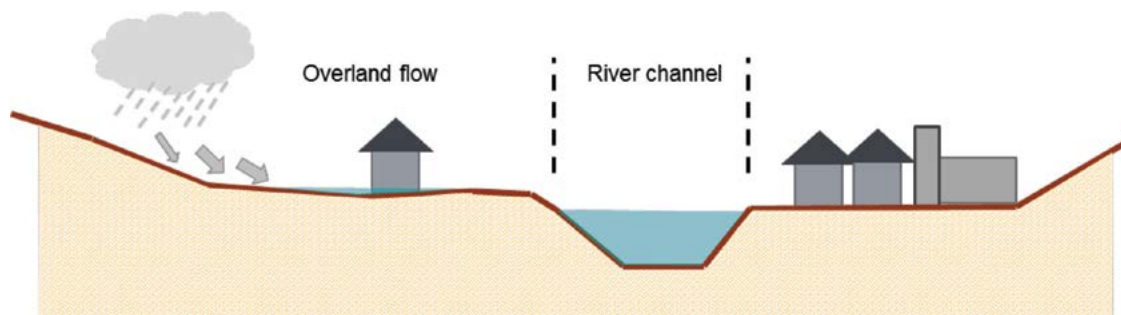
Surface water flooding

Surface water flooding is a form of local flood risk, and is also known as pluvial flooding or flash flooding. This type of flooding occurs when rainfall generates runoff which flows over the surface of the ground and accumulates in low lying areas. It is usually associated with high intensity rainfall events and can be exacerbated when the ground is saturated or when the drainage network has insufficient capacity to cope with the additional flow.

It is very difficult to predict this type of flooding. It may affect a widespread area and the extent of the flooding is relevant to the duration and intensity of rainfall, most of it is short-lived hence the description of flash flooding.

The Environment Agency undertook a surface water modelling exercise and produced surface water flood risk maps for the country. These maps can be viewed here

<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk-map?easting=485435&northing=166403&address=100080208054>



Sewer flooding

Sewer flooding occurs when the sewer network cannot cope with the volume of water that is entering it. It is often experienced during times of heavy rainfall when large amounts of surface water overwhelm the sewer network causing flooding.

Surface water flooding is normally caused when the capacity is exceeded and the system surcharges causing water to flow out of the manhole and drain covers. A surface water sewer can also fail as a result of a blockage, siltation, collapse and equipment or operational failure.

Highway flooding

Highway flooding can be defined as flooding caused by heavy rainfall resulting in overflows from drains, gullies and manholes leading to ponding in low spots on the highway network. Overflows could also be due to localised blockages, siltation, collapse and equipment or operational failure.

Groundwater flooding

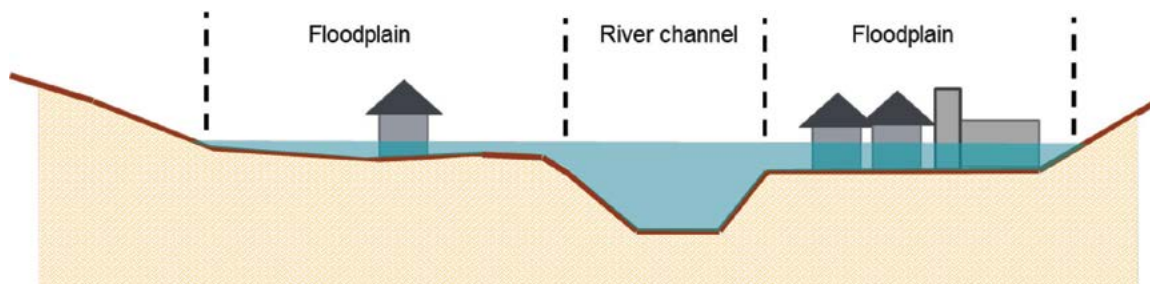
Groundwater flooding occurs when water levels in the ground rise above the ground surface. Flooding of this type tends to occur after long periods of sustained heavy rainfall and can last for weeks or even months. The areas at most risk are often low-lying areas where the water table is more likely to be at a shallow depth and flooding can be experienced through water rising up from the underlying aquifer or from water flowing from springs. Ground water flooding occurs in areas which have highly permeable geology such as chalk.

River flooding

River flooding is known as fluvial flooding. Flooding from a river occurs when the capacity of the channel is exceeded and the water spills onto the floodplain.

The main rivers within Bracknell are The Cut located along the northern boundary of the Borough and the Blackwater along the southern boundary.

The Environment Agency have modelled all Main Rivers in the UK. Plans showing the extent of flooding associated with Rivers can be reviewed here. <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk>



Ordinary watercourse flooding

Ordinary watercourse flooding concerns flooding from any watercourse which is not designated as a main river. All smaller watercourses, ditches and streams are classified as ordinary watercourses. Flooding from an ordinary watercourse occurs when the channel cannot accommodate the volume of water that is flowing in it, or when there is significant impedance to the passage of flow within the channel of the watercourse to the extent that it causes flow to come out of banks. Ordinary watercourses not designated as main rivers are the Bull Brook running from Martins Heron to The Cut.


Reservoir flooding

Reservoir flooding occurs when there is a complete or partial failure of the reservoir structure. It may be caused by erosion due to seepage, overtopping of the dam beyond its design level or through accidental damage. There are three reservoirs located within Bracknell; Mill Pond, Fish Place (Ascot) and Sandhurst Lower Lake.

Interaction between different sources of flooding

Whilst the primary focus of this strategy is local flooding (surface, small watercourses) flooding in the Borough can arise from a number of combined sources. To members of the public suffering from flooding the source of water may seem irrelevant however each flooding source may have a number of different organisations responsible for dealing with it.

1.6 Bracknell Forest Borough Council objectives

This section sets out the primary principles and objectives to ensure that local flood risk is considered and managed effectively. Recognising the limited allocated resources we have available is important in the context of managing flood risk. These resource levels have been significantly reduced since the 2013 - 2016 strategy was developed. 

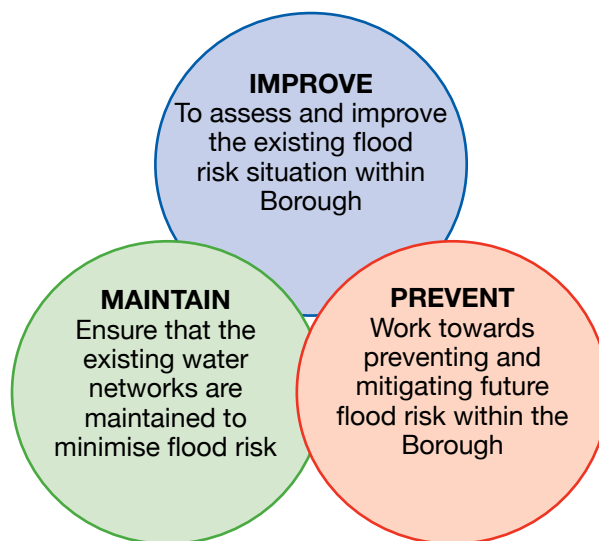
We propose to take a pragmatic approach to reduce the current flood risk and ensure that we do nothing to make this worse in the future. In formulating these objectives and measures we considered three options for flood risk management:

Maintain – Ensure existing water networks are maintained to minimise flood risk. Maintain so as not to worsen the situation.

Improve – Assess and improve the existing flood risk situation within the Borough. Seek to better understand the flood risk and drainage characteristics of the Borough.

Prevent – Work towards preventing and mitigating future flood risk within the Borough. Ensure there is no net increase in flood risk by considering the impact of new development, land use changes and climate change.

Figure 1.2: Overarching principles



The measures are those that we will seek to implement in order to meet the objectives of the Local Strategy. Each of the objectives has been considered in turn with measures identified to meet these objectives. These measures are explained within Table 4.2

Table 1.2: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LRMS) objectives

Objective		Contributes to overarching principle
1	Seek to reduce the current flood risk and ensure that as the LLFA we do not increase this in the future.	IMPROVE MAINTAIN PREVENT
2	Deliver a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LRMS) in line with the national flood risk management guidance.	IMPROVE MAINTAIN PREVENT
3	Deliver the LLFA duties and responsibilities under the FWMA	IMPROVE MAINTAIN PREVENT
4	Understand and capture flooding and drainage data of the Borough.	IMPROVE
5	Improve the level of understanding of flood risk, within the community as well as with key agencies. Ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities and adopt partnership working to deliver realistic outcomes.	IMPROVE
6	Ensure that due consideration is given to the wider environmental, social benefits and climate change requirements in both the strategy and delivery of objectives and measures.	MAINTAIN
7	Seek to avoid an increase in flood risk as a result of new development by controlling how any additional water enters existing drainage systems.	PREVENT
8	Currently Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) has not identified any schemes, however as opportunities arise for grant funding consider whether any potential schemes may be able to benefit.	IMPROVE MAINTAIN PREVENT
9	Identify and deliver appropriate opportunities for training and education in flood risk management.	IMPROVE MAINTAIN PREVENT



2 Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Why define roles and responsibilities?

Local Authorities rules have been enhanced so that they have responsibility for leading the coordination of flood risk management in their areas. Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) has been designated as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and is responsible for leading local flood risk management across the Borough.

2.2 Risk Management Authorities within Bracknell Forest

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) defines risk management as the following:

What is Risk Management?

Means anything done for the purpose of -

- 1) analysing a risk;
- 2) assessing a risk;
- 3) reducing a risk;
- 4) reducing a component in the assessment of a risk;
- 5) altering the balance of factors combined in assessing a risk, or
- 6) otherwise taking action in respect of a risk or a factor relevant to the assessment of a risk (including action for the purpose of flood defence).

The following organisations are identified as being 'Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) within Bracknell.

Lead Local Flood Authority	- Bracknell Forest Council (BFC)
Environment Agency	
District Council	- Not relevant as Bracknell is a Unitary
Internal drainage board	- there are no internal Drainage Boards within Bracknell
Water Company	- Thames Water
Highway Authority	- Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) are the Highway Authority

Figure 2.0: Flood risk partners



Under the provisions of the FWMA, the following duties are common to all risk management authorities:

- A duty to cooperate with other risk management authorities;
- A duty to act consistently in accordance to the national and local strategies;
- Powers to take on flood risk functions from another risk management authority, and
- A duty to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development.

More detailed information on the specific roles and responsibilities of each organisation is also included in this chapter.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

Bracknell Forest Borough Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority. In conjunction with leading and co-ordinating flood risk management activities, the FWMA also places a number of key duties on the LLFA. These duties are identified within the table below, more detailed information on implementation is provided within the relevant annexes.

Responsibility	Details
Local Strategy	To develop, maintain and monitoring of a Local Strategy in line with the National Strategy.
Duty to Investigate Flood Incidents	<p>To build an accurate image of the flood risk issues across Bracknell requires the collation of useful records from actual flood incidents when they occur. Residents should proactively report such incidents. The investigations will examine which authorities have an involvement in a flood incident, and a report should outline their responsibilities or actions, if any. All Risk Management Authorities have a duty to cooperate under the FWMA and will work together to seek resolution. Investigations will involve consultation with the relevant risk management authorities, landowners and private organisations involved. As the LLFA we also have enforcement powers with respect to riparian ownership under the Land Drainage Act. The aim is for the Flood Investigation Reports to provide an understanding of the situation, outlining possible causes of flooding and potential long-term solutions. Further recommendations will also be made to highlight potential flood risk management actions. Reports will provide a clear and thorough understanding of the flooding situations.</p>
Preparation of an Asset Register	<p>The LLFA have a duty to maintain a register of structures or features which are considered to have an effect on flood risk, including details on ownership and condition as a minimum. BFC is required to ensure there are records of all significant assets available for use by risk management authorities and for inspection by the public at all reasonable times. It is anticipated that this will take many years before this register is sufficiently comprehensive to be of real value in terms of flood risk management. Steps are underway to undertake and develop this register.</p> <p>Unlike major assets associated with fluvial or tidal flooding or coastal erosion, there has often been much confusion over the ownership and maintenance responsibility of local flood risk assets. This is likely to be due to local drainage infrastructure commonly being hidden underground or along land boundaries, where landowners either do not realise or acknowledge that they have any responsibility. The Asset Register is a way to address this problem and ensure that residents are aware of assets in their area and have information to enable them to contact the assets' owners when there are issues.</p> <p>There are currently no set criteria for what defines an asset as significant but the most important consideration is its location. Future flood risk mapping and the flood history at a site will be used to analyse the 'significance' of each flood risk asset. The vulnerability of the asset's surroundings will also be used to determine the consequences of its failure.</p> <p>New Sustainable Drainage Assets will be recorded via the planning and designation processes and asset data may also be captured through local studies, such as Surface Water Management Plans and Flood Investigation Reports.</p>

<p>Designation of Features</p>	<p>BFC and the Environment Agency are both designating authorities' which means that these authorities may 'designate' features or structures where the following conditions are satisfied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The designating authority has established that the existence or location of the structure or feature effects flood risk. • The designated authority has flood or risk management functions in respect of the risk which is affected. • The structure or feature is not designated by another authority. • The owner of the structure or feature is not a designating authority. <p>An example of such a structure or feature might be a privately owned balancing pond or river bank. If an asset becomes 'designated' its owner cannot alter or remove it without first consulting the designating risk management authority. The aim of designating flood risk assets is to safeguard them against unchecked works which could increase flood risk in the area. Designating of features or structures will be done only when there are concerns about the asset.</p>
<p>Consenting works to ordinary watercourses</p>	<p>The LLFA is responsible for consenting works, by third parties on ordinary watercourses within their boundary. Works are covered by the requirements of Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991.</p>
<p>Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)</p>	<p>The Floods and Water Management Act sought to ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems were adopted and maintained by Local Authorities. This was to reduce the risk of failure of systems due to maintenance. However in December 2014 the Government abandoned the relevant schedule of the Floods and Water Management Act and instead implemented some changes to the wording of the National Planning Policy Framework. The Environment Agency are now only a Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications which fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3. From April 2016 the LLFA became the statutory consultee for all Major Developments, with a duty to consider sustainable drainage provisions. The duty to adopt SUDS schemes has been removed and SUDS will remain largely in private ownership. The developer may maintain the SUDS themselves or get a third party to maintain the system (Service management company, water and sewage company, Local Government, private individuals, property owners or occupiers).</p> <p>The LLFA will have a vested interest in the long term performance of any drainage system in order to minimize flood risk. Should the delivery of SuDS on new developments lead to privately owned and maintained systems, the LLFA will consider designating those SuDS under Schedule 1 of the FWMA. The effect of which will be that a person may not alter, remove or replace a designated structure or feature without the consent of the responsible authority. In addition, the designation becomes a local land charge.</p>

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency (EA) has both a national strategic role and local operational role in relation to flood risk management. Although their involvement at a local level has reduced given the changes in responsibility.

National Strategic Role

The Floods and Water Management Act requires the EA to publish the National Strategy. The National Strategy has guiding principles that need to be incorporated into the Local Strategy. The National Strategy aims to define and understand the roles and responsibilities of risk management authorities and to provide information to communities at risk.

The National Strategy identifies the following strategic actions for the EA:

- Use Strategic Plans such as the Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) and the Shoreline Management Plan to set the direction of Flood risk management;
- Support the creation of Flood Risk Regulation by collating and reviewing the assessments, plans and maps that Lead Local Flood Authorities produce;
- Provide data, information and tools to inform government policy and aid risk management authorities in delivering their responsibilities;
- Support collaboration, knowledge-building and sharing of good practice including provision of capacity-building schemes;
- Manage the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) and support their decisions in allocating funding for flood defence and flood resilience;
- Report and monitor on flood and coastal erosion risk management; and
- Provide grants to risk management authorities to support the implementation of their incidental flooding or environmental powers.

Local Operational Role

The EA's local operational role includes emergency planning, advising on planning applications when they are classed as major development and are situated within a Flood Zone in relation to flood risk and managing flooding from main rivers and reservoirs.

Emergency Planning

The EA, as part of their role in emergency planning, contributes to the development of multi-agency flood plans. These are developed by local resilience forums to help the organisations involved with responding to a flood work efficiently together.

To help provide better warning to organisations, the media and the public the EA also work with the Met Office jointly in the Flood Forecasting Centre.

Main Rivers

Main Rivers are watercourses shown on the Statutory Main River Map held by the EA and DEFRA. The EA has permissive powers to carry out works of maintenance and improvement on Main Rivers. This can include any structure or appliance for controlling or regulating flow of water into or out of the channel. The overall responsibility for maintenance of Main Rivers lies with the riparian owner.

The EA can bring flood defence schemes forward through the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees, and it will work with lead local flood authorities and local communities to shape schemes which respond to local priorities. The EA are also the regulating authority with regards to consenting works carried out by others, in, under, over or within 8 metres of a main

river in accordance with the Local Bylaws.

Reservoirs

The EA enforce the Reservoirs Act 1975, (amended within the Floods and Waters Act 2012), which is the safety legislation for reservoirs in the United Kingdom. The EA is responsible as the Enforcement Authority in England and Wales for reservoirs that are greater than 25,000m³ (amended to 10,000m³ in Floods and Waters Act but is yet to be enacted). As enforcement Authority the EA must ensure flood plans are produced for specified reservoirs. However the responsibility for carrying out work to manage reservoir safety lies with the reservoir owner/operator who should produce the flood plans.

Highway Authority

As Highway Authority (HA), BFC has the same obligations to co-operate on flood risk issues. It also has the following responsibilities under other legislation:

Responsibility to maintain highways, including ensuring that highway drainage systems are clear and that blockages on the highway are cleared. This is a duty under the Highways Act and therefore strategic highways are inspected and maintained regularly.

As HA the Council also has powers to deliver works that they consider necessary to protect the highway from flooding. These works can either be on the highway itself or on land which has been acquired by the HA in the exercise of highway acquisition powers.

The HA may divert parts of watercourses or carry out any other works on any form of watercourse if it is necessary for the construction, improvement or alteration of the highway or provides a new means of access to any premises from the highway.

Thames Water

The water industry is highly regulated and the quality of customer service and the prices they are able to charge their customers are regulated by the Water Services Regulation Authority (WSRA), commonly known as Ofwat. Thames Water is the principle sewer authority operating within Bracknell. Thames Water has the following responsibilities for flood risk management:

- Respond to flooding incidents involving their assets; including storm sewers draining and located under a public highway.
- Maintenance of a register of properties at risk of flooding due to hydraulic overload in the sewerage network (DG5 register)
- Provide, maintain and operate systems of public sewers and works for the purpose of draining an area;
- Have a duty to co-operate with other relevant authorities in the exercise of their flood risk management functions;
- Must have a regard to national and local flood risk management strategies.

The DG5 Register

All water and sewerage companies maintain a register of properties at risk of flooding due to hydraulic overload in the sewerage network; this is known as the DG5 register and part of the

set of Ofwat DG (Director General) Indicators.

The DG5 Register is a register of properties and areas that have suffered or are likely to suffer flooding from public foul, combined or surface water sewers, due to the system being overloaded. There are 3 at risk reporting categories:

- 1 in 20 year;
- 1 in 10 year; and
- 1 in 2 year.

This reporting category reflects the frequency of flooding incidents in properties/areas and the return period of the storm that causes the flooding. For a sewer to be classified as over-loaded the flow of a storm must be unable to pass through it due to a permanent problem not due to problems such as blockage, siltation or collapse. Flooding that occurs during more intense storm events (greater than 1 in 20 years) is also excluded. When a solution is in place to rectify the overloading a property or area is removed from the register.

Tackling sewer flooding

As part of the obligation to Ofwat, sewerage companies are required to undertake capacity improvements to alleviate sewer flooding problems on the DG5 register during the current Asset Management Period (2010 – 2015) with priority being given to more frequent internal flooding problems.

2.3 Other stakeholders

Local communities & householders

Communities have vital knowledge about the history of flooding in their area and can make important contributions to helping manage the levels of flood risk. It is important therefore that residents are encouraged to report flooding incidents otherwise we can't do anything to assess or take action. This also includes taking steps to reduce the impacts of flooding on their properties. BFC's policy on the distribution of sandbags is provided in the Annexes.

RMAs are unlikely to be able to record every incident of flooding that occurs in the Borough without the help of Parish Councils and Communities, especially those that do not directly flood properties. However, flooding incidents which affect roads or enter the curtilage of properties are important to record. They can indicate that there has been flooding in relatively regular rainfall events which would warn that the properties are at risk in more extreme rainfall events. This information is crucial in building up cases for flood defence and flood resilience schemes.

Communities affected by flooding should report the incidents to BFC, via Customer Services, who may or may not undertake a formal investigation. The decision on whether an incident will be investigated formally will be in accordance with the flood investigation policy within the Annexes to this document.

Residents may also wish to take a proactive approach to flood risk by signing up to Floodline Warnings Direct through the EA. The free flood warning service gives advance notice of when flooding from rivers is likely to happen and gives time to prepare. Warnings can be received by a variety of means including text, phone, e-mail etc. More information can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/floodsdestroy>

Many residents may be unaware of the flood risk to their property if there has not been a flooding incident while they lived there. The EA provide guidance and information on preparing for flood events through their website, including information on flood information in the form of flood risk maps.

It is the responsibility of householders and businesses to look after their property including protecting it from flooding. Whilst in some circumstances other organisations or property owners may be liable due to neglect of their own responsibilities, there will be many occasions when flooding occurs despite all parties meeting their responsibilities. It is also vitally important that householders whose homes are at risk of flooding, take the following steps to ensure the impact to their home reduced:

- Check whether their household is at risk from flooding from all sources;
- Ensure that preparations have been made in the event of a flood;
- Take measures to ensure that the impact of flooding to their household is reduced, either through permanent measures or temporary measures; and
- Where possible take out flood insurance (this is relative to fluvial flooding, it is very difficult to insure against storm events)

Local Planning Authority

As well as being the LLFA BFC is also the Local Planning Authority. They are responsible for the production of strategic planning documents such as the Local Plan/Core Strategy that guide new development and regeneration within the Borough. They also determine planning applications in line with national and local policies.

Landowners

Landowners whose property is adjacent to a river, stream or ditch are likely to be riparian owners with responsibilities. If a property borders a river, stream or ditch then the property owner is likely to be a riparian owner, owning the land up to the centre of the watercourse. Land registry details should confirm this.

Riparian owners have a duty to protect their property from flooding but in most cases will need to discuss the methods of doing this with the EA or BFC. They also have the responsibility for maintaining the bed and banks of the watercourse and ensuring there is no obstruction, diversion or pollution to the flow of the watercourse. Any works to the watercourse will need consent from either the EA (if Main River) or the BFC (if an Ordinary Watercourse). The EA and BFC have enforcement and consenting powers under the FWMA and other legislation.

Businesses

Utility and infrastructure providers such as Network Rail, energy companies and telecommunication companies are not Risk Management Authorities as defined by the FWMA. However they have a crucial role to play in flood risk management as their assets can be important consideration in planning for flooding. They may have assets such as culverts and bridges that have the potential to restrict flood flows and increase the risk of flooding to the community, information about these assets needs to be shared with the risk management authorities. They may already maintain plans for the future development and maintenance of the services they provide and it is important that they consider flood risk management issues during this planning process. This will help to ensure that their assets and systems are resilient to flood risk and that the required level of service can be maintained in the event of an incident.

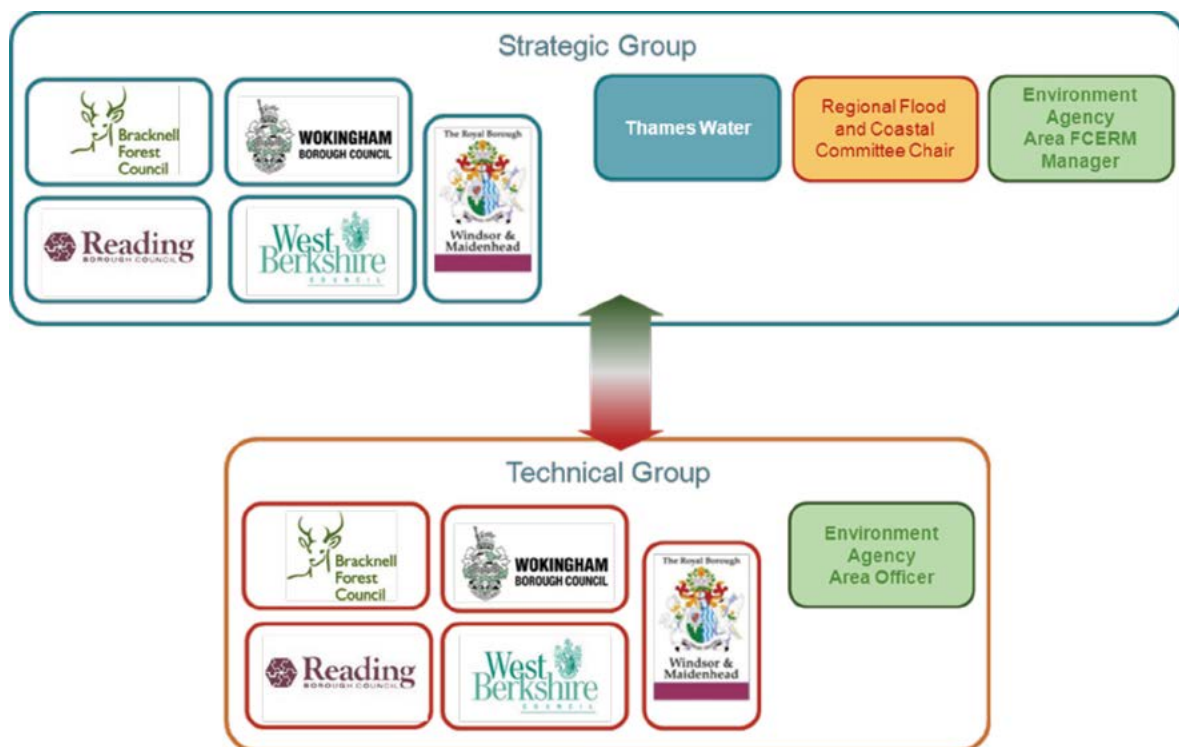
2.4 Berkshire Five Strategic and Technical Groups

The FWMA encourages Risk Management Authorities to work together and cooperate on flood risk management. The Berkshire Group was set up to facilitate discussions on the implementation of the FWMA and to share best practice. This has evolved into an established group whereby flood risk issues can be discussed and in some respect economies of scale be sought. The Berkshire Five Group consist of five of the Berkshire Unitary Authorities, these are:

- Bracknell Forest Council (BFC);
- Reading Borough Council (RBC);
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM);
- West Berkshire Council (WBC); and
- Wokingham Borough Council (WBC).

N.B. Slough Borough Council have aligned themselves with South Buckinghamshire Council due to the local drainage catchments.

Figure 2.1: Berkshire Strategic and Technical Group Structure



There are two separate groups. The Strategic Group comprises heads of department within the LLFA, the Environment Agency and the Chair whom is a councillor and a representative of the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. The Strategic Group set the direction and guide the work of the Technical Group.

The Technical Group is comprised of operational officers within the LLFA which aim to discuss the technical aspects of how the Floods and Water Management Act will be implemented. The Technical Group provide information and suggest approaches to the implementation of the FWMA for decisions at the Strategic Group. As resources become even more stretched there is the potential to merge these two groups. An internal flood risk management group is established to monitor objectives of the CFRMS. These meet twice a year.



3 Nature of Flood Risk within Bracknell

3.1 Overview of Bracknell Forest Borough

Bracknell Forest Borough covers an area of approximately 109 square kilometres and contains three main towns. The largest is Bracknell which lies in the centre of the Borough. To the south of the Borough are the towns of Crowthorne and Sandhurst.

Outside the town, the south of the Borough is forested, the majority of which is owned by The Crown Estate and Forestry Commission. The north of the Borough is mainly rural, agricultural land. The Borough is made up of six parishes, these being Binfield, Bracknell, Crowthorne, Sandhurst, Warfield and Winkfield.

The main rivers in the Borough are The Cut and the River Blackwater. The Cut flows from North Ascot in a northern direction along the eastern boundary of the Borough, before turning west and flowing past the northern boundary of Bracknell, where it is joined by a tributary from within the town. It then turns north again, exiting the Borough at Westley Mill. The River Blackwater flows along the southern boundary of Bracknell and is flanked by a series of ponds and lakes, i.e. Yateley Lakes, Trilakes Fisheries and the Country Park. Both rivers form part of the Thames River Basin and are the responsibility of the Environment Agency Thames Region. Multiple tributaries and drainage ditches flow into these Rivers; these are not classified as main rivers.

The bedrock geology of the Borough generally consists of Bagshot, Windlesham and Camberley Sand Formations (beds of sand, silt and clay) to the south and London Clay to the north of Bracknell.

3.2 Flood risk within Bracknell Forest

Historical flood incidents recorded by BFC have been captured as four main event years, 2000, 2002, 2006 and 2007. These flood events were mainly caused by surface water flooding, which can be directly attributed to rainfall storm events which occurred over all or some parts of the Borough. In the last two flood incidents, surface water flooding was experienced as drainage systems and the underlying soils became overloaded and unable to cope with the volume and intensity of rainfall.

Historical flooding within the Borough is based on information gathered by BFC, Thames Water and the Environment Agency. This historical information is summarised within this chapter.

Table 3.0: Historical Flood events

Date	Brief Description	Source
7th – 8th May 2000	Localised flooding across the Borough, number of properties unknown.	Surface Water
8th August 2002	Localised flooding across the Borough, number of properties unknown.	Surface Water
17th November 2006	Localised flooding across the Borough, number of properties unknown.	Surface Water
20th July 2007	Localised flooding across the Borough. Estimated no. of properties < 10	Surface Water

Table 3.0 above does not intend to provide an exhaustive list of all flood events or areas affected by flooding, but rather an indication of the types of flood events which have occurred in the past.

This information does not indicate locations that may be susceptible to future flooding due to local changes such as improvements to drainage systems whilst the Thames Valley and its surrounding catchment areas have experienced a number of significant events since 2007, (2012 and Winter 2013 to 2014) these have not resulted in any flooding in Bracknell.

The Environment Agency (EA) have produced fluvial flood maps and Flood Maps for surface water, these are based on these are based on detailed modelling of predicted flood events which have been calibrated using historical flooding information. See figures in Annex A. Interactive mapping for your area can be checked here <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk>

3.3 Types of flooding

Surface water flooding

It has been identified from the historical flood records, that the most recent and significant surface water flooding to affect the Borough was recorded on the 20th July 2007 with a 1 in 33 chance of occurring (Bracknell Forest PFRA). Heavy rainfall over the previous weeks had caused a degree of saturation to soils, resulting in less infiltration through the underlying geology, leading to high surface water runoff rates in a short amount of time.

The Historical Flood Records also indicated similar issues, albeit to a lesser extent, during storm events in 2002 and 2006.

The Environment Agency undertook a nationwide modelling study to produce surface water flood maps. These are based on ground levels and areas draining to natural valleys. The modelling includes assumptions regarding the presence of drainage features across urban areas. They have been provided for 3 classes of event the 30 year (high), 100year (moderate) and the 1000 year even (low).

The EA Flood Map for Surface Water within Bracknell identifies surface water flooding within the Borough as relatively sporadic, with discrete patches of surface water flooding across the whole catchment.

Sewer flooding

Records of flooding from the surface and foul water sewers have already been provided for the PFRA and the SFRA from Thames Water.

Groundwater flooding

Groundwater flooding in Bracknell Forest is unlikely due to the underlying geology. An exception to this is along the watercourses where the presence of river gravels or alluvium can act as local aquifers and potentially cause groundwater flooding. Refer to Annex A which includes a map to show the areas susceptible to groundwater flooding and indicates a low probability of risk within the Borough.

The EA have generated maps showing the percentage of an area being susceptible to groundwater flooding. These show the Borough divided into squares and the percentage of this square being susceptible to groundwater emergence. Much of the Borough is covered by squares less than 25% susceptible. It should be noted that the assessment has been undertaken on a broad scale.

River (Fluvial) flooding

The EA modelled floodplains in the north of the Borough tend to be along relatively narrow floodplains associated with The Cut, typically covering approximately 100m to 200m in width. This mapping indicates that the downstream floodplain of The Cut could reach a width of approximately 500m. This area is mainly countryside, but identified within the EA Flood Maps (refer to Annex A) there are existing isolated areas at risk. The EA historical flood mapping indicates that some of these properties may have experienced flooding in the past. Whilst the EA flood maps shows past flooding, no historical records of river flooding have been found along the tributaries, the Environment Agency's historical flood map indicates that the incidents of flooding mainly occur along The Cut in several locations.

Flooding in the south of the Borough associated with the River Blackwater remains within the fields and lakes situated along the River's borders, particularly on the western side. On the eastern side flood risk is generally more extensive with the flood zones extending far into the town. The EA historical flood map extent corresponds well with the flood zones along the meadows and lakes area.

Ordinary watercourse flooding

There are no specific flooding records related to ordinary watercourses, however some historical flooding could be attributed to watercourses of this type combining with others during a flood event.

Flooding from impounded water bodies

There are three reservoirs (those that hold 10,000m³ of water above ground); these are Mill Pond, Fish Pond in Ascot and Sandhurst Lower Lake. As yet the extent is of flooding from the reservoir inundation maps from potential breaches is not available to the public.

Mill Pond, near Wildridings Road, has a spillway which diverts flows through a pedestrian subway nearby and via paths through an industrial estate to The Cut. Mill pond was created as an attenuation pond to ease the burden of increased runoff on the sewer and river network from new developments in the area.

There are approximately 25 other attenuation ponds in the Borough which are not classified as reservoirs. Whilst the other attenuation ponds have also overtopped on occasion, there are no known incidents of flooding affecting properties.



Key Points on Local Flood Risk within Bracknell:

Generally river (fluvial) flooding is not an issue within the Borough.

Historical surface water flood events have been sporadic.

The risk of groundwater flooding is low due to the nature of the geology

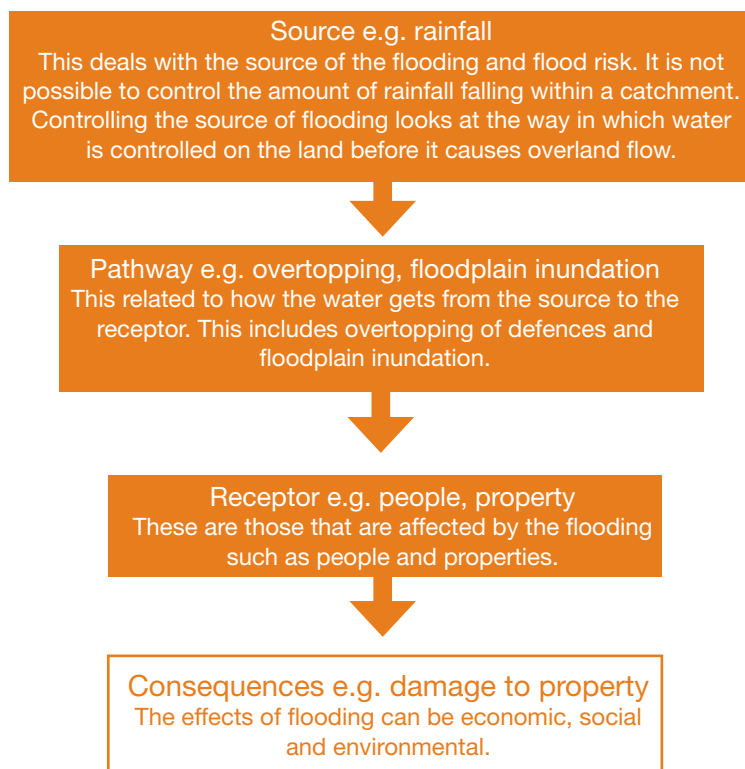


4 Options and funding

4.1 Options for managing local flood risk

When considering flood risk management there are many different options that can be utilised to reduce the risk of flooding to individuals. However the options cannot remove the risk completely as there can always be an extreme event that may exceed the design standard of the measure put in place. It is also important when considering methods to consider the Source, Pathway, Receptor and Consequences model.

Figure 4.0: Source - pathway- receptor- consequence



When deciding what combination of flood risk management measures or strategies to adopt it is important that the same general performance features are considered for each and every option. These should be considered together with the specific characteristics that affect the performance of that option.

4.2 Options suitable for Bracknell Forest Council (BFC)

There are a number of options for managing flood risk within the Borough.

Options to control the source – reducing runoff from the catchment
<p>These methods help reduce or delay the runoff entering the system of drainage systems; and reduce or increase the speed at which water is conveyed downstream.</p> <p>Land Use The generation of surface water runoff can be reduced through the implementation of certain agricultural practices. For example, land can be ploughed across the slope of the land thereby, reducing the effect of channelling of water over the land when it rains. Measures can include incorporating buffer strips on farm with tree planting to delay the flow of water through a catchment.</p> <p>Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) The implementation of sustainable drainage measures as part of any development is a necessity to ensure future flood risk is not increased due to an increase in impermeable area. There is also potential to reduce the existing flood risk. This can include, for example, permeable paving with sub-base storage, swales, attenuation basins and ponds. These methods will act as source control method to reduce the amount of run off entering the drainage network, and therefore reduce the risk of flooding downstream from a severe rainfall event. There are also environmental benefits with the installation of these systems such as a reduction in diffuse pollution entering the watercourses.</p> <p>Storage These structures, providing storage can take up a large land area, but with careful design can take different forms to incorporate them into the existing landscape. These aim to control the rate in which run off is discharged into the watercourse and if ground conditions are suitable allows water to infiltrate.</p>
Options to control the Pathway
<p>Storage Where land area allows it may be possible to construct offline and online storage areas, to attenuate the flood water and discharge it from the area at a manageable rate. May require a large area, but can be multifunctional space. If it is designed to attenuate over 10,000m³ of water it may be designated as a reservoir (under the Reservoirs Act 1975, as amended by the Floods and Water Management Act 2010).</p> <p>Channel Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reduce or increase the conveyance capacity of the watercourses (for example, by construction of bypass channels or multistage channels, by widening or deepening, or by changing the roughness of the existing channel);• Removal of constrictions to the flow within the channel or floodplain.• Flood Farming <p>Flood Farming is about getting farmers or landowners to agree to allow their land to be designed to flood more frequently through the construction of measures around an area to contain the water as it flows in. Clearly landowners would require compensation for the use of their land.</p>

Options to affect the receptor - preventing water from affecting assets

Walls and Embankments

Hard engineering techniques may be the only viable option in some areas, these methods would involve the construction of embankments and flood walls; these can be costly and have higher environmental implication on the area when compared to other methods.

Property Level

A general approach to improving community resilience should be adopted throughout the Borough, including increasing the general awareness and preparedness for a flood event in areas that are at high risk areas. There are options for home and business owners to take action in relation to resistance and resilience measures.

Resilience Measures

These are measures that allow buildings to recover quickly in the event of flooding

Existing developments in risk areas could retrofit flood resilience measures therefore allowing a property to be quickly habitable again if a property did flood.

Resistance Measures

These are described as those measures that prevent water from entering the property

In addition the properties could include property protection schemes, such as demountable flood defences and airbrick covers. These are known as resistance measures.

Exceedance

Not all flooding can be prevented but the route that overland flows or flows that exceed the drainage systems take can be controlled along the existing highways or other flow routes to areas designed to attenuate flood water. This can be achieved through:

- increasing kerb heights and property thresholds to retain water on designated sections of highway. This could be combined with existing highways maintenance and improvement projects which would make it more cost effective.
- divert flood flows to less vulnerable areas, through bypass channels or a piped network, with a suitable capacity. This can be incorporated into new development as part of the planning and design phase.

Non structural measures

A number of other measures should also be used in conjunction with any of the above methods or as standalone to further reduce flood risk. These methods are relatively simple and are the least costly:

Review asset management and maintenance methods

It is important to review the maintenance and management of drainage infrastructure and assets. This will happen for significant flood risk assets (such as culverts and weirs) through the development of the Asset Register to meet the requirements of the FWMA.

The riparian owners are responsible for maintenance of the watercourses and assets. BFC will ensure that owners are aware of their responsibilities to maintain their assets and watercourses.

Future Developments

Future developments should incorporate appropriate mitigation measures and the use of SuDS and help contribute to the reduction of flood risk in the community.

Community Flood Management Plans

These are community lead flood management plans which may be appropriate in some locations and allow the community to understand what actions they need to take in the event of a flood. This could include for example, who they should contact and if advised to evacuate, where they should go and the route that they should take.

There are currently no community flood plans within the Borough, and given flooding history and appetite. These are unlikely to develop.

The table below identifies the suitability of potential flood risk management options for Bracknell.

Table 4.0: Flood risk management measures

Option	Source, pathway, receptor	Comments	Applicable for Bracknell (Yes/No)
Land Use	Source	Farmland that generates flooding	No
Sustainable Drainage Systems	Source	Sustainable Drainage Systems should be implemented within all new development. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) will approve Sustainable Drainage Systems as part of a planning application. The LLFA will provide technical advice to the LPA as a statutory consultee.	Yes
Maintenance of Channels	Pathway	Maintenance of main river channels is the responsibility of riparian owners with an overview from the Environment Agency. Maintenance of ordinary watercourse is the responsibility of the riparian owners.	Yes
Improving channel capacity	Pathway	Opportunities to improve channels through development and redevelopment for main rivers and ordinary watercourse.	Yes
Increasing the storage	Pathway	This will be the creation of storage within the floodplain. Flooding from the rivers are considered to be minimal within Bracknell as a source of flooding (see Local Flood Risk Chapter)	No
Construction of flood defences	Pathway	Traditional flood defences, such as walls are likely to be of limited affect within Bracknell due to the nature of flooding.	No
Property Level Protection	Receptor	This option directly affects people's property. Bracknell floods from sporadic flooding from surface water runoff.	Yes
Community Flood Management Plans	Receptor	Allows actions to be taken to provide measures during a flood event	Yes
Flood Emergency Planning	Receptor	Allows a co-ordinated approach from Bracknell.	Yes

4.3 Managing flood risk through the requirements of the FWMA

As well as considering general options for managing flood risk within Bracknell, the FWMA identifies that the LLFA is required to undertake a number of actions.

Table 4.1: Bracknell FWMA requirements

FWMA Requirement	Description	Annex Reference
Production of Asset Register	The asset register allows identification of assets within the Borough that may have a significant impact on flood risk. Whilst this does not involve the building of defences, it helps identify existing structures that act as pathways throughout the Borough	D
Designation of Features	The designation of an important feature allows the LLFA control over this pathway structure	E
Flood Investigations	To assess the causes of a flood event and the roles and responsibilities of the Risk Management Authorities within the area. This will allow Bracknell to understand the flooding including the causes and possible measures that could be taken to reduce flood risk in the future.	B
Transfer of powers on ordinary watercourse	Bracknell will be responsible for issuing and reviewing works to ordinary watercourses. This will allow for flood risk issues to be taken into account with works to ordinary watercourses.	C

4.4 Sustainable drainage requirements

Water is an essential part of our natural and built environment. The way we live, work and play to varying degrees are influenced by the availability and quality of water.

Increasingly we need to embrace water management as an opportunity rather than a challenge. Successfully delivered sustainable drainage provides communities and wider society with benefits set within the context of adapting to climate change, development and improving our natural environment.”

Extracted from ‘Planning for SuDS – Making it happen’ (CIRIA report C687, 2010)

Background

SuDS as a means of dealing with surface water are not, in themselves, a new concept.

The natural means of dealing with rainfall is through evaporation, infiltration, or take up by vegetation. Excessive rainfall that cannot be dealt with in this manner flows over land to watercourses, stream and rivers, or collects in hollows to form ponds or marsh.

Bracknell Forest Borough was fairly undeveloped prior to construction of the new town, with any development relying on soakaways, connections to ditches or watercourses or basic surface water drainage systems, using conventional pipes.

With the development of the new town in the 1950’s came a new form of surface water drainage, still based upon the use of drainage pipes, but now incorporating the concept of balancing flows, so that generally smaller pipes conveyed water to the existing water courses which were themselves either piped or altered, with water which exceeded the capacity of the pipes being stored either in ponds (such as Mill Pond) or by being diverted into dry ponds for a short time.

Most modern development within the Borough since the 1970’s has also followed this principle of balancing flows, along with restricting flows from developments so as not to overwhelm surface water sewers or watercourses downstream of the site.

Conventional surface water drainage systems

It is often perceived that this modern “conventional” form of drainage – gullies, manholes, pipework and storage – is a sustainable drainage system.

However, whilst often delivering the goals of reducing flood risk and dealing with rainfall from the development, these systems do not meet the basic requirements for SuDS.

Conventional surface water drainage systems have the following attributes:

- They are generally piped systems below ground
- They are not legible, i.e. they do not show how they function
- They are not easily maintainable
- They do nothing to deal with pollutants - during the first flush following a period of rainfall, pollutants will be washed from surfaces, such as highways, and are then transported very efficiently into water courses or ponds without any treatment
- They do not provide much in the way of amenities - balancing ponds in the borough such as Savernake and Westmorland are mostly owned by Thames Water. Without entering into management agreements with BFC these ponds would normally be fenced off and not available to the public.

- They do not deal with all of the rainfall from a development - water companies are only obliged to deal with rainfall up to 1 in 30 year storm events. Any flows in excess of this amount, are not catered for in the adopted public sewer system. Instead the excess rainfall is dealt with by the provision of storage which is separate and often privately owned (usually with the owners being unaware of their ongoing liabilities – as these systems are hidden below ground). However, the excess rainfall does usually drain down into the Thames Water sewers over time
- They do not help to provide water for vegetation and trees, nor do they help to replenish the natural water table within the development

Sustainable drainage systems

SuDS work in a different way to conventional piped systems. The systems use a variety of different techniques to not only deal with the rainfall, but also to capture pollutants and silts, as well as providing water for plants and replenishing the ground water table.

Over the past few decades where SuDS have been constructed they have not only been dealing with the rainfall from 1 in 30 year events, but also from other events up to 1 in 100, all generally being owned and managed by one body. They are therefore more integrated in their design and provide many benefits in addition to their basic function.

SuDS have been promoted by Government, the Environment Agency and by Planning Policy for some time, but their uptake has been slow. This is mainly due to a presumption that they are:

- Expensive to construct
- Use too much land
- Difficult to maintain
- Difficult to design
- Difficult to adopt by public authorities

Publications by CIRIA, the Environment Agency and NHBC, together with practical experience from Europe, USA and Australia, as well as pioneering work by some authorities such as Oxfordshire have shown that these perceptions are misplaced, except those regarding adoption.

The Government, following the Pitt review, took on board misconceptions about adoption, and in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA), published details of a new body which would be part of the Lead Local Flood Authority – the SuDS Approving Body. adoption.

Current proposals

Following extensive work on preparing for implementing Schedule 3 of the FWMA, the government carried out a consultation in September 2014 with a view to abandoning that work, and instead placing the responsibility for approving SuDS within the local planning authority (LPA).

The LPA will assess and approve Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as part of a planning application. It is intended that this will apply to “major” developments initially, but may be extended to include “minor” developments.

The drainage of surface water from a proposed development will be given greater weight as a material consideration when determining the application. The government expects local planning policies and decisions on major planning applications to ensure that SuDS are used – unless demonstrated to be inappropriate.

Currently the Environment Agency are the statutory consultee with regard to any flood risk which may affect, or be affected by, any proposed development. In future the Environment Agency will only be the statutory consultee when the development affects a main river. It is proposed that the previous statutory consultee role for all other development will transfer to the LLFA.

The LPA will consult the LLFA (and EA when appropriate) and satisfy themselves that the proposed minimum standards of operation are appropriate, that there are clear arrangements in place for ongoing maintenance for the lifetime of the development and ensure that the SuDS are designed to have maintenance and operational requirements which are economically proportionate.

The current requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that all development in areas at risk of flooding are expected to use SuDS will still apply. Planning applications that fail to meet a policy requirement to normally deliver SuDS first over conventional drainage could be rejected.

Local planning authorities have a broad discretion to impose conditions on planning permissions providing they meet the legal and policy tests (as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework). Planning conditions can require the use of effective sustainable drainage systems to drain a development's surface water runoff, and also to ensure that the sustainable drainage systems will be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Any conditions imposed on the grant of planning permission run with the land and continue to apply so future land owners would be required to adhere to them. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for this to be delivered using a Section 106 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) agreement.

To ensure the delivery of effective sustainable drainage systems, conditions could require that the construction of the drainage solution be in accordance with a detailed scheme as agreed with the LPA. In order to be effective, the conditions would need to provide that the sustainable drainage systems be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Any condition regarding maintenance should be effective and must:

- a) Clearly identify who will be responsible for maintaining the SuDS and funding for maintenance should be fair for householders and premises occupiers,
- b) Set out a minimum standard to which the SuDS must be maintained.

Government will set out options within planning policy for the delivery of long term maintenance. The developer may maintain the SuDS themselves or get a third party to maintain the system (Service management companies, Water and Sewerage companies, Local Government, private individuals, property owners or occupiers).

Design considerations

- Government has proposed that the SuDS national standards which were developed as ministerial standards for use by the SuDS Approving Body, will become national guidance. This guidance would be supported by partner-led “guidance” maintained as a standalone document.
- Bracknell Forest Council as the LLFA, would expect SuDS to be designed to be in accordance with the national SuDS guidance. In addition, there would be a requirement that the SuDS are also designed in accordance with BS 8582:2013 - Code of practice for surface water management for development sites. Any SuDS used within Bracknell Forest should also accord with the guidance given in Annex F to this strategy.
- Particular emphasis by the LLFA would be placed on the provision of SuDS which were constructed on or near the surface, which utilize natural vegetative SuDS features and/or permeable block paving so as to deliver multiple benefits with regard to flood risk, surface water management, water quality, etc; The use of below ground, piped storage systems would be discouraged, due to their inability to deliver benefits particularly with regard to water quality and interception.

4.5 Funding options

National funding

It is important that the Local Strategy sets out how the proposed actions and measures will be funded and resourced. It is also important that this strategy sets out the different types of funding that are available to the individual LLFA.

Flood Defence Grant in Aid

The Environment Agency is responsible for allocating central government funding to manage flood and coastal erosion risk in England.

This funding is known as Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA). It goes to flood risk management authorities (RMAs) who are formed of the Environment Agency, English local authorities and internal drainage boards (IDBs). Together, they use it to pay for a range of activities including flood defence schemes that help reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion.

When allocating FDGiA to RMAs, the EA follow Defra policy and guidelines, which set out what projects are able to be funded. The Environment Agency's Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) play an important role in agreeing programmes of work, and can raise extra funding from local authorities, known as local levy (see below). The RFCCs are made up of a majority of elected members from local authorities and representatives from other local interest groups.

Flood and Coastal Resilience Partnership funding

In April 2012 the approach to the way that Government funds flood risk management projects changed. Defra's new methodology for allocating capital funding - flood and coastal resilience partnership funding - is based on the outcomes delivered.

Funding levels for each scheme now relate directly to the number of households protected, damaged prevented and other benefits such as environmental or business benefits that will be delivered. Instead of meeting the full costs of just a limited number of schemes, the partnership approach to funding flood and coastal resilience means that Government money is potentially available towards the costs of any worthwhile scheme. Funding levels are based on the numbers of households protected, the damages being prevented, and the other benefits a project would deliver. Overall, more schemes are likely to go ahead than under the previous 'all or nothing' approach if contributions from other sources are present.

The total benefits of a scheme must exceed the costs to the taxpayer for any scheme to qualify for FDGiA.

The local levy

Local levies are paid by upper tier authorities, such as Bracknell Forest Borough Council, to the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee for additional flood risk management schemes that would not otherwise proceed. The Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee set a local levy and vote on where to invest the local levy.

Funding to Lead Local Flood Authorities through Area Based Grants

Funding for LLFA to meet their new responsibilities has been allocated through Area Based Grants or local services support grants. The money is not ring fenced so individual authorities

must decide how much grant to spend, subject to limits on overall budget and the need for investment on other priorities. The amount of money allocated for each LLFA varies based on the overall risk within the relevant area.

Local funding

Highway budget

The Council currently delivers an annual capital budget for work on the highways drainage network. Work is prioritised according to safety, internal property flooding, social impact and the duration of flood incidents.

The Council also has a revenue budget that it uses for maintaining the highway network.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force in April 2010 and provides the local authorities with an alternative source of potential funding for flood defence and alleviation schemes; only the charging authority is able to determine what to spend the CIL on. It allows the local authorities to raise funds from new development in their area in order to pay for the impact that development has on local infrastructure.

Local authorities are required to use this funding for infrastructure needed to support the development; it can be used to construct new infrastructure, increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or repair failing infrastructure. The Localism Act 2011 includes a broad definition of the infrastructure that can be covered by this scheme including transport, flood defence, schools, hospitals and parks. Bracknell Forest adopted CIL in April 2015 and at this time, there are no flood defences or drainage projects listed.

Section 106 Funding – Developers Contributions

Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into an agreement with a landowner or developer in association with granting of planning permission. A section 106 agreement is used to address issues that are necessary to make a development acceptable, such as supporting provision of services and infrastructure.

It is recommended that any flood risk which is caused by, or increased by, new development should be resolved and funded by the developer. This can be secured through planning conditions or through a Section 106.

Other sources of funding

There are also other sources of funding currently available and there may be other funds in the future that can be used for flood risk management. A list of the current funds is provided below:



- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - South East England Operational Programme (SEEOP) sets out how ERDF resources are to be used in the South East Region. The Programme is based upon an analysis of the needs and opportunities facing South East England, particularly the recognised importance of decoupling further economic growth from resource consumption, pollution generation and a loss of biodiversity if the Region is to achieve its vision of achieving sustainable prosperity by 2016.

- Business Improvement District (BID) scheme - business-led initiative supported by government legislation which gives local businesses the power to 'raise funds locally to be spent locally' on improving their trading environment.
- Growing Places Fund - aims to help address this constraint; enabling targeted investment in pieces of infrastructure which unlock development, allowing places to realise development values which can be recycled to provide a longer term solution to infrastructure provision.




4.6 How are Bracknell's objectives going to be achieved?

Whilst the above provides a general overview of the funding mechanisms available to all Lead Local Flood Authorities, the Objectives identified as being specific for Bracknell have been considered in the following table.

Table 4.2: How Bracknell will achieve the objectives

Objective		Potential Measures/Actions to achieve the Objective	How this is to be achieved
1	Seek to reduce the current flood risk and ensure that as the LLFA we do not increase this in the future.	This combines the measures listed below within the table and includes, planning measures, provision of technical advice responsibilities and requirements under the FWMA and developing schemes.	Through the measures listed within this table.
2	Deliver a local flood risk management strategy in line with the national flood risk management guidance.	Assess criteria against national guidance including the National FCERM, Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 and existing local policies and align accordingly.	Undertaken as part of the Local FRM Strategy Production – completed.  Review Strategy every 3 years 
3	Deliver the LLFA duties and responsibilities under the FWMA	Provide guidance and administer a process for consenting of new structures and maintenance of existing structures on water courses.	Information and guidance produced and process managed through existing team structures.
		Produce a flood investigation policy and publish formal investigations which meet the criteria as detailed within the policy.	Publication of Flood Investigations Policy within the Strategy. Ongoing investigations as per policy.
		Develop an asset register and designate assets as appropriate.	The Asset Register is underway, assets are added to the register as appropriate.
		Share information and work together to understand the flood risks and to plan for future flood risk management measures.	Establish a formalised internal group in relation to flood risk management with relevant functions. insert - This group also has partners in attendance. Opportunities to progress are also taken outside of the formal meeting structure e.g. with parish Councils. This meets every 6 months.

4	Understand and capture flooding and drainage data of the Borough.	Research, capture and record all relevant data.	Through site survey for the asset register. Through Flood Investigations when undertaken.
5	Improve the level of understanding of flood risk, within the community as well as with key agencies. Ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities and adopt partnership working to deliver realistic outcomes.	This strategy will provide a clear explanation of the roles of flood risk management authorities as well as the important roles that residents and land managers can play	Undertaken as part of the Local Strategy production and as opportunities flow.
		Ensure riparian owners are aware of their duties to keep watercourses flowing freely. Provide clearer information on BFC website and co-deliver with the Environment Agency.	Current website information and as opportunities for engagement arise.
		Achieved via the Berkshire 5 technical and strategic officers forum and strengthening internal/external arrangements. Currently meet every 1/4.	Continued engagement and attendance with these groups.
6	Ensure that due consideration is given to the wider environmental, social benefits and climate change requirements in both the strategy and delivery of objectives and measures.	Promote the concept of water cycle management and multifunctional spaces that will hold flood water, provide space for wildlife and local green space as part of the master planning process.	By ensuring that the planning process and the LLFA role consider these aspects when reviewing applications.

7	Seek to avoid an increase in flood risk as a result of new development by controlling how any additional water enters existing drainage systems.	<p>Ensure that planning decisions are based on up-to-date information about all flood risks and that there is a consistent approach to surface water management in new development.</p> <p>Stricter standards to be used with regard to discharge rates, volumes, storage for watercourses and their catchments known to have capacity issues.</p>	Building on government guidelines on sustainable drainage and BS 8582: 2013, we will provide comments to the local planning authority in respect of new development. Emphasize that there should be no increase in surface water flow from future development wherever possible.
8	Currently BFC has not identified any schemes however as opportunities arise for grant funding consider whether any potential schemes may be able to benefit.	Use current information and the flood investigations policy as the key criteria to identify areas at most risk and develop bid submissions and schemes. 	Where a potential issue is identified funding for studies and schemes will be sought from FDGiA/ Local Levy 
9	Identify and deliver appropriate opportunities for training and education in flood risk management.	Continue to build upon existing networks and commit to highlighting continuing opportunities for education and engagement.	Review website and update. As and when opportunities arise, specifically with other Risk Management Authorities 

4.7 Next steps

Monitoring, review and updating this local strategy will be essential to ensure it remains fit for purpose and as a way of demonstrating success in delivering reduced flood risk within the Borough. Each strategy will be updated on a 3 year cycle.

The Bracknell Forest Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment, which is the key evidence base for this strategy is revised on a 6 year cycle. The current PFRA is dated July 2011 and therefore requires review in the summer of 2017. Our local knowledge and understanding of local flood risk will improve in coming years and there must be opportunities to update the strategy as new information becomes available, and for this reason the strategy should be viewed as a living document.

The reviews will ensure the contents are compatible with current legislation as well as a report showing progress against the set objectives. In this respect, an annual review report prepared for Environment Culture & Communities Departmental Management Team (and Corporate Management Team or Executive if substantial change warrants it) will be produced ensuring the document is as up to date as possible.



Annexes

Annex A Mapping

Flood Zone 2 – area could be flooded from a river with up to a 0.1 per cent (1 in 1000) chance of occurring each year.
Flood Zone 3 – area could be flooded from a river with a 1 per cent (1 in 100) or greater chance of happening each year.

Figure A1 - EA flood map BFC

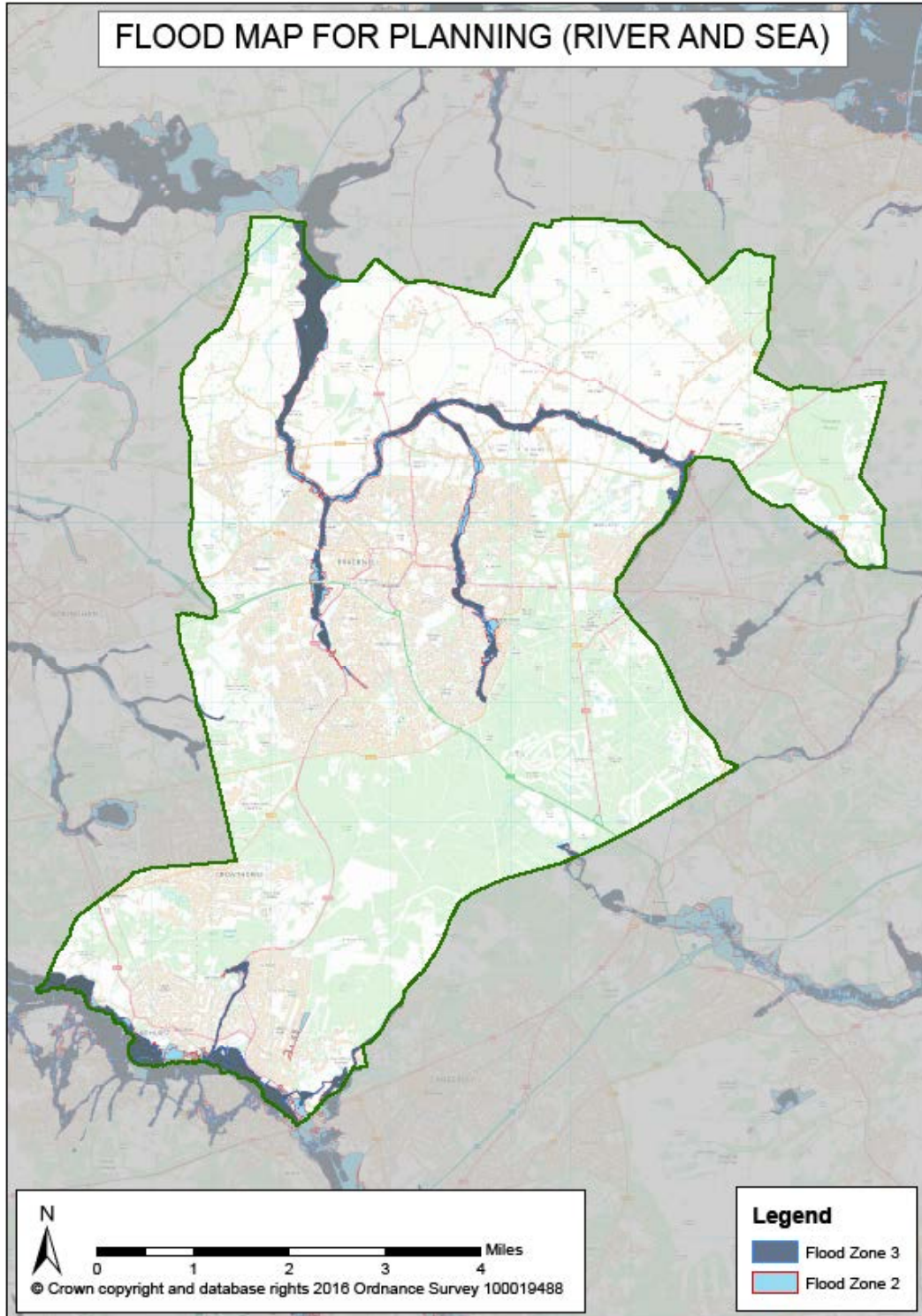


Fig A2 – Flood map for surface water 30 year BFC

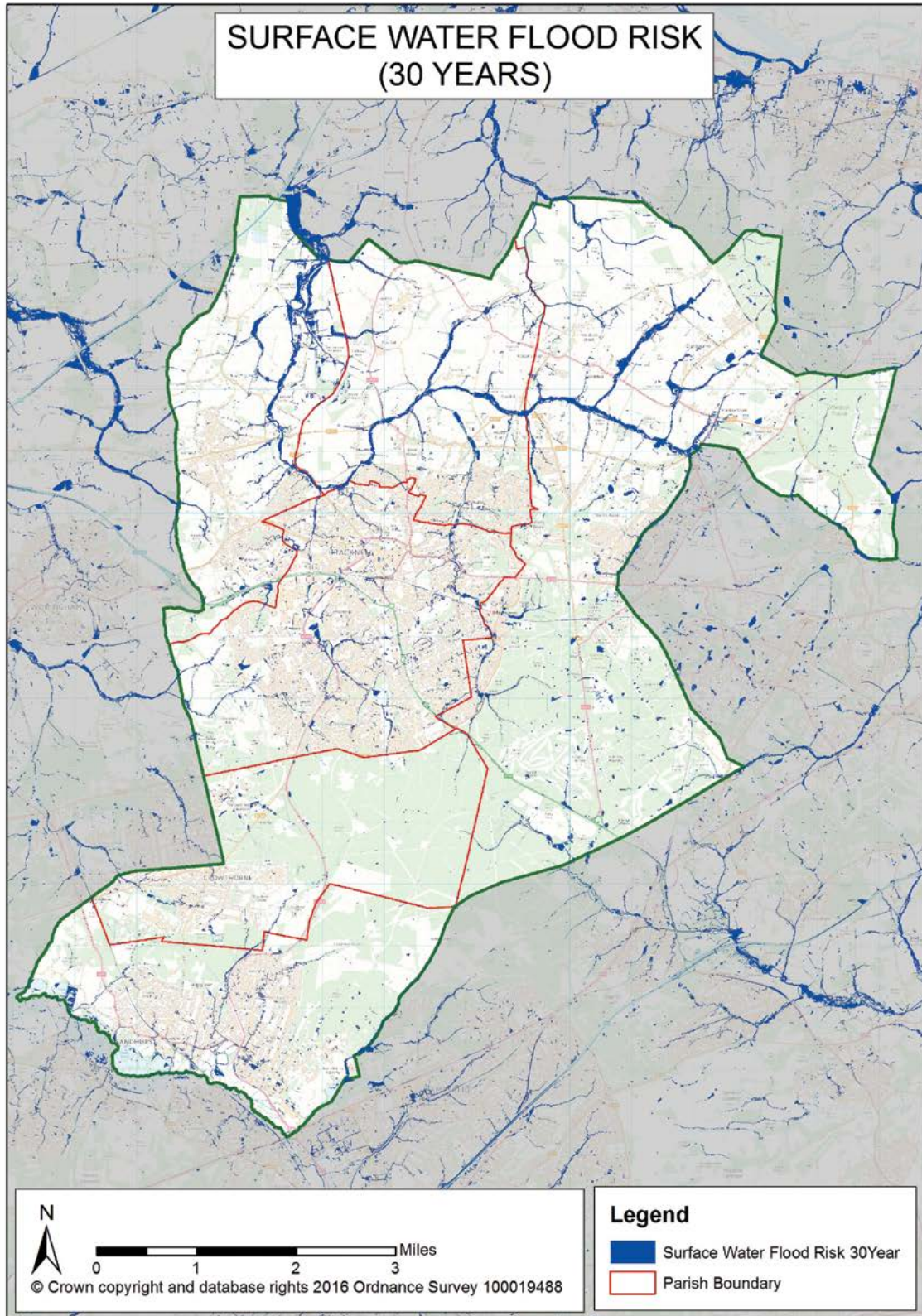


Fig A3 – Flood map for surface water 100 year BFC

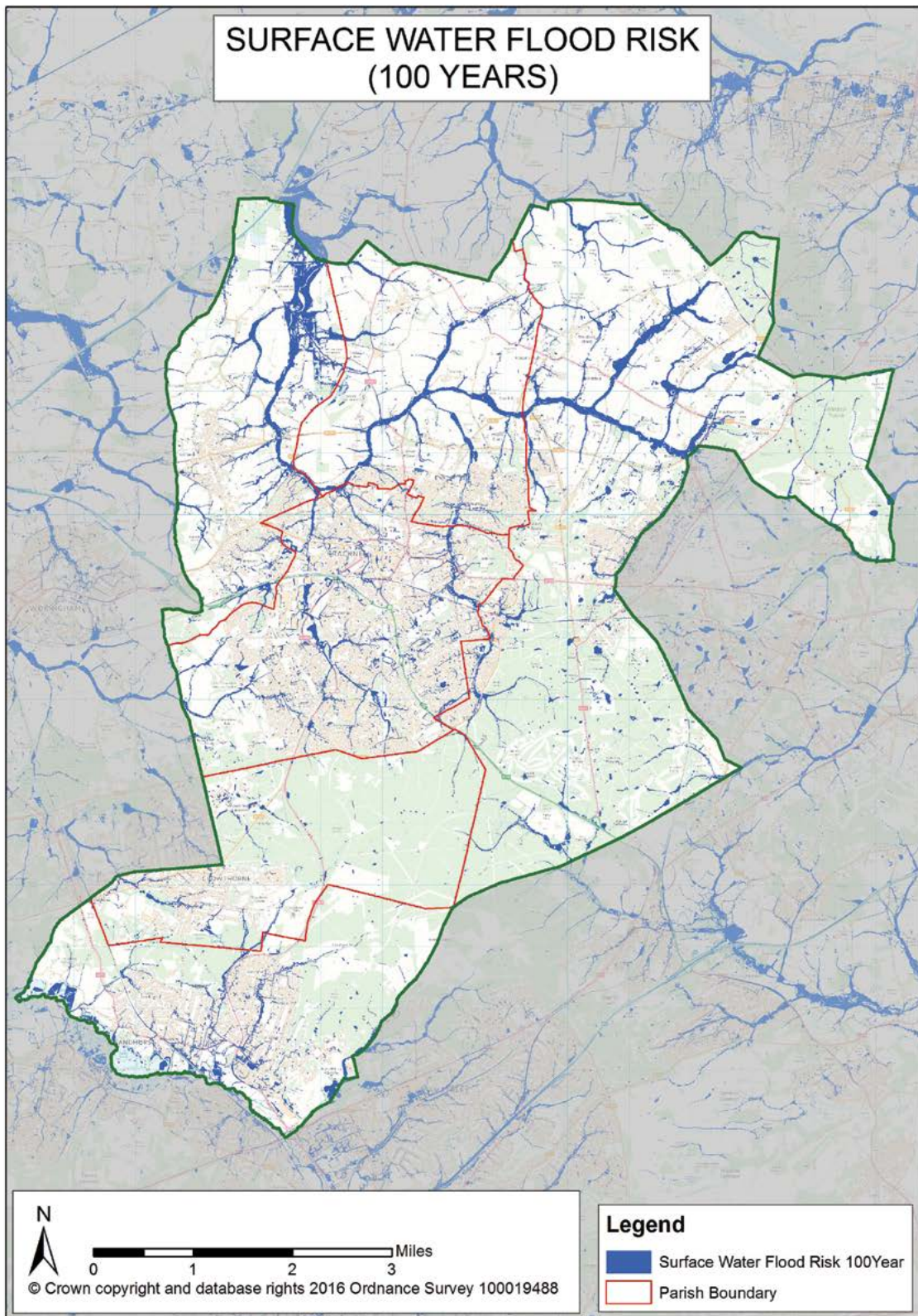


Fig A4 - Flood map for surface water 1000 year BFC

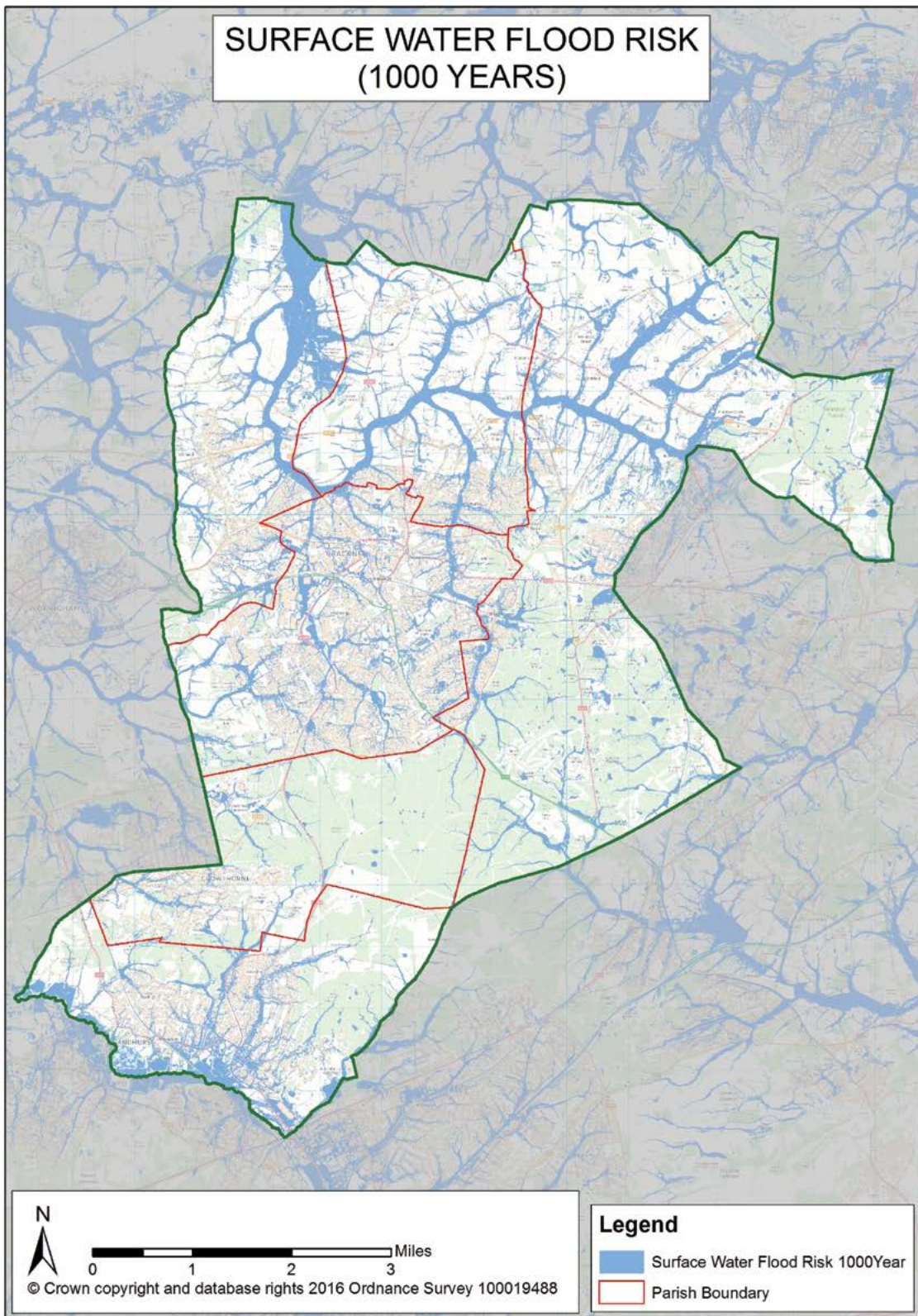


Fig A5 - Areas susceptible to groundwater flooding

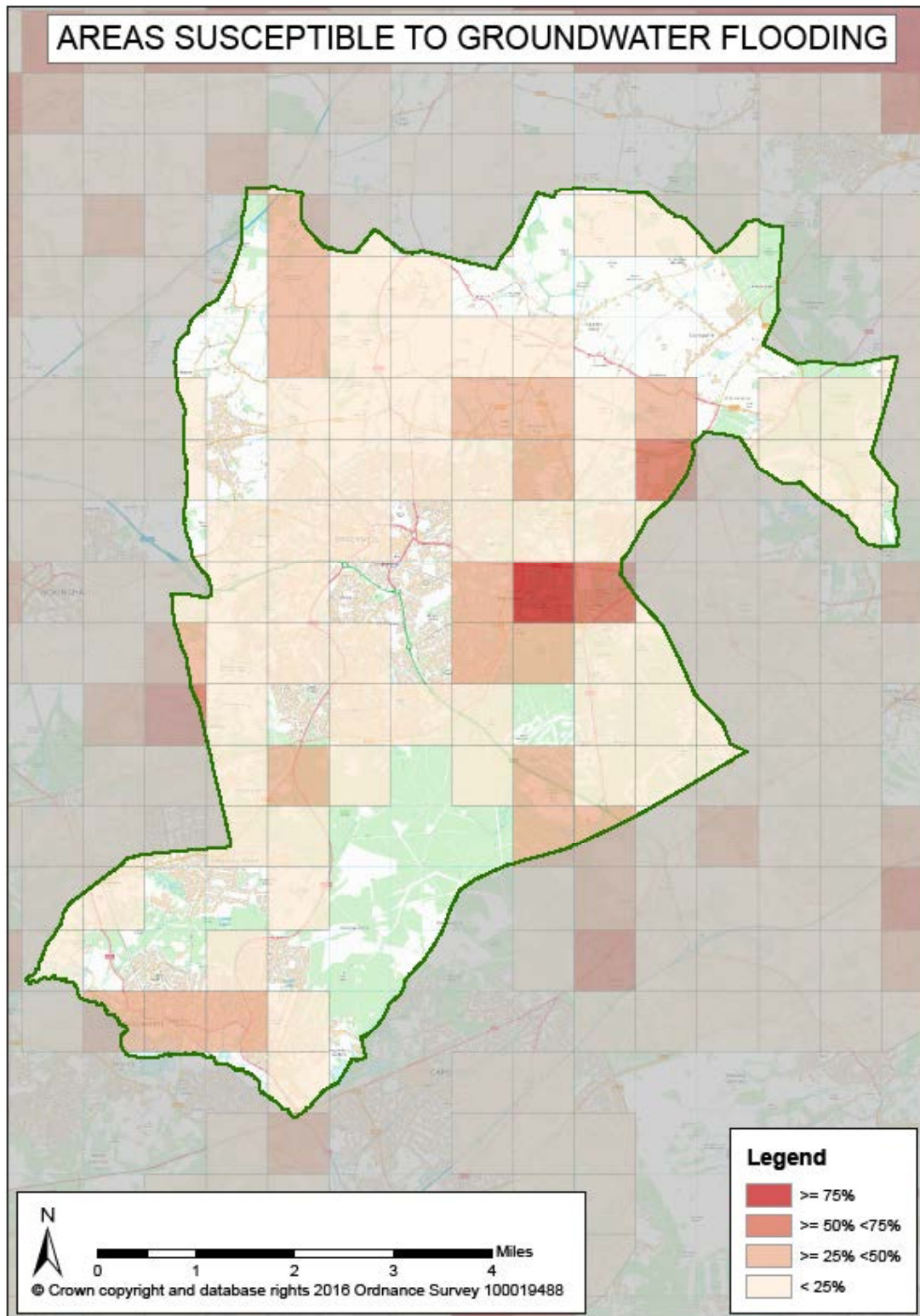
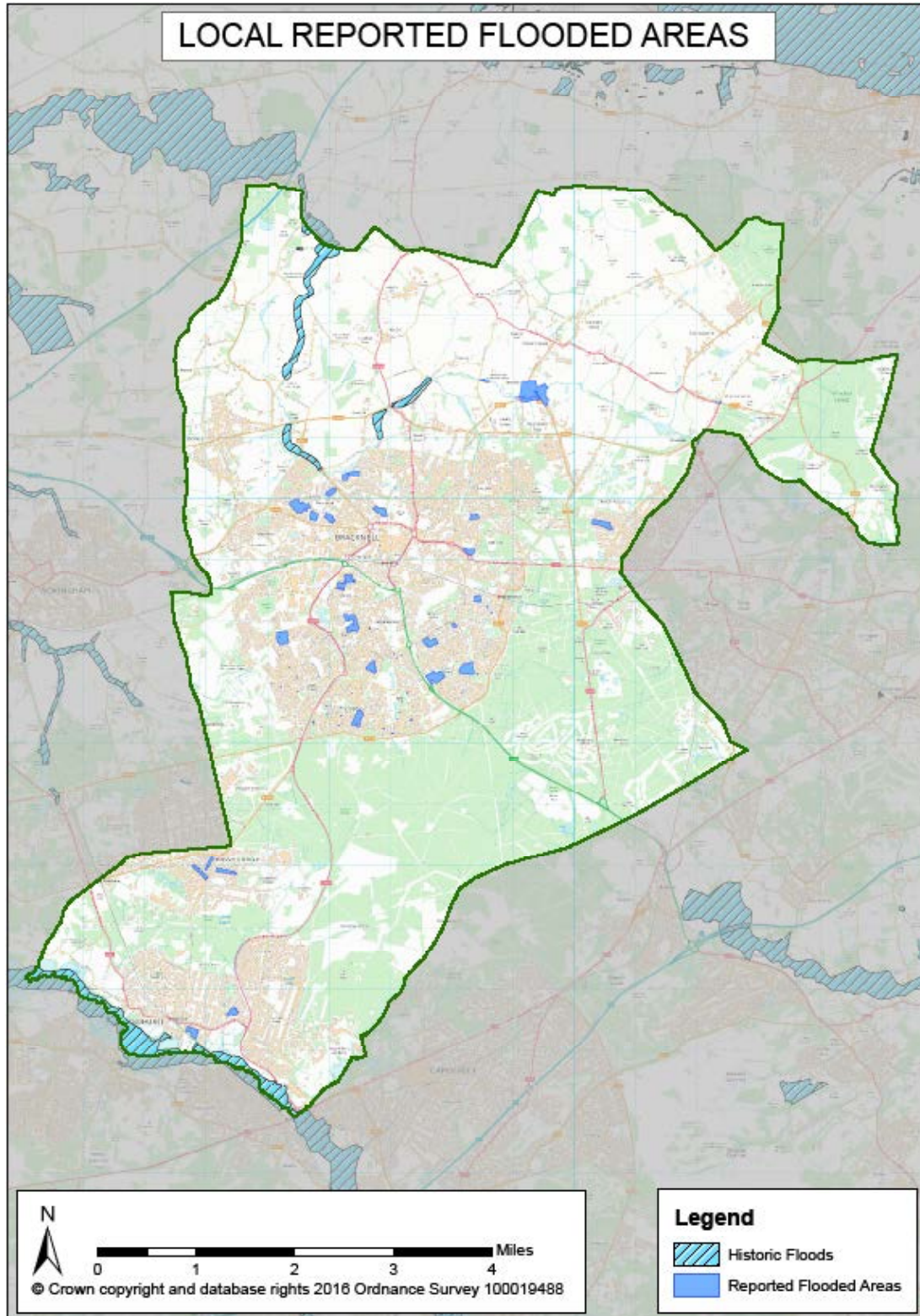


Fig A6 – Local flooding hotspots BFC



Annex B Flood investigation policy

1 INTRODUCTION

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) places a duty on the Council (in its capacity as Lead Local Flood Authority) to investigate flooding incidents to the extent that it considers necessary or appropriate.

Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 outlines that:

- (1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate:
 - (a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
 - (b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
- (2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must:
 - (a) publish the results of its investigation, and
 - (b) notify any relevant risk management authorities.

“Risk management authority” means:

- (a) the Environment Agency,
- (b) a lead local flood authority,
- (c) a district council for an area for which there is no unitary authority,
- (d) an internal drainage board,
- (e) a water company, and
- (f) a highway authority.

2 THRESHOLD FOR INVESTIGATION

The Council will undertake formal investigations into flooding incidents reported by residents, or that otherwise come to its attention, involving:

- A risk to life as a result of flooding.
- Internal flooding of one property experienced on more than one occasion.
- Internal flooding of two properties or more during one flood incident.
- Flooding of critical local infrastructure.
- Ambiguity surrounding the source or responsibility of a flood incident.

The Council will formally investigate and publish a flood investigation report on events that meet the criteria above. Publication will be via the website.

The Council may also investigate and internally record smaller flooding incidents but will not be required to publish the findings of such events.

3 PURPOSE AND SCALE OF FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORTS

Any investigations undertaken will seek to establish the likely causes of the flooding incident, the relevant risk management authorities involved and any actions proposed or undertaken by the relevant risk management authorities.

Investigations will be undertaken during, or as soon as possible after the flooding incident and will be appropriate to the scale and nature of the flooding incident. Investigations will have to be prioritised in relation to the numbers of reported incidents and available resources. The scale of the flooding will proportionally affect the size of the investigation and subsequent report.

Small scale flooding incidents and incidents where the relevant risk management authorities are immediately apparent or are undertaking actions to alleviate the cause of the flooding incident are likely to require only limited investigations.

4 CONTENT OF FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORTS

The purpose of flood investigation reports is to inform parties which risk management authorities have relevant functions relating to the flood incident.

All published flood investigation reports should contain the following information:

- Site location, maps and photos
- Site characteristics and drainage
- Flood history and extent
- Details of the flood event (inc. Confirm reference number/date of flood event/date flood event reported to BFC/date of investigation/threshold for investigation [as outlined in sc 2 above]).
- Rainfall analysis
- Identified sources/probably causes
- Role and responsibilities
- Outcomes of investigation including proposed activities and recommendations

5 DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

It should be noted that initial reports are likely to be received as anecdotal evidence from members of the public, in depth investigations will likely require officers to visit and undertake their own evidence collection. The published report does not have to detail the specific detail of what was affected or proposed mitigation, e.g. specific addresses. Generic areas can be referred to. However it is worth noting that if properties have flooded then the owners have obligations to declare flood information in any insurance contract or property sale.

6 PUBLICATIONS OF FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORTS

The findings of all flood investigation reports will be made publicly available via the website and linked to internal records.

Annex C Consenting process

As LLFA we are now responsible for the consenting of works to ordinary watercourses and have powers to enforce un-consented and non-compliant works. This includes any works (including temporary) that affect flow within the channel of any ordinary watercourse (such as in channel structures or diversion of watercourses).

Consent is refused if the works would result in an increase in flood risk, a prevention of operational access to the watercourse and/ or they pose an unacceptable risk to nature conservation. The clear guiding principle will be to ensure that obstructions are kept to a minimum and not increase the risk of flooding. Where obstructions are inserted without consent or in a manner contrary to a consent the LLFA has powers to enforce their removal or take remedial action.

Information about the need for consents and the consenting process are available on the website.

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/privatepropertydrainage>

Annex D Register/record of flood risk assets

All LLFAs are required to maintain a register of structures or features (asset register) which are likely to have a significant effect on flood risk in their area.

Flood risk assets are structures or features which are considered to have an effect on flood risk. An example could be an embankment protecting properties and therefore decreasing flood risk, or an undersized culvert in a residential area, which may actually increase flood risk during high rainfall.

The requirement is to ensure there are records of all significant assets available for use by risk management authorities (asset record) and for inspection by the public at all reasonable times (asset register).

The asset record will include a map of local flood risk assets along with clarification as to whether the asset is publicly or privately owned. The asset register will then provide further information about each asset and contact details for the owner/maintainer. There has often been much confusion over the ownership and maintenance responsibility of assets. This is likely to be due to local drainage infrastructure commonly being hidden underground or along land line boundaries where landowners do not realise or acknowledge they have any responsibilities. The asset register is a way to address this problem.

There are no defined criteria as to what defines an asset as significant but a key criteria is location. Future flood risk mapping and flood history at the site will be used to assess significance.

Although the process has started it will take a number of years before this register is sufficiently comprehensive to be of real value in flood risk management.

New sustainable drainage assets will be recorded via the planning and designation processes and included on the register.

Annex E Designation process

LLFAs and the Environment Agency are known as ‘designating authorities’. That is, they may ‘designate’ natural or artificial features or structures that are important for flood risk management. The process is set out within the FWMA.

They may designate features or structures where the following four conditions are satisfied:

1. The designating authority thinks the existence or location of the structure or feature affects:
 - a) a flood risk, or
 - b) a coastal erosion risk.
2. The designating authority has flood or coastal erosion risk management functions in respect of the risk which is affected.
3. The structure or feature is not designated by another authority.
4. The owner of the structure or feature is not a designating authority.

If an asset becomes ‘designated’ its owner cannot alter or remove it without first consulting the designating risk management authority. The designation process covers both the initial designation by the designation authority and an appeals process which is available to the owner of the structure or feature. Once designated the designating authority will have enforcement powers should the structure or feature be altered or modified without permission.

The aim of designating flood risk assets is to safeguard them against unchecked works which could increase flood risk in the area. Designating of features or structures is not something that will be done regularly but only when there are concerns about the asset.

A process for designating features has been developed. With the increase in privately owned and maintained SuDS following the change in government direction, it is likely that there will be substantial increase in the number of designations being carried out in the future.

Annex F

Sustainable drainage systems – Local guidance

Planning applications

When making planning applications, developers will get the best results if they consider the use of SuDS options early in the site evaluation and planning process, not just at the detailed design stage.

Trying to retrofit a sustainable drainage system into a layout which has already been designed is very difficult. It can lead to a design which compromises the benefits of SuDS, results in excessive land take and usually costs more than a conventional drainage system.

It is therefore important to engage in early discussions with the SuDS team, who work alongside their colleagues in the highway and planning authorities. This will ensure that surface water management is integrated into the development, leading to an effective drainage design with costs adequately considered at the start of the development.

There will be a SuDS solution to suit the site, due to the wide range of components available. To determine the right technique it is necessary to first establish the soil conditions and hydrology of the site and use the results of the investigations to support the drainage proposals. The choice can also be significantly influenced by the quality of the land (whether it is affected by contamination), the need to protect vulnerable groundwater sources and the permeability of the soil.

SuDS solutions are most cost effective when designed to work with the natural drainage pattern of the site, for example designed to use existing ditches or natural depressions for swales and ponds or designed to form part of hard and soft landscaped areas. Ponds and green spaces will provide habitats for wildlife to flourish, reduce pollution and provide areas for people to enjoy, adding value to the site.

In the early stages of the site design, consideration should be given as to how the drainage system will be adopted and maintained in the future. It is likely these decisions will influence the design just as much as the technical considerations.

The local planning authority will determine the application in accordance with national and local policies whilst taking into account advice on technical matters from the LLFA.

The LPA will need to be satisfied that:

- any proposals meet national and local policies
- any proposals clearly identify who will be responsible for maintaining the sustainable drainage systems and funding for maintenance should be fair for householders and premises occupiers; and,
- set out a minimum standard to which the sustainable drainage systems must be maintained.

What is expected from the developer?

- Ensure that any submission has been designed in accordance with the national SuDS guidance and this LFRMS
- Use “Planning for SuDS – making it happen” CIRIA C687 to guide the planning of the site
- Consider how to manage the rate of surface water run-off so that it is similar to the conditions before the development. Also consider the effect this run-off will have on any receiving ground or watercourse
- Use the “Code of Practice For Surface Water Management For Development Sites” BS8582:2013, in developing a drainage strategy for the site
- Speak to the SuDS team about the surface water drainage proposals for the site. They can advise on what consents will be required, which types of SuDS are unsuitable and whether
- to take special precautions to prevent pollution or reduce infiltration
- When carrying out the detailed SuDS design, use “The SuDS Manual” CIRIA C697 (C753) to inform the choice of SuDS components, maintenance, etc; for the development
- Demonstrate in the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) that surface water will not cause flooding on site or offsite as a result of the proposed development
- Whilst constructing the site, protect adjoining areas from flooding
- Consider the timetable for construction. Where permeable surfaces are installed, ensure they are not blocked with silt from site activities. Ensure that any planting is carried out in the right conditions
- Ensure there is an adequate management and maintenance system in place to ensure operation of the drainage system until final adoption

Pre-application discussions

The SuDS team will either engage in direct pre-application discussion with developers, or as part of a multi-disciplinary team during LPA discussions. The importance of early discussions cannot be over-emphasized. They should establish the following:

- a) hydrological, planning and environmental objectives for the site (leading to a drainage strategy)
- b) requirements of the local drainage approval and designation processes, including consents, inspections, commuted sums for future maintenance, etc;
- c) environmental or technical constraints to drainage design for the site
- d) the need for a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)
- e) planning layout and constraints – in joint discussions with the Local Planning Authority
- f) highway layout and constraints – in joint discussions with the Local Highway Authority
- g) establishing blue and green corridors within the development

- h) design criteria for the surface water management system
- i) designing the surface water management system for future maintenance
- j) opportunities for the surface water management system to deliver multiple benefits
- k) land ownership for drainage routes and points of discharge (including proposed sewer connections)
- l) existing drainage systems - both on and off site
- m) stakeholder responsibilities and requirements, including timescales for any likely approvals/consents
- n) temporary drainage during the construction phase(s).

For larger sites or multi plot developments, where the land is sub divided into separate plots owned by different landowners, or where there is an intention to develop the land in phases, the content for a drainage Masterplan should be agreed at this stage.

The Masterplan should be designed to ensure effective communication between all developers and identified stakeholders in establishing the selection, implementation and phasing of source control, site and regional and/or linking drainage components, together with responsibilities for temporary drainage and maintenance during construction.

Outline planning application

The following information should be presented the form of a drainage strategy to enable determination of the application:

- a) the technical design criteria used for the development site(s) based upon the national SuDS guidance
- b) any constraints which affect the proposed development
- c) topographical survey of the site, including levels and sections of any adjacent water courses for an appropriate distance upstream and downstream of discharge point
- d) how the indicative drainage design meets the FRA requirements (if an FRA is required)
- e) proposed approach in the drainage design to deal with flood risk, water quality, conveyance, storage, exceedance routes and multi functional use of drainage 'space' to meet community and environmental requirements
- f) details of any offsite works required
- g) details of any consents required
- h) identification of discharge points or receptors i.e. to ground, watercourse or sewer
- i) identification of sensitive receptors, including groundwater protection zones, habitat designations or archaeological features
- j) an assessment of the need and opportunity for rainwater harvesting and use
- k) evidence of infiltration capacity at the site and suitability of infiltration drainage

- l) proposed design calculations for peak flow, volume control and greenfield runoff, and/ or brownfield runoff where appropriate. Based upon the national SuDS guidance showing pre-development (greenfield or brownfield as relevant) and post-development runoff rates, critical storm duration and associated storage estimates with indicative impermeable areas
- m) inclusion of climate change, future development allowances and quantification of any surface water flows on-site from off-site locations
- n) temporary drainage during construction
- o) proposed split of the surface water management systems between private (i.e. within curtilage) and public (i.e. in public open space and/or highway)
- p) the relationship with and links to the LFRMS, Water Framework Directive, Planning, Sustainability and Environmental Policies (National, Regional and Local)

The Masterplan (in addition to the drainage strategy information) should include:

- i. details of phasing;
- ii. individual plot discharge and storage constraints;
- iii. who would be responsible for construction, maintenance and adoption of the regional and/ or linking components of the drainage system;
- iv. who would be responsible for controlling the overall surface water management of the site;

Due to the nature of outline planning applications and whether or not certain aspects of the proposed development are reserved, the amount of information which would be contained within the drainage strategy (set out above) should be considered to be a minimum.

If the drainage of the site is not reserved (and the layout and landscape design are also not reserved) then the drainage strategy should be more detailed as set out below.

It is likely that an outline planning permission will have a condition(s) attached requiring the submission of more detailed drainage information which must be approved before the development can commence.

Full planning application

(or reserved matters application if applicable)

Detailed design

If a reserved matters application is being made, the submission on the detailed design and layout of the sustainable drainage system should update and enhance the drainage strategy, taking into account the advice from the SuDS team and stakeholder inputs, and be submitted as a detailed drainage strategy.

If a full planning application is being made then the submission should be a combination of the information required for an outline application drainage strategy and the following information, to produce a detailed drainage strategy:

- a. Final design calculations to demonstrate conformity with the design criteria for the site for peak flow, volume control and greenfield runoff, and/or brownfield runoff where appropriate. Based upon the national SuDS guidance showing pre-development (greenfield or brownfield

as relevant) and post-development runoff rates, critical storm duration and associated storage estimates to determine the scale (and associated land take) of conveyance and storage structures;

- b. Existing and proposed site sections and site levels;
- c. Long sections and cross sections for the proposed drainage system;
- d. Plan of proposed SuDS with sub-catchment areas including impermeable areas and phasing;
- e. Details of connections to watercourses and sewers;
- f. Operational characteristics of any mechanical features including maintenance and energy requirements;
- i. Plan demonstrating flooded areas for the 1 in 100 year storm when system is at capacity and demonstrating flow paths for design for exceedance;
- j. Access arrangements for all proposed SuDS;
- k. Management plan for all non adopted drainage;
- l. Landscape planting scheme if proposing vegetated SuDS;
- m. Plan for management of construction impacts including any diversions, erosion control, phasing and maintenance period (pre-adoption);

The local planning authority will determine the application in accordance with national and local policies whilst taking into account advice on technical matters from the LLFA.

Due to the nature of full or reserved matters planning applications certain aspects of the proposed development may not be fully developed at the time of submission. The amount of information which would be contained within the detailed drainage strategy (set out above) should be considered to be a minimum.

If the applicant has not fully detailed the drainage design, it is likely that the planning permission will have a condition(s) attached requiring the submission of more detailed drainage information which must be approved before the development can commence.

Allowance for urban creep

Increased development within urban areas can have an impact on flooding, particularly surface water flooding. Urban creep describes activities such as paving over gardens and building extensions. This sort of development increases the hard surfaces in a catchment, reducing the opportunity for water to filter into the soil, increasing the volume of water which has to run off into drains and the speed at which it flows, thus increasing the intensity of the peak flow.

The activities which make up urban creep are often outside the development management process (known as permitted development) so their impacts on flooding are less likely to be controlled than development which is subject to normal planning procedures.

The LLFA will look for all future development to have an allowance for creep built into any surface water design this will in accordance with the following table:

Residential development density Dwellings per hectare	Change allowance % of impermeable area
≤ 25	10
30	8
35	6
45	4
≥ 50	2
Flats and apartments	0

Note: where the inclusion of the appropriate allowance would increase the total impermeable area to more than 100%, then 100% should be used as the impermeable area for calculation purposes.

The consideration of urban creep should be assessed on a site by site basis but is usually limited to residential development only. However on commercial, industrial, retail, school and hospital sites an allowance may be required.

Designing for Exceedance

Whilst SuDS are generally designed to cope with rainfall in excess of that used for public sewer design, nevertheless it would be prohibitive to design a system to cope with all rainfall events. Any development should therefore be designed to deal with any water which exceeds the design capacity, this is called exceedance.

The LLFA will expect all development to be designed to ensure that exceedance is allowed for, and that flow paths are provided to deal with this situation. Exceedance should not have a detrimental effect upon life, property or critical infrastructure. .

Annex G Sandbag policy

Operational procedure

FLOOD CONTAINMENT/PREVENTION (SANDBAG POLICY)

General

In the event of a serious flooding problem affecting a large area of the Borough or a number of properties the expectation is that calls for assistance will be coordinated through the Customer Services Centre and Forestcare (out of hours). These calls will then be directed to and managed by the appropriate service area (Highways/Landscape). Service areas need to coordinate throughout any flooding incident to ensure there is an overall coordinated picture. This coordination will be facilitated via the emergency planning function and most likely with the establishment of a Corporate Severe Weather Management Team.

All requests for sandbags will be assessed in terms of priority of need and associated risk. Because the nature of local flooding tends to be as a result of the rapid onset of surface water run off the Councils ability to respond to hundreds of requests for assistance over a very limited time is extremely limited.

Priority of need

Where likely need has been identified the priority is to provide advice to the Customer Services Centre/Forestcare as to how calls are to be handled. They will normally agree to take the full details and advise the caller that these will be passed on to the officers so that they may evaluate need having regard to the circumstances and the following priorities. The caller will be advised not to assume that help will be coming. The Council will deploy sandbags with regards to the following priorities.

- To prevent loss of life or serious injury.
- Maintaining access for the emergency services.
- Protection of property occupied by a vulnerable resident (regardless of tenure) such as a housebound, frail or disabled person unable to assist themselves.
- Protecting vital facilities within the community.
- Protection of vital facilities and infrastructure within the community.
- Protection of BFC property.

It is essential to recognise that BFC maintains a limited supply of sandbags which is intended to be deployed according to the above priorities. It is not able to provide a sandbag service on demand to the general public.

Other than in the circumstances outlined above BFC will not normally seek to provide sandbags to private properties. Residents and local businesses are expected to make their own provision for flood defence based on the weather forecasts and any previous local experience. The Council has no liability to provide sandbags and care must be taken to ensure that no liability is accepted.

Flooding on the highway

The Council's highways contractor, Ringway, holds only a very limited sandbag stock and will in its normal course of duties deploy sandbags intended for use on the road network to contain modest scale pollution events.

Sandbags will not ordinarily be used to prevent flooding on the road and if the network becomes flooded it will recede over time. Ringway is responsible for placing flood warning signs on the network and in extreme conditions close roads. Ringway support can be arranged via the highways team in hours via Forestcare out of hours.

Flooding of other BFC owned and occupied property

Council resources will be deployed (via CLL) to help prevent flooding of council properties including offices, schools, libraries, leisure centres and community buildings. CLL may also be called upon to assist vulnerable households in the community.

Emergency planning

The Emergency Planning function is able to provide coordinating support and assistance to the above roles. Specific requests for support such as maintaining access may also be received via the emergency services. The first priority is to assess the situation and determine the likelihood of there being a need to establish the Corporate Severe Weather Management Team as outlined in the Corporate Severe Weather Plan.

Vulnerability

Discretion and judgment will be required in the deployment of sandbags which prevent loss of life or serious injury, protection of transportation routes and vital facilities within the community. Deployment will be considered at the time of need, giving due regard to the extent and duration of event, protection of the vulnerable, previous flooding history, and health and safety of the teams making deliveries.

It is not possible to provide an exact definition of vulnerable but circumstances such as medical conditions, disabilities, age, and pregnancy may make an individual more vulnerable. Requests for assistance will be made to the Council via the Customer Services Centre and Forestcare, and where there is uncertainty as to whether a person is vulnerable this information should be passed to the Severe Weather Management Team/Emergency Planning Function for decision. It may be necessary to liaise with other service areas colleagues in making this assessment.

Resources and manpower

Stocks of 700 ready filled and 500 empty sandbags are located at the Depot. CLL are responsible for ensuring that stock levels are maintained and available for use.

In the event of need to deploy/restock then manpower resources can be called upon from CLL. No formal callout/standby arrangements are in place out of hours, therefore a telephone call must be made to the CLL managers to determine possible staffing resources and timescales of availability.

Mutual aid arrangements

In the event of urgent need then under the Berkshire emergency planning mutual aid memorandum other Berkshire local authorities may be able to assist if it is a localised event or they have additional capacity – contact can be made via the Emergency Planning Function. BFC may also receive a request for mutual aid, depending upon the numbers required this decision must be made by the Severe Weather Management Team. Above all consideration should be given to the needs of BFC as a priority.

Where BFC provides sandbags, they become the responsibility of the person receiving them. BFC cannot accept responsibility for putting the bags in place (although this should be determined at the time of need, e.g. if there are elderly tenants) or for disposing of them after flooding recedes, although in exceptional circumstances this view will be reconsidered.

Forward planning

Consideration should be given by all BFC site managers as to the local risk of flooding and previous experience and, wherever possible, sandbags should be deployed in advance when the risk is considered high. Under such circumstances stock can be drawn from the corporate store.

Annex H: SEA/HRA summary

Separate links on Website

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement>

Copies of this document may be obtained in large print, easy read, Braille, on audio tape or in other languages. To obtain a copy in an alternative format, please telephone 01344 352000.

Nepali

यस प्रचारको सक्षेपं वा सार निचोड चाहिं दिइने छ, ठूलो अक्षरमा, ब्रेल वा क्यासेट सूनको लागी । अरु भाषाको नक्कल पनि हासिल गर्न सकिने छ । कृपया सम्पर्क गनुहोला ०१३४४ ३५२००० ।

Tagalog

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Urdu

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Polish

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TO: EXECUTIVE
DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2017

HIGH NEEDS BLOCK REVIEW
Director Children, Young People & Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek endorsement from the Executive to implement the recommendations within the attached High Needs Block funding (HNBF) review report

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **For the Executive to NOTE the recommendations and rationale on which they are based.**
- 2.2 **For the Executive to APPROVE the implementation of the recommendations given, subject to sufficient resources.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendations contained in the report have implications for the nature of Bracknell Forest's provision for Special Educational Needs and Alternative Education.
- 3.2 This will affect all schools in the Local Authority and require negotiation with current specialist provision at Kennel Lane School, College Hall, out of area providers and additional resource centres regarding funding levels and provision.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Continue with the present arrangements. This is not acceptable because:
- a. The changing educational policy landscape and the need for a higher degree of school sector driven change
 - b. Proposed revisions to the way LAs are funded for High Needs pupils will reduce the flexibility the LA currently has to manage this budget alongside the schools budget
 - c. Overspending within the HNBF cannot be sustained.
 - d. Inefficient use of public money must be addressed.
- 4.2 Disregard findings from the review and seek other recommendations. This is not appropriate because:
- a. The basis for the review, procurement procedure and subsequent engagement with the consultants has been robust.

- b. The consultants have consulted with all schools and had a high level of engagement with school leadership teams fostering confidence in the validity of the process.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The attached independent review of the current High Needs Block spending was commissioned by Children, Young People & Learning (CYPL) following consultation with the Schools Forum which endorsed the terms of reference and agreed the cost should be financed from the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- 5.2 CYPL Departmental Management Team has considered this report and accepts the report and the recommendations within it.
- 5.3 The purpose of the review was to produce a report including recommendations for the future and a first draft of a new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy for Bracknell Forest. The outcomes/ recommendations will form a work plan and be consulted on to inform future spending decisions.
- 5.4 Areas considered by the review team:
 1. To assess if the current SEND funding system in the range of maintained education provision meets needs, delivers effective outcomes and value for money
 2. Identify existing good practice and make recommendations on improvements in SEND processes and funding allocation specifically the SEN panel process which considers whether or not pupils should be given a Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and the current base funding and bandings used to agree top up funding
 3. Analyse the use of High Needs Block funding in
 - a 20% sample of mainstream schools,
 - the local special school and one other comparable special school where Bracknell Forest places pupils
 - two post-18 providers
 - the secondary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
 - and benchmark against schools and providers that the review team consider have good practice; collect and analyse the views of a focus group of key stakeholders including parents/carers about the provision
 4. Analyse the evidence base for the model used in some LAs of devolving a higher level of funding to schools (sometimes to geographic school clusters) to meet SEND needs prior to the formal EHCP processes and comment on the desirability of this approach in Bracknell Forest.
 5. Analyse the existing LA wide provision against current and projected needs and make recommendations on
 - how mainstream provision could be developed to better meet needs
 - the best use of existing specialist provision
 - the scope for re-directing resources into additional specialist provision locally in the medium and long term.

5.5 The recommendations contained in the report are:

- I. **Increasing strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system in Bracknell Forest**
 - Establishing a Bracknell Forest SEND strategic group that is a partnership between nominated Headteachers and the Council's Department for Children, Young People and Learning.
- II. **Strong co-ordinated local authority leadership for planning of places and funding and commissioning**
 - The review has identified a mismatch between some commissioned specialist places and likely demand, whilst at the moment there is no clear mechanism to formally amend specialist place numbers
 - Current provision at Kennel Lane School, College Hall, Additional Resource Centres and within Non Maintained Special School (NMSS) should be reviewed to focus on outcomes, pathways of support and maximise value for money/ efficient use of the HNBF. Any changes to this provision will require consultation.
- III. **Greater coherence to the SEND system designed with the child's need at the centre**
 - Support pathways for each major SEND category should be mapped to support the LA in commissioning provision to meet needs identified in schools
- IV. **A data-rich SEND system that understands the differences it is making through planning and commissioning.**
 - Good quality, reliable data is necessary to underpin developments across the renewed SEND system. This is not currently in place.

Full details are on pages 61 – 70 in the attached High Needs Block Funding review report.

5.6 It is anticipated that in implementing these recommendations and emerging DfE guidance will result in a series of proposed actions for the consideration of the Executive in shaping the way the High Needs Block is spent going forward. The recommendations for change will also need to take account of the national funding reforms, where the current DfE consultation document indicates the potential for a £2.327m (15%) reduction in the high needs funding grant to £12.858m over the medium to long term.

6 **ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

Borough Solicitor

6.1 The report sets out a legal review and consultation of the high needs budget. The review should be careful that whilst it looks at how the high needs funding block is used more efficiently, the review should not stray into adjusting the threshold for the gateway to a plan which is set out in the report namely that a child requires a plan where they have a special educational need for provision which is in excess of that which a school alone should be expected to provide.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this interim report. Any final recommendations for change will need to be fully costed, evaluated and deliverable within the overall funding available to support high needs pupils.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not applicable at this point, but may be appropriate alongside the consultation process to address certain recommendations particularly where that results in changes to provision.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Potential financial risks are being mitigated through conducting this review. There is a risk of reputational damage by making changes to the way SEN funding is being used and this is being mitigated through extensive stakeholder involvement and a communication strategy which will highlight improvements in value for money and services better matched to local needs.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 All schools/ academies, Schools Forum, parents forum, officer meetings

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Online, face to face (individual interviews and group), written reports.

Representations Received

- 7.3 None

Supporting Papers

High Needs Block review report

Contact for further information

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High Needs Funding Block Review

October 2016

For Bracknell Forest
Council



THE PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW IS TO ASSESS THE CURRENT USE OF THE HIGH NEEDS FUNDING BLOCK AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE SPECIAL EDUCATION AND DISABILITIES SYSTEM IN BRACKNELL FOREST.

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High Needs Funding Block Review

FOR BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL

THE PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW IS TO ASSESS THE CURRENT USE OF THE HIGH NEEDS FUNDING BLOCK AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES SYSTEM IN BRACKNELL FOREST.

Executive Summary

The High Needs Funding Block Review provides a range of recommendations for the future Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system in Bracknell Forest and was carried out over a six-month period from April to October 2016.

This Review was commissioned to support future decision-making about the allocation of the High Needs Funding Block (HNFB) informed by changes to the education system and in the light of financial challenges. Bracknell Forest Council commissioned Chow Solutions Ltd to carry out the external review.

The scope for the Review is to report on:

- the effectiveness of the current school SEND system, and externally commissioned provision and how the HNFB is deployed in Targeted Services;
- emerging and future pupil demand;
- existing SEND provision funded from the HNFB and analyse against current and projected levels of need;
- options for better alignment of service provision to demand & potential for savings
- options for reinvestment of savings in an improved SEND system.

The following aspects lie outside the scope of the Review:

- early years funding, health provision and pupil premium funding;
- vulnerable children and young people who are not SEND;
- the quality of local authority provision supported by the HNFB;
- the quality of provision at College Hall and other schools funded by the HNFB.

The Review's recommendations are summarised below.

Key for table: Funding implications: - = cost increase < £50K; 0 = achievable within current funds; + = potential saving up to £100K; ++ = potential savings = £100K - £250K; +++ = potential saving >£250K.
Priority: 1 = highest priority to 3 = lowest priority. Complexity: 1 = lowest complexity to 3 = most complex.

High Needs Funding Block Review – Summary Recommendations					
Theme	Recommendation	What this involves	Benefits	Potential funding implications by 2020	Estimate: priority / complexity
6.1 Increasing strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system in Bracknell Forest	6.1.1 Increased school leader involvement in establishing and implementing a strategic vision for SEND	Establishing Bracknell Forest SEND Strategic Group to develop a local vision in consultation with strategic partners.	Better strategic leadership that results in more efficient, impactful use of SEND funds. More children are placed locally.	–	1 / 1
	6.1.2 School leadership of strategic accountability across the SEND system	Setting out clear terms of reference that ensure the group scrutinises and drives change, aligned with a new SEND Strategy.	Facilitates creative solutions to future demand pressures for SEND. Improved transparency and accountability for high needs funding and implementation of the local vision for SEND.	0	1 / 1
6.2 Strong Local Authority strategic leadership for planning of places and funding and commissioning	6.2.1 Remodel specialist provision to better meet future needs	A) Special School - remodelling of provision.	Fewer children going out of area, early assessment of SEND and more effective early intervention. More efficient use of funds.	+++	1 / 3
		B) Pupil referral unit - review current provision.	Improved quality of learning and attainment, and secure leadership and management. More efficient use of funding leading to improved alternative provision, including within mainstream schools.	0	1 / 3
		C) Resource centres - refocus planned places and introduce outcomes-based service level agreements.	Provide a better continuum of local provision for children and young people with ASD. More efficient use of funds.	+++	2 / 2
		D) Independent and non-maintained special schools - partnership and improved place commissioning.	More children are placed locally, over time; reducing transport costs and improving their access to community networks. More efficient use of funds.	+++	2 / 1
	6.2.2 Chief Officer approval required for high cost out of area placements	Robust process to approve and commission all high cost placements in excess of £20,000 per annum	More efficient use of funds. Helps to ensure more effective partnership working with health, social care and education to manage those with the most complex needs.	+	2 / 1

High Needs Funding Block Review – Summary Recommendations					
Theme	Recommendation	What this involves	Benefits	Potential funding implications to 2020	Priority vs complexity (scale 1 to 3)
271 6.2 Strong Local Authority strategic leadership for planning of places and funding and commissioning	6.2.3 Robust joint commissioning arrangements for SEND, starting with joint planning for 14-25 year olds.	Establish robust joint commissioning arrangements ensuring all assessments for EHCP, Care Act and health are coordinated. Involvement of parents / carers and young people throughout.	More efficient use of Council and health funds. Better transitions to adulthood for young people.	–	2 / 3
	6.3 Greater coherences to the SEND system designed with the child's need at the centre	6.3.1 A senior Council officer should review specific long standing SEND support contracts.	Modernising the commissioning approaches for speech and language therapy, sensory impairment and other SEND support services	Provides improved commissioned support for children and young people with SEND. More efficient use of funds.	++
	6.3.2 Implement a continuum of support for all pupils with SEND, through building on local strengths and processes.	As part of updating the Local Offer, map pathways for all categories of SEND need.	Better information and advice and guidance for children and young people and their parents. Better multi-agency coordination	0	3 / 3
6.4 A data-rich SEND system that understands the differences it is making through planning and commissioning	6.4.1 Consistent, reliable and robust SEND data across the local system.	Establish a core SEND data set which is available to professionals across the system and reported to strategic leaders.	Understanding the impact of changes. Achieving improved outcomes for pupils identified at SEN support and with an EHCP or statement.	–	1 / 1
	6.4.2 Development of forecasting and cost projections to inform future SEND decision-making.	Model future demand for school places for SEND for up to ten years.	Better planning of provision and more efficient use of funds.	0	1 / 2

1. Introduction

1.1 Scope

Bracknell Forest Council's Children's Services, in consultation with the local Schools Forum, commissioned a review to assess the current use of the High Needs Funding Block (HNFB) across their local special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system and to make recommendations for the future. This is in response to projected financial pressures it is anticipated the HNFB budget faces in the future, as well as reviewing the financial robustness of the local system as it adapts to the new statutory arrangements under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the statutory SEND Code of Practice (DfE 2015a).

The HNFB Review was carried out between April and October 2016, timed to inform strategic decision-making for 2017-18 onwards. Specifically, the scope for the Review is to report on:

- the effectiveness of the current school SEND system, and externally commissioned provision and how the HNFB is deployed in Targeted Services;
- emerging and future pupil and student demand;
- existing SEND provision funded from the HNFB and analyse against current and projected levels of need;
- options for better alignment of service provision to demand & potential for savings
- options for reinvestment of savings in an improved SEND system.

The following aspects of the SEND system in Bracknell Forest fall outside the scope of this Review:

- early years funding, health provision and pupil premium funding;
- vulnerable children and young people who are not SEND;
- the quality of local authority (LA) provision supported by the HNFB;
- the quality of provision at College Hall and other schools funded by the HNFB;
- outcomes for children and young people with SEND;
- analysis of the outcomes of pupils with SEND across LA provision, including the work of the Early Interventions Hub.

1.2 Definitions and terms used in the report

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is defined as a child or young person who has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her (DfE 2015a).

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. (DfE 2015a)

The Department for Education (DfE) oversees the national legislative and policy framework for all schools in England and defines specific, identifiable conditions that fall within the SEND responsibilities of schools and local authorities. These are listed in the Glossary.

The DfE, with the Education Funding Agency (EFA), also allocates the high needs funding block (HNFB): an element of the Direct Schools Grant (DSG) transferred to local authorities (LAs). The purpose of the HNFB is to fund the system to meet the educational needs of all children and young people resident in the LA with SEND high needs (see: section 3.1.2 for more details).

The HNFB allocation for Bracknell Forest is the central focus of this report.

1.2.1 LOCAL SEND SYSTEMS

A local SEND system is defined as that which supports and delivers the entitlement to education for all children and young people under 25 identified as having SEND

Under the Children and Family Act 2014, LAs have a statutory duty to identify all children and young people resident in their area who have SEND and ensure that the necessary statutory provision is made for them.

Key features of a local SEND system, as an element of the local school system, include:

- LA's have a lead for SEND, who oversees implementation of the strategy for SEND and would usually manage a team who monitor and implement the funding arrangements for all children and young people with high needs and the statutory processes to assess and identify them, via the education and health care plan (EHCP) process;
- A school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCO): a qualified teacher in a school or maintained nursery school who has responsibility for co-ordinating special educational needs (SEN) provision.
- The Local Offer: each LA must develop and publish information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people who have SEND. This provides parents / carers of children with SEND with an important source of local information and schools are encouraged to summarise their own offer for SEND on the school's website as well.

Education and health care plans (EHCPs) were introduced in the DfE's 2015 Code of Practice for SEND (DfE 2015a) and are the culmination of a new process to identify and assess children and young people with high needs and the EHCP supersedes the previous 'statements of SEN'. EHCPs act as a single plan and define the support to be provided across education, health and social care, including setting out any additional funding from the HNFB for this support. Parent and child views should be set out in this plan and an annual review be undertaken by the child's school to assess progress and, if necessary, update the EHCP. The assessment of need and the updating of EHCPs is overseen in Bracknell Forest by its SEND Panel, chaired by the LA lead for SEND.

'SEN support' was introduced by the Code of Practice as a category covering children and young people identified with SEND, but not assessed as having high levels of need. These pupils' needs will have been assessed by the SENCO in their school and, through a graduated approach, access given to additional, personalised interventions to enable them to better access the curriculum and progress in their learning. The number and primary need of these pupils must be recorded by schools and reported in their annual census.

Some children with SEND have such complex high needs that these cannot be sufficiently supported by local, maintained specialist provision, whether in school or FE college. Following assessment, the

SEND Panel can decide that a place ought to be commissioned in a non-maintained special school (NMSS) or an independent specialist provider. NMSSs are specialist, independent education providers approved to run special schools and charge fees on a non-profit-making basis.

Social care and health are key components of the local SEND system. The LA has the flexibility to commission some services on behalf of schools and pupils with SEND. Often these are health services such as speech and language therapy (SALT) and occupational therapy (OT). There is also a significant need for support for some children and young people with SEND from local child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), services that are provided by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust (BHFT) in Bracknell Forest.

2. The Review Process

Bracknell Forest Council consults with its Schools Forum, a representative group of headteachers and governors, about local funding arrangements and budgets for education. In its budget consultation for 2016-17 BFC officers set out changes to “the allocation of High Needs Block income that is the most complex part of the DSG High Needs Funding” (p26 BFC 2016a). This paper identified the following challenges:

- The Education Funding Agency uses the 2012-13 levels of SEND as its baseline for financial allocations to LAs,
- There is a shortfall in the adjustment for payments for post-16 places such as for the new responsibilities for education for 19 – 24 year olds with an EHCP, and
- Some recent changes to the funding of NMSS places, which has had negative consequences for the finance model for the new ASD resource centre in Bracknell Forest.

In the light of the challenges, LA officers proposed to commission an external review of the HNFB to help with future decision-making and this was approved by the Schools Forum (BFC 2016a). This review commenced in April 2016 and completed October 2016.

2.1 Governance and the Review team

The Chow Solutions Team consists of two experienced consultants, with extensive LA and education experience, and the head of a leading alternative provision academy and a former headteacher. More information about the Review team is in appendix 4.

The lead client relationship for the Review is with the Head of Targeted Services and this has been managed through fortnightly ‘keep-in touch’ (KIT) meetings, as well as regular telephone and email liaison. The Head of Targeted Services also chairs the Review’s Project Board made up of senior stakeholders in BFC’s Department of Children, Young People and Learning. The core membership of this group is the Principal Educational Psychologist (and Head of SEND) and the Head of Education Finance. The Project Board has met three times during the period of the Review and its terms of reference can be found in appendix 4.

The other key governance group for the Review is a Headteachers Reference Group of school leaders. Volunteers were recruited to the Reference Group in response to an invitation circulated by the Director of Children, Young People and Learning. The experience and views of Bracknell Forest schools are a key consideration of the Review and the opportunity to discuss issues and emerging themes with these school leaders has been essential. This has ensured that recommendations are firmly based on schools’ day-to-day experiences and that there is confidence in the future direction of SEND system change. The terms of reference and membership of this group is in [appendix 4](#).

2.2 Timeline and evidence gathering

The key elements of initiating and then gathering evidence for the Review are set out below. During the scoping phase, the Review team assessed in detail the challenges for data gathering and analysis, allowing for the fact that schools would only be able to participate during the summer term. Informed by these constraints and the requirements in the invitation to tender, the final scope was agreed, as set out in 1.1, and signed off in the first week of May 2016.

The period up until early July was set aside for evidence and intelligence gathering, culminating in the presentation of a Summary of Emerging Themes to the Project Board towards the end of that month. Further analysis and synthesis led to the development and agreement of the recommendations of the Review during September, with the final report and a draft SEND strategy for Bracknell Forest delivered on 14th October (see appendix 4).

2.2.1 SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT

A core feature of the Review was to gather evidence from schools about their own planned provision for children and young people with SEND and their views about what works well across the current system and areas for improvement. A secondary objective was the engagement of the wider body of schools across Bracknell Forest, so they both feel they have had an opportunity to express views or submit evidence and are more likely to be engaged in future change and development. In addition to the Headteachers Reference Group (see: 2.1), school-level evidence was sourced from:

- visits to certain core providers: Kennel Lane School (the maintained special school in Bracknell Forest), College Hall (the PRU), Chilworth House School (a key NMSS provider for Bracknell Forest Council) and Bracknell & Wokingham College.
- interviews with a senior leader and SENCO from a range of mainstream schools in Bracknell Forest;
- additional data provided by the schools, including information for parents and provision mapping for pupils with SEND;
- an online survey of all schools in Bracknell Forest.

In preparation for the visits to the special school or PRU, a list of enquiry questions and data were circulated in advance together with a schedule for the visit (see: [appendix 2c](#)).

The mainstream schools that participated in the interviews were requested to supply a similar range of data and examples of their SEND provision mapping as well as respond to interview questions. The schedule of mainstream schools for the interviews was prepared by Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) following an invitation that was circulated to all state schools in the LA.

2.2.2 SURVEYS AND COMMUNICATION

A one-page summary about the HNFBR Review was prepared with officers from BFC and circulated in a briefing for headteachers and also accompanied the invitation to participate in the short online survey about the SEND system across Bracknell Forest. Versions of the same summary were used to inform stakeholders such as LA officers, school staff and parents of children with SEND.

The short online survey was developed to canvas the views of leaders from as many of Bracknell Forest's schools as possible (see: appendix 1). The survey questions were largely adapted from an earlier survey conducted as part of a DfE commissioned, national research project into the funding system for SEND, which reported in July 2015 (DfE 2015c). The adaptation of their questions has enabled some national comparison to be included in the analysis (see: section 4.6.1).

A short online survey for parents / carers of children with SEND was also developed and carried out, following the consultation session with Bracknell Dialogue Parents Forum. The purpose of this survey was to both seek the views of parents / carers across Bracknell Forest and to offer some

comparison of their views about aspects of the SEND system with those of school leaders (see: appendix 2). Following consultation sessions, the link to the survey was circulated via their database of members and by the disabilities team in BFC's children's social care. This resulted in 40 responses being submitted from the parents / carers of 45 children with SEND (see: 3.7.2).

2.2.3 LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA AND INTERVIEWS WITH OFFICERS

An initial list of data about SEND and the deployment of the HNFB to schools was drawn up. The Head of Education Finance and the SEND Lead ensured that time from key members of their staff was available to provide data from existing sources and additional time meet the Review team to build their understanding of the data.

Data requested included (for a three year period wherever possible):

- Breakdown by primary need and age of all pupils with statements or EHCPs.
- Breakdown by school and primary need and year group and top-up payment of all pupils with EHCPs or statements.
- More detailed budget breakdowns for Kennel Lane and College Hall.
- Detailed breakdown of the HNFB budget, including specific teams and services commissioned from the LA and elsewhere.
- Breakdown by school, year group and by primary need of all pupils recorded receiving SEN support.
- Information about the banding scales used to assess the element 3 payments.

A series of interviews with key LA officers was scheduled during the evidence gathering phase, including with members of the SEN Team as well as their manager, the manager of the Support for Learning service and with education finance staff as well as the Head of Education Finance.

2.3 Analysis and the emerging themes

The Review team's focus then moved to the analysis of data and the interview and written evidence. This culminated in the delivery of a summary of the Review's Emerging Themes to the Project Board, which was signed off in July. The final phase of the Review further tested the evidence and themes, leading to the final recommendations.

2.3.1 ANALYSIS AND SHAPING OF EMERGING THEMES

Following analysis, the Review evidence was found to fall into four overarching themes:

1. Increasing strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system in Bracknell Forest
2. Strong local authority strategic leadership for planning of places and funding and commissioning
3. A more coherent SEND system designed with the child's need at the centre
4. A data-rich SEND system that understands the differences it is making.

2.3.2 TESTING OF THEMES AND DEVELOPMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The final phase of the Review has involved further testing of the themes, including with the Headteachers' Reference Group, and shaping these into recommendations that the Project Board

view as achievable for Bracknell Forest. In support of implementation three case studies have been produced offering examples of practice from elsewhere in England about:

1. Approaches to traded SEND services to schools
2. Funding and commissioning arrangements with specialist school provision
3. Examples of approaches for schools to access funding to support pupils with high needs outside the statutory assessment processes.

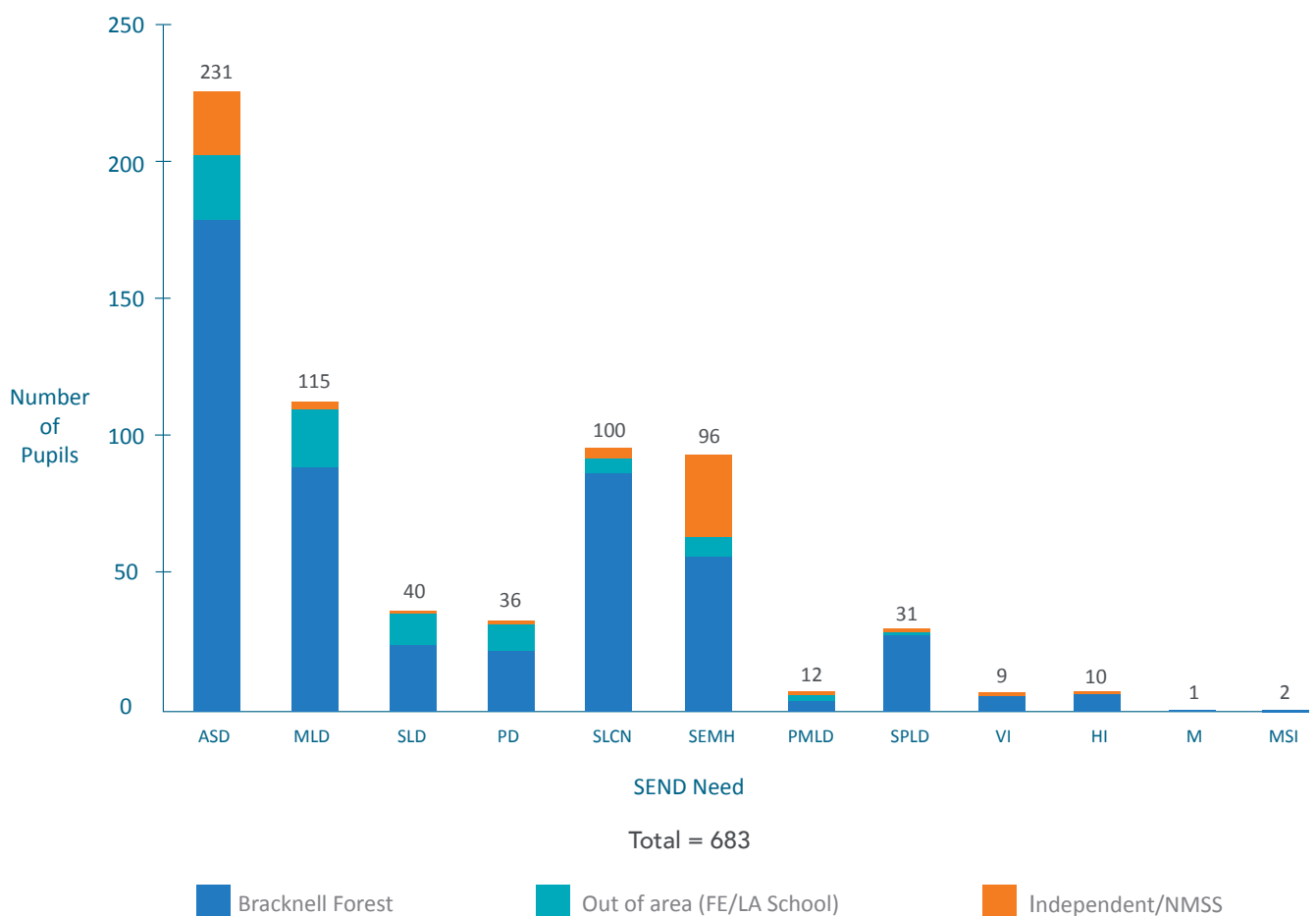
Finally, the Review's recommendations are reflected in the first draft of a new strategy for SEND for the school system across Bracknell Forest. This document will form an early element of a renewed strategic partnership across the LA, schools, voluntary sector and other partners to achieve value for money and better outcomes for all children and young people with SEND.

3. Overview of Bracknell Forest’s SEND System

The SEND system is led by national government and, for England, the legislative, policy and funding arrangements are overseen by the Department for Education (DfE). The DfE’s vision for the SEND system in England is “of children and young people with SEND achieving well in their early years, at school and in college; finding employment; leading happy and fulfilled lives; and having choice and control over their support.” (p4 “Special educational needs and disability: supporting local and national accountability”, DfE 2015b). A more detailed summary of the national law and policy for SEND is set out in [appendix 1](#), together with a national profile of levels of SEND need.

This section provides an overview of the SEND system as it currently operates across Bracknell Forest, in the context of national arrangements. This overview has a particular emphasis on the high needs funding block (HNFB) budget and on the parts of the system supported by it. In addition, this section includes additional detail about SEND provision in Bracknell Forest schools, including mainstream, specialist and FE colleges. More detail is also provided about the funded, out of area SEND provision and, finally, there is a summary of the findings from the two surveys conducted by the Review.

Fig 1: Total SEND Pupils with EHCP/statement (June 2016)



3.1 Summary

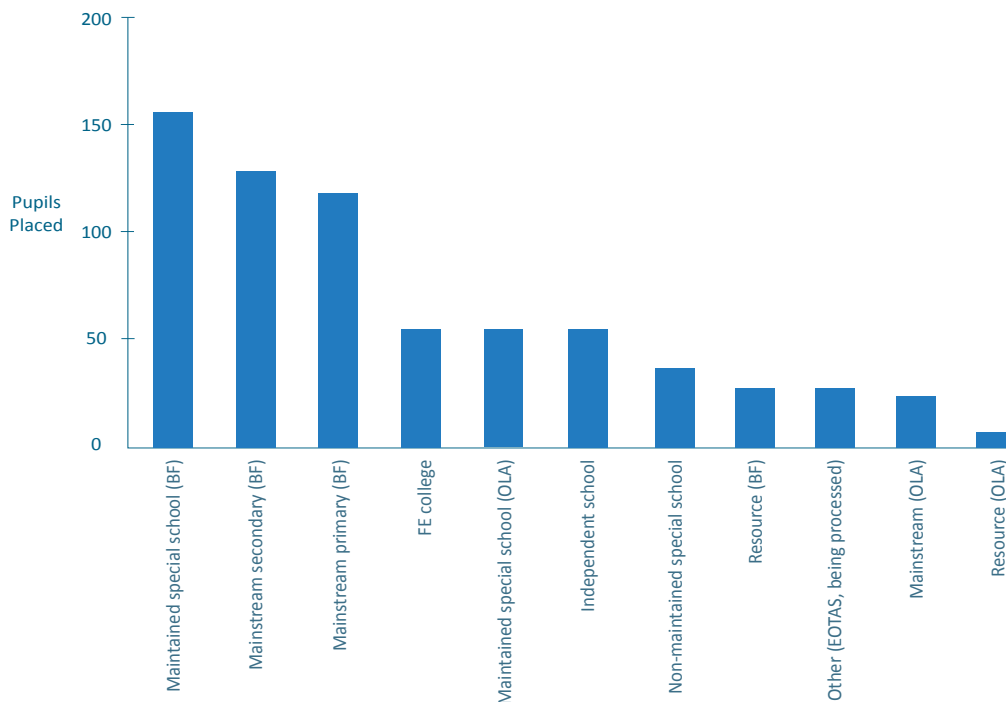
As of June 2016, there are 683 children or young people from Bracknell Forest with a statement or EHCP (*source: BFC’s SEN Team*):

- 240 children attend primary phase school
- 301 young people of secondary age (years 7 – 11)
- 142 young people are 16 or older and educated at school or FE college

Figure 1 shows the primary SEND need of the children and young people as recorded on their EHCP or statement who are Bracknell Forest residents. This shows that the largest group are those with ASD, who make up 34% of these pupils. Nationally, those with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) as a primary need form the largest single group of pupils with SEND (see: appendix 1), but the proportion in Bracknell Forest is nearly 10% higher than the average for England. The graph also shows whether pupils, by need, are placed in or out of Bracknell Forest. Children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) are the largest group of pupils educated outside of Bracknell Forest (and in independent provision), followed by those with ASD.

Figure 2 gives a more detailed breakdown of where these Bracknell Forest pupils are educated. The vast majority attend either mainstream schools or resource centres (280) or Kennel Lane (157) in Bracknell Forest (BF), whilst another 82 attend either mainstream or state special schools in other LAs (OLA). These figures provide a snapshot from June this year; there were 11 cases still in the process of assessment, whilst there are lower FE and other post-16 numbers, due to young people leaving education following exams and not yet having confirmed their place for September.

Fig 2: School sector where pupils with EHCP / statement are placed



Increasing resident population is another challenge in Bracknell Forest.

- The School Places Plan (BFC 2015) estimates an increase of 21.4% in the total school population between 2015 and 2020. There were no specific analyses of future numbers of pupils with SEND carried out by BFC. However, if the number of pupils requiring an EHCP reflects this an additional 145 places will be required for pupils with EHCPs by 2020: from the 683 presently to 824 by 2020.
- Other pressures include a population ‘bulge’ that has been affecting the primary phase and is starting, from September 2016, to result in an increase in numbers needing places from year 7 in secondary schools. Since the proportion of pupils identified with SEND increases with age, this would suggest that the 824 figure, above, could be a conservative estimate.

Only basic analysis of SEN support data was possible (fig 3). An uncleaned, one-off extract of SEN support data from the summer term 2016 for 30 Bracknell Forest schools (including 27 primary schools) was provided. The largest two categories identified as primary need are ‘moderate learning difficulties (MLD)’ and ‘specific learning difficulties (SPLD)’, 23% and 22% respectively (fig 3). When comparison is made with national data (appendix 1), it is notable that the proportion identified in Bracknell Forest schools as having a ‘specific learning difficulty’ is 7% higher than nationally reported and ASD is about 2% higher. A total of 45 pupils, out of the sample of 1,370, are identified as having a sensory need, whether ‘hearing impairment (HI)’, ‘visual impairment (VI)’ or ‘multi-sensory impairment (MSI)’.

Fig 3: Pupils on SEN support by primary need (data from 30 BF schools)

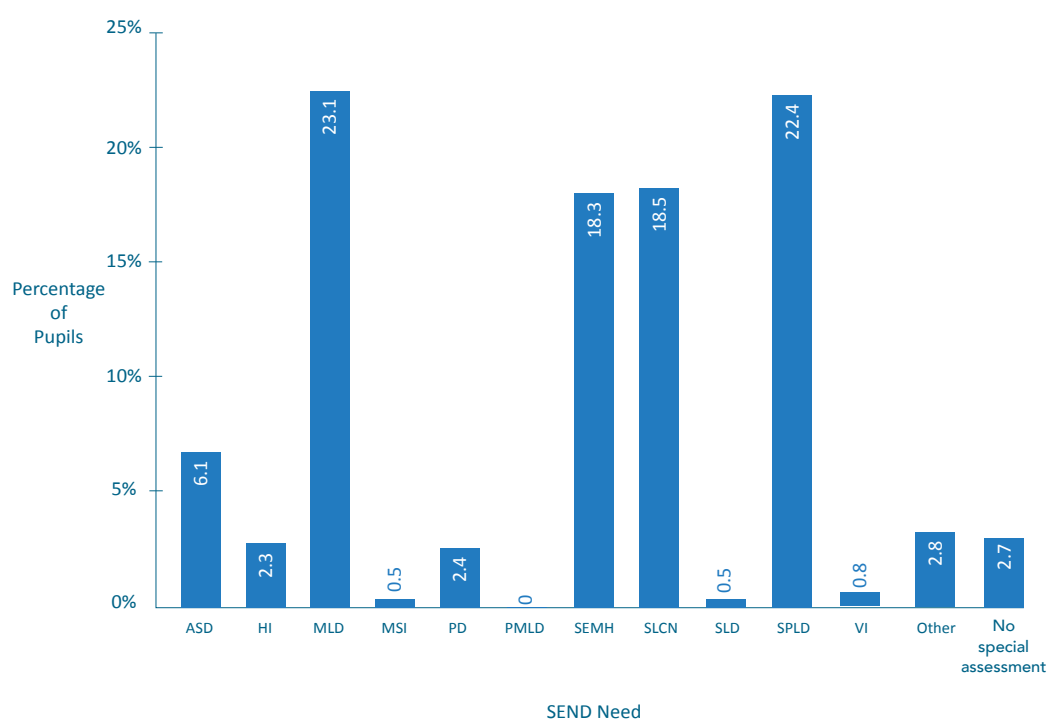


Table 1 compares the proportions of pupils with SEND for Bracknell Forest with its statistical neighbours and with England as a whole. These data indicate that the proportion of pupils with statements or EHCPs has reduced in Bracknell Forest since 2013 and, at 2.6% of the school population, is at a similar level to statistical neighbours. The reductions in Bracknell Forest contrast with the trend across statistical neighbours and England as a whole, where the proportion has plateaued. Similarly, the proportion of pupils on SEND support is reducing too, though faster in secondary schools than in primary. The data for 2016 do show an upturn across all categories, a situation that should be monitored by BFC to assess whether or not this is a trend.

Table 1: Comparison of school-age population - proportions with SEND

	% EHCP/statements all schools				% SEN support primary				% SEN support secondary			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
Bracknell Forest	2.9	2.7	2.4	2.6	14.0	13.4	12.0	12.7	13.3	12.2	9.5	10.1
Statistical neighbours average	2.7	2.75	2.75	2.65	14.2	13.4	11.3	10.7	14.2	13.8	11.0	10.6
England	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	16.0	15.2	13.0	12.1	17.0	15.9	12.4	11.0

(Source: DfE and LAIT)

A note of caution must be sounded about 'SEN support' data: schools alone assess needs and decide whether a pupil meets thresholds for SEN support. There is evidence that there is varied practice between schools, that the definition of SEN is open to interpretation and the school context can make a marked difference (NHS E Mids 2016), and this situation is reflected in Bracknell Forest too (see: [4.3](#)).

3.2 The High Needs Funding Block budget in Bracknell Forest

The HNFB is paid to LAs to support the educational needs of children and young people aged 0 – 25 with a high level of SEND; broadly whose education provision costs more than about £10,000 per annum. Further information about the direct schools grant and the per pupil payments in Bracknell Forest can be found in: [appendix 1](#).

The total allocation to BFC from the DfE was initially estimated at the start of the financial year 2016-17 as £11.719 million (after EFA deductions). The LA identified that this was insufficient for all

existing commitments and projected needs. Following discussions with the Schools Forum, a transfer, from the Schools Block of the Direct Schools Grant (see: [appendix 1](#), fig 20), of a further £2.093 million was agreed, giving a total 2016-17 initial budget of £13.812 million (table 2).

The Bracknell Forest high needs funding block (HNFB) budget for 2016-17 includes amounts retained by the Council to fund specific support services and to administer the HNFB. Table 2 gives the budget breakdown for 2016-17 (BFC 2016a plus further BFC finance data):

Table 2: Bracknell Forest HNFB budget breakdown 2016-17

	Description	Amount in 000's	
Bracknell Forest schools	Kennel Lane School	£3,271*	
	College Hall	£1,031	
	Primary mainstream top-ups	£365	
	Secondary mainstream top-ups	£328	
	Resource: Great Hollands School	£99	
	Resource: Meadow Vale School	£213	
	Resource: The Rise, Garth Hill College	£354**	
	Resource: Ranelagh School	£0***	
	Sub-Total		£5,661
Out of area, FE and independent schools	Pre-16 other LA schools (mainstream, resource & special)	£679	
	Pre-16, non-maintained specials (NMSS)	£3,060	
	Post 16 - FE	£1,294	
	Post 16 other LA schools	£188	
	Post-16 NMSS	£1,508	
	Sub-Total		£6,729
Bracknell Forest retained			£1,422
	Total		£13,812

* Plus £500K for EFA grant for 6th form places and £263K top-ups from other LAs

** Plus £180K available from reserves for start up costs for The Rise.

*** Ranelagh School: as an academy its £132,000 pa allocation, deducted at source by EFA before BFC receives its HNFB allocation.

Table 3 details the breakdown of the £1.4 million from the 2016-17 HNFB that has been retained and managed by BFC. Support services to schools are organised via a mixture of Bracknell Forest SLAs, as part of a package covering the period 2016 - 19, or contracts with external providers (for example a contract with BHFT for speech and language therapy (SALT) and occupational therapy (OT)) that are brokered and managed by BFC. The approach to SLAs for support services for schools is at an early stage of development in BFC. The lead responsibility for monitoring the SALT, OT and sensory impairment contracts lies with the Head of Targeted Services.

Table 3: Breakdown of the Council retained elements of the HNFB budget 2016-17

Service area	Amount in '000 (2016-17)
SEN contingency (to schools)	£100
SALT contract	£213
Sensory Impairment contract	£251
OT contract	£37
Medical support	£37
Support for Learning	£149
Traveller Ed Service	£75
Autism and Social Communication Service (ASSC)	£84
Various services (< £35K each, e.g. EOTAS, Head of Targeted Services)	£155
Misc. recharges etc.	£213
Early years/ Child Development Centre	£108
Total	£1,422

3.3 Bracknell Forest mainstream provision (including FE)

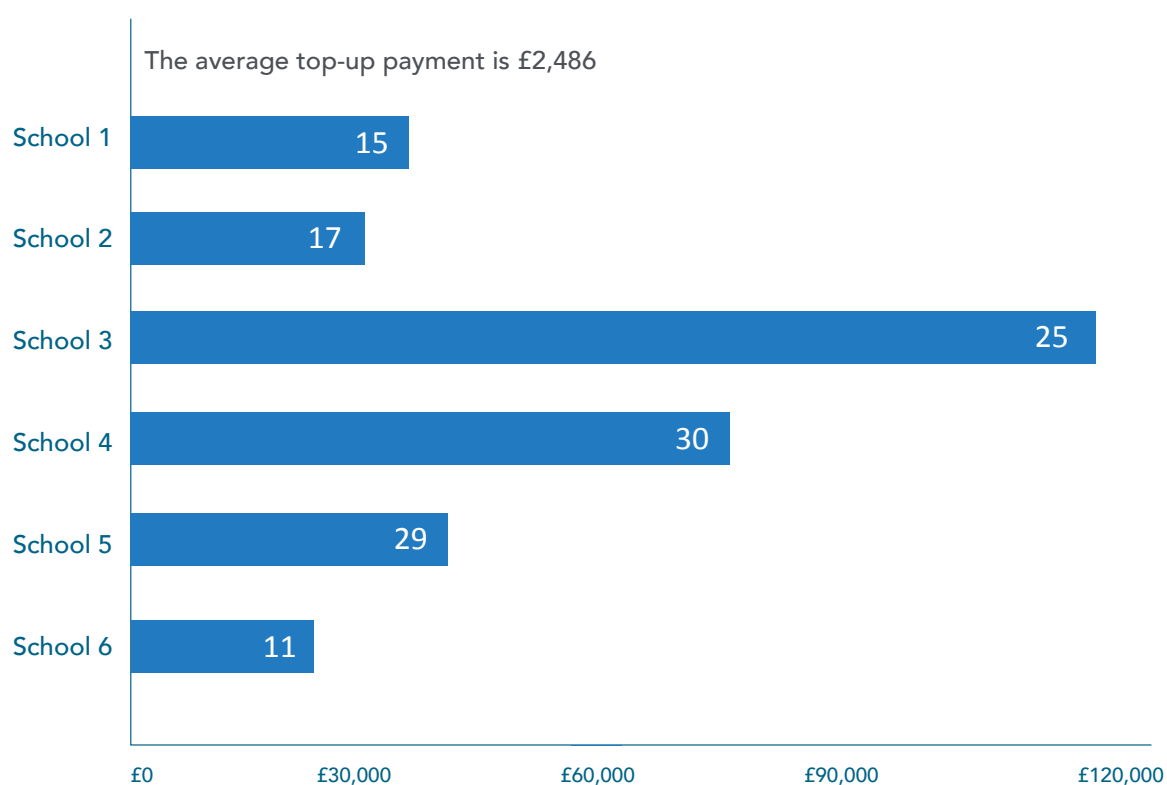
Bracknell Forest is a relatively small unitary authority in Berkshire and currently has 39 state schools within its area, including six secondary schools (all with sixth forms), 31 primary phase schools plus one special school (Kennel Lane School), a pupil referral unit (PRU) – College Hall; there is also one large tertiary or further education (FE) college: Bracknell & Wokingham College. There is a relatively

low level of academisation in Bracknell Forest: two secondary schools are academies. Work has begun on the Binfield Learning Village: a new, all-through free school that is planned to open, for year R and year 7 entrants, in September 2018. This is one of the LA's responses to the increasing school age population.

3.3.1 MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

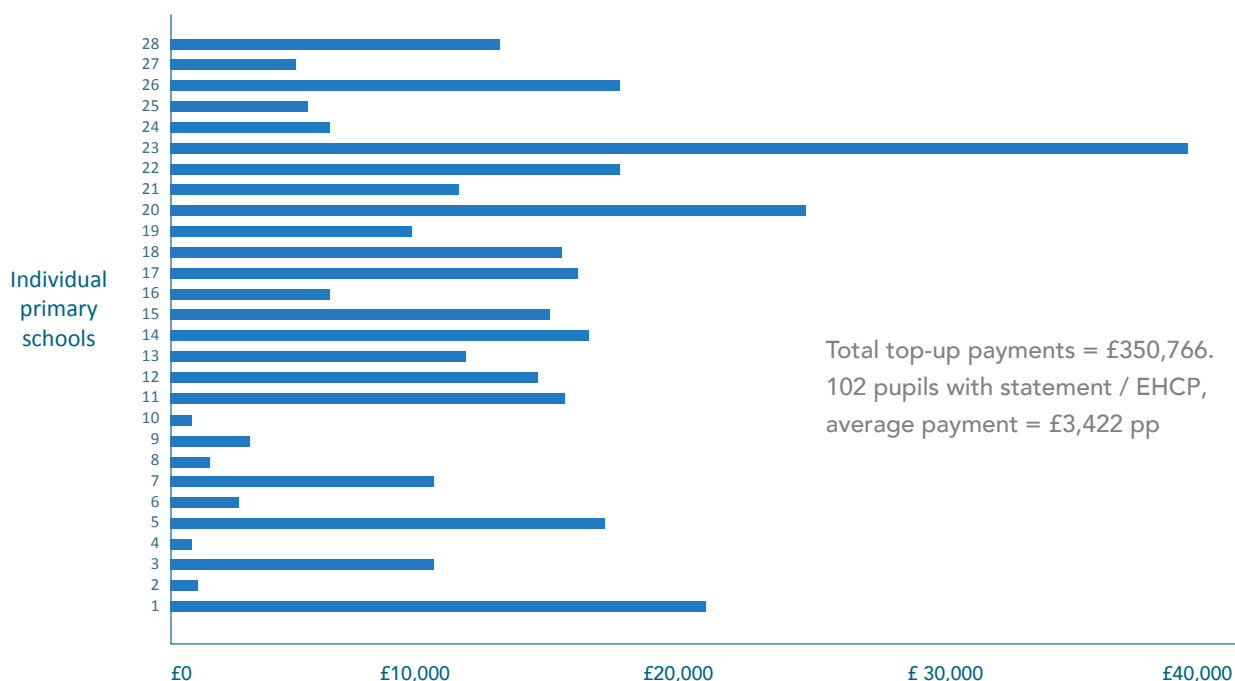
The six state secondary schools in Bracknell Forest all provide education for 11 to 18 year olds. It is worth noting that the number of students with a statement or EHCP falls to nine across all the school sixth forms. Fig 4 shows the amount of planned, top-up funding across the six schools in 2016-17 financial year, together with the number of students each school has with an EHCP or statement.

Fig 4: SEND top-ups per BF secondary school (2016), plus total students with an EHCP



There are 31 primary phase schools across Bracknell Forest, this includes three infants and three junior schools. Fig 5 shows the planned top-up payments across primary schools for support for pupils with statements or EHCPs. This reflects the range of numbers of children with an EHCP or statement: with three schools supporting between eight and ten children, whilst three schools have no children with high needs. The range of total top-up payments received by primary schools for pupils with EHCPs or statements ranges from around £1,500 up to £39,000.

Fig 5: SEND top-ups per BF primary school (2016-17)



In addition to the pupils with an EHCP or statement attending mainstream schools who are supported by the HNFb, there are several specialist resource centres at mainstream schools. These receive place payments as well as top-up funding to provide specialist support for a set number of pupils. There are no service level agreements (SLAs) in place for the provision commissioned by BFC at these resource centres. The resources centres are:

- The Rainbow Unit at Great Hollands Primary School – 6 fte early years places for pupils with speech and communication difficulties; average number on roll (NOR) for 2015-16 = 4.
- The Speech and Language Resource at Meadow Vale Primary School – 20 places for primary age with ‘speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)’; average NOR for 2015-16 = 17.
- The Rise, Garth Hill College – opened in Sept 2015, a centre for pupils with autism (ASD) and is planned to grow to educate years 7 to 13, with 7 students per year. Current year 7 has NOR of 7.
- Ranelagh School – resource centre for students with ‘specific learning difficulties (SPLD)’ currently funded for 16 places; average NOR for 2015-16 = 4.

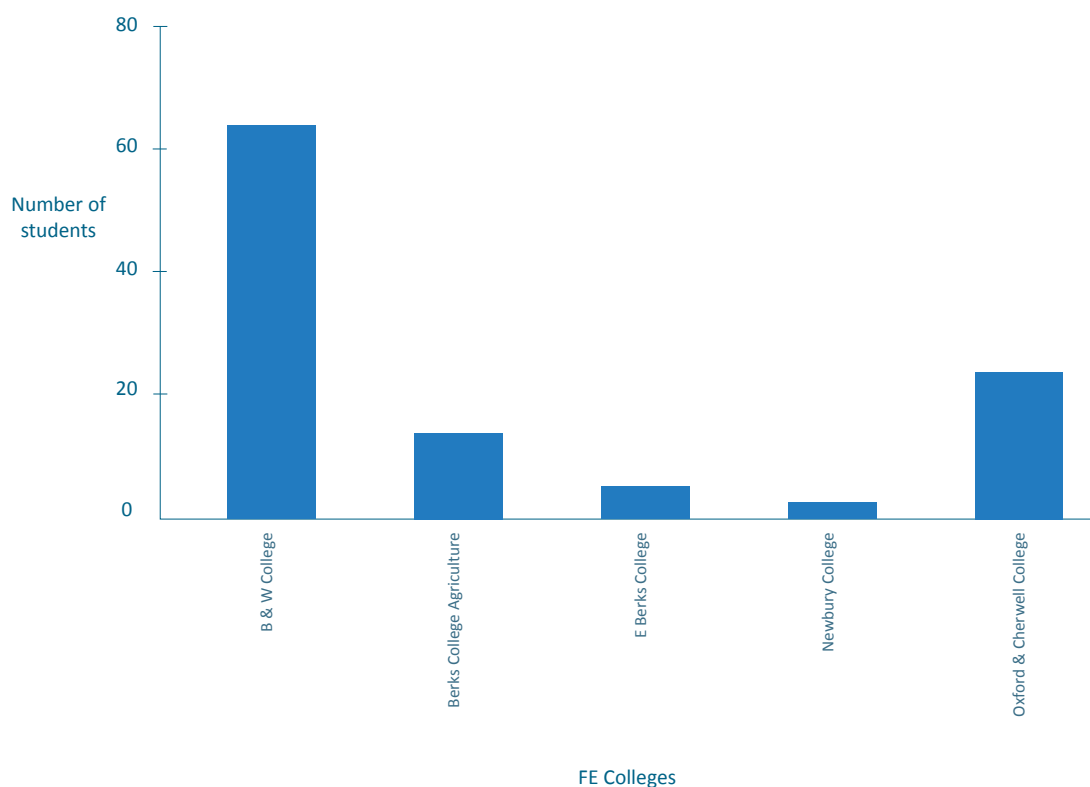
Kennel Lane School also runs a primary outreach class hosted at Birch Hill Primary School for 8 pupils with a primary need of ASD.

3.3.2 FE COLLEGES

In 2015-16 the large majority of post-16 Bracknell Forest students with statements / EHCPs attended courses at FE colleges (109). The largest number (63) attended Bracknell & Wokingham College,

followed by 25 who attended Oxford & Cherwell Valley College Group, which includes Reading College (fig 6). Nine students with EHCPs/statements attended sixth form in a Bracknell Forest school.

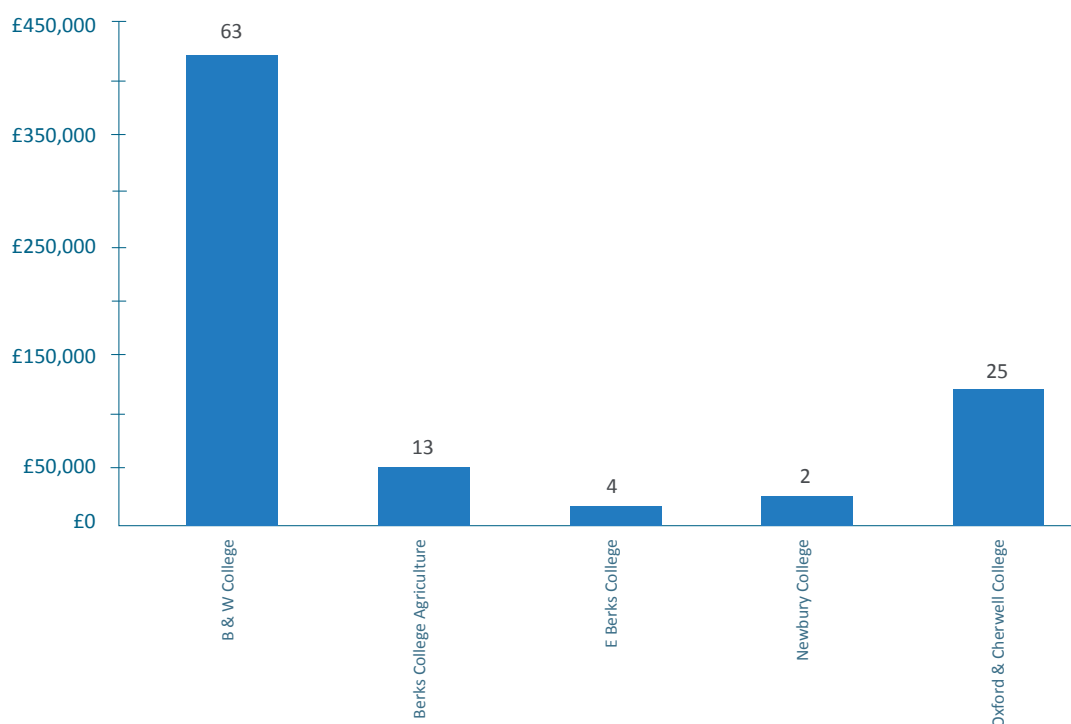
Fig 6: Number of BF students with an EHCP attending FE colleges (2015-16 financial year)



Bracknell & Wokingham College is the main local provider of education for young people with SEND. It is a large college, around 6,500 enrolled learners, although over half of these are on part-time courses. The provision base for year 12 to 16 learners with SEND is being moved onto the main college site in central Bracknell, with the aim of being able to support students nearer to the teaching programmes that they are attending. They anticipate having about 70 learners with an EHCP enrolled at the college from September 2016, together with a further 200 or so who access SEN support from the college's specialist team of assistants.

Fig 7 shows the breakdown of payments to the five tertiary colleges for the last completed financial year (2015-16). It was not possible to update this for 2016-17 because FE colleges cannot confirm final numbers until students have enrolled in September. The average, per student, payments range from £3,658 pa at East Berkshire College to £14,165 at Newbury College. Bracknell & Wokingham College cost an average of £6,765 pa per student. It is necessary to factor into these costs that the 'nominal SEN' budget for tertiary colleges of £6,000 per student is deducted by the EFA in advance of the HNFB being received by an LA (EFA 2016).

Fig 7: Total payment for SEND places to FE Colleges (2015-16), plus student numbers



3.4 Bracknell Forest special and alternative provision

Bracknell Forest is a relatively small unitary authority and has one maintained special school, Kennel Lane School, and a pupil referral unit, College Hall. As major components of the local SEND system, this section focuses solely on these schools.

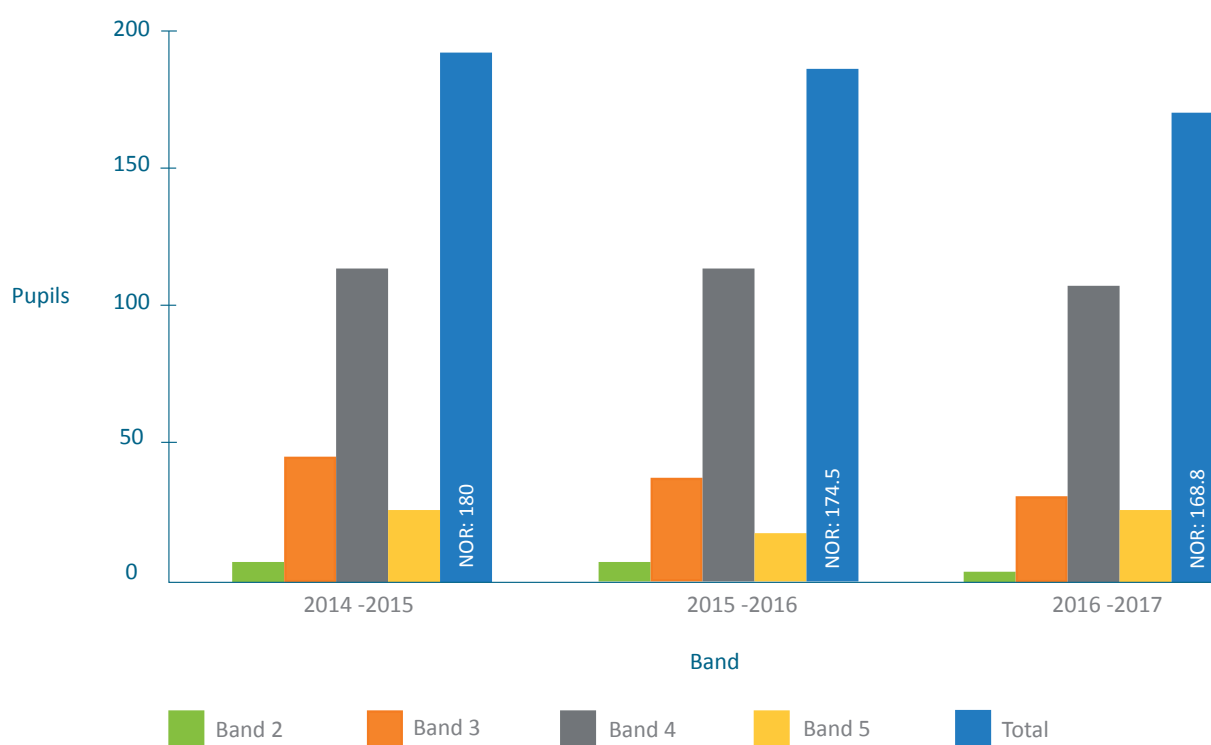
3.4.1 KENNEL LANE

Kennel Lane provides education for pupils with SEND who have a statement / EHCP aged between 3 and 19. It has a broad and deep offer for a range of pupils with complex and severe learning difficulties and pupils are taught in mixed-age groups within each key stage. The outcome data suggests that pupils make good progress and, in its 2015 inspection, Ofsted rated the school as good. The offer is comprehensive: examples include the GEM group (individual short intervention programmes), music therapy, forest school, SPLD support with high teacher input. Kennel Lane provides a personalised programme including access to specialist teachers, for example for art and science GCSEs. They commission a range of services including: counselling (Youth line), drug advice service, and it is a well-funded school offer.

The school is funded for 185 places at £10,000 per place: notionally 153 Bracknell Forest, 32 from neighbouring LAs. This place funding totals £1.85 million, whilst ‘element 3’ and post-16 top-ups contribute another £2.18 million funding from Bracknell Forest’s HNFB. The school’s total budget is £4.03 million, including £0.3 million in payments received from other LAs placing students at the school.

Fig 8 gives a high-level breakdown of the level of assessed need for support of the pupils over the past three years. Whilst the total number on roll (NOR) is on a downward trend the numbers of students at the lowest level of need (in receipt of no top-up) has reduced from 51 to 36 whilst the number of students assessed as being band 5 has increased from 25 to 31. There is a reducing proportion of Kennel Lane students from neighbouring LAs, for whom top-ups are reclaimed from the sending LA.

Fig 8: Kennel Lane – total pupils placed, by level of need (band)



3.4.2 COLLEGE HALL

College Hall is the PRU for Bracknell Forest and provides education for pupils from key stage 3 and key stage 4 who have been permanently excluded or are experiencing difficulty in maintaining a place in mainstream education, through a shared timetable. It operates the local home tuition service for pupils who have medical reasons for not attending mainstream school, this takes place both in the home and from The Cottage, which is on the College Hall site. It also provides an outreach and family support service for young people whose behaviour is challenging in school, which aims, through structured programmes, to assist young people to continue to attend and learn in their mainstream school. These different service areas are reflected in the budget streams, with separate SLAs in place for the home tuition and family outreach (table 4).

College Hall is located to the west of Bracknell in two dedicated, but limited, buildings. There is an increasing number of students referred for home tuition, whilst the budget has remained unchanged over past two years.

Accurately summarising the place profile through the academic year at a PRU like College Hall is challenging, because the numbers will fluctuate as pupils are reintegrated or excluded from mainstream schools. College Hall is funded for 46 places, and expected to achieve a 70% average occupancy, reflecting the movement of students and the fact that some are on a dual programme as part of reintegration back to a mainstream school. The January 2016 school census reported 26 pupils on roll.

The attendance breakdown provided by College Hall for 2015-16 was as follows:

- Alternative provision 4
- PRU 35
- Home tuition 25
- The Cottage 10

Table 4: College Hall summary budget:

College Hall funding stream (2016-17)	Places	Amount/ place	Amount
Place payment	46	@£10,000	£460,000
Key stage 3 top-up	10	@£8,721	£88,000
Key stage 4 top-up	22	@£9,718	£214,000
Income from moves / exclusions			-£60,000
PRU Sub-total			£702,000
Home tuition contract			£235,470
Outreach			£94,130
Total			£1,031,600

There appears to be no additional therapies commissioned by College Hall for its students. Instead there is a reliance upon goodwill support: for example pupils can access the substance misuse service, but there is patchy access to a school nurse or from the Autism and Social Communication (ASSC) service and no contract for counselling support.

3.5 SEND decision making and out of area special school provision

BFC’s SEND Team manages the processes for children and young people with high levels of SEND. Amongst their work is coordinating the compilation of evidence for EHCP assessments before being presented to the SEND Panel, managing the conversion process from SEN statements to EHCPs,

updating records following annual reviews and managing placements and contacts with NMSS or independent schools or school moves for pupils with SEND.

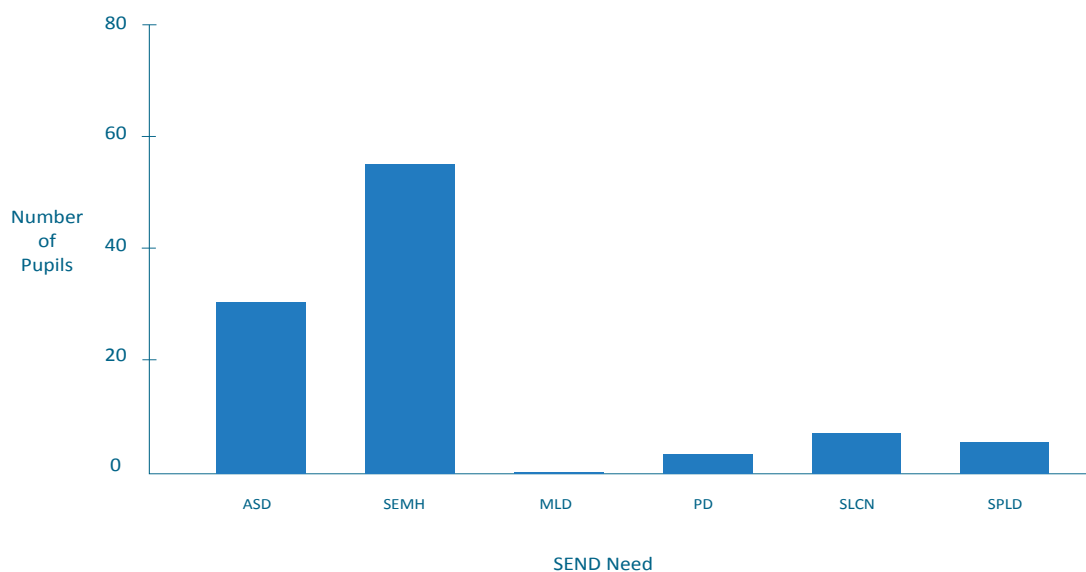
The finances for top-up payments to mainstream schools and to the special school are set by locally devised frameworks. For mainstream schools BFC has chosen to align top-up funding with the costed provision mapping that a school submits as part of the application for an EHCP, rather than just providing funding categories by the assessed SEN need of a pupil. This enables the LA to closely monitor top-up expenditure by schools and lends itself to being able to adapt the top-up paid as changes to needs are identified in annual reviews. For the special school a less detailed framework of bands based on need is applied, which has not been reviewed since the new Code of Practice. The breadth of the categories do not lend themselves to transparency or close monitoring of provision (see: [appendix 5](#)).

The analysis in this section draws mainly on the complete and audited financial data for the financial year 2015-16 (not academic year). The decision to place a pupil can be made by the SEND Panel at any time during the year, so 2015-16 figures enabled the Review team to report on actual spend in a complete year, whereas 2016-17 figures have to include a level of projection and estimate.

3.5.1 PRE-16 PROVISION

A total of 103 pupils with SEND were placed with non-maintained special schools (NMSS) and independent special schools outside Bracknell Forest during the financial year 2015-16. Fig 9 shows the breakdown of primary SEND need among these children and young people with SEMH and ASD being by far the biggest category of need accounting for over 80% of these pupils. Placement recommendations for these children and young people are made by the SEND Panel and the SEN Team are responsible for agreeing the most appropriate available school place for the pupil, in consultation with parents / carers. Price and contracting decisions are made by the SEN Team and they also monitor the EHCP for each of these pupils and, where possible, participate in annual reviews.

Fig 9: Pupils placed out of area, by primary SEND need (2015-16)



All school places purchased by BFC are with schools licensed to provide suitable education and care for particular groups of children and young people with SEND. In consultation with parents / carers, the SEN Team report selecting places in NMSS that can meet the child’s needs and which are not-for-profit where possible. The SEN Team have good working relationships with the two schools that are the largest placement providers for Bracknell Forest. Many out of area placements are residential, which is reflected in the costs and are higher than places in maintained special schools either in Bracknell Forest or neighbouring LAs.

A total of £3,314,895 was spent in 2015-16 on pre-16 places for these pupils, whilst £2,896,500 is budgeted for 2016-17 (see [table 2](#)). No evidence has been available to the Review team about how the 2016-17 reduction in costs is planned to be achieved.

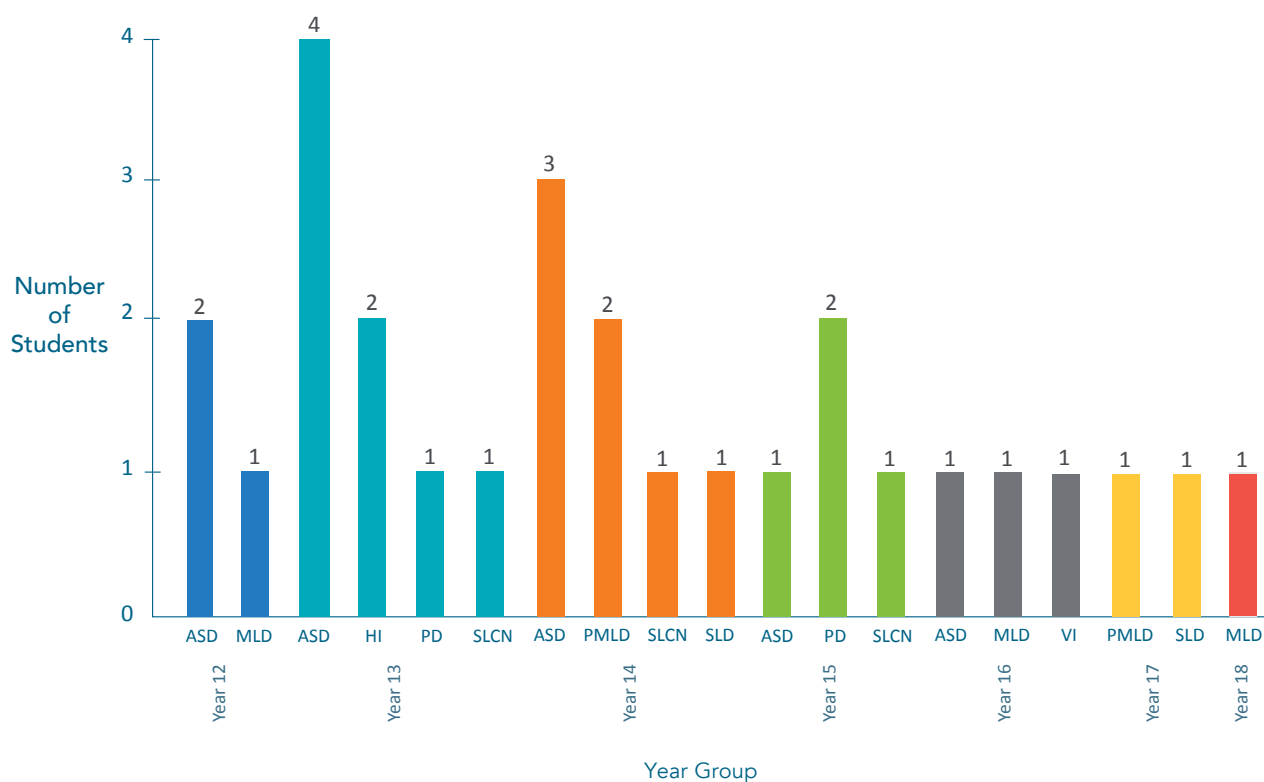
3.5.2 POST 16

A total of 135 students with statements/EHCPs are recorded to have continued to be funded for their education in 2015-16 at a total cost to the HNFB budget of £1,937,401. Most students with a statement / EHCP continued their education in a local tertiary college (see 4.3.3), but 28 students continued their post-16 education in NMSS or independent provision, placed with 25 different schools. The total cost of these placements for 2015-16 was £1,281,963, about £45,800 per student.

Although most of these young people have complex needs, fig 10 shows that the most frequently recorded primary need is autism (11). Whilst [fig 18](#) shows there has been some success with the majority of young people with EHCPs currently being educated in the FE sector rather than the costlier independent sector The chart in fig 10 shows decreasing numbers of students the nearer they are to age 25, possibly due to transition to greater independence and adult social care support, although this was not a focus of the Review.

There are concerns about future cost pressures as a result of the entitlement to education for all young people with an EHCP up to age 25. Although recognised by both education providers, such as Bracknell and Wokingham College, and by the SEND team, there was no evidence of partnership action to both better understand this future pressure and to propose local solutions.

Fig 10: Over 16 students in NMSS by primary SEND need (2015-16 academic year)



3.6 Services funded from retained HNFB budget

Certain support services for vulnerable children and young people have been funded from the HNFB in Bracknell Forest for some years, including LA and health provision, together with sums retained to support overhead costs such as financial administration and service management. As set out in [table 3](#), this is a total for 2016-17 of £1.422 million.

Three support areas are externally commissioned by the LA: speech and language therapy (SALT), occupational therapy (OT) and support for sensory impairment. The first two areas are commissioned from the NHS provider Berkshire Healthcare Trust (BHFT) and the latter from a pan-Berkshire consortium. All have been subject to three year contracts and notionally overseen by the Head of Targeted Services. All three contracts were rolled forward when they expired in 2016 with minimal internal discussion and no consultation with schools or analysis of the level of need (for example considering the proportion of SEND pupils with VI and HI and existing capacity such as specialist teachers at Kennel Lane School).

LA services funded by the HNFB include:

1. Autism and Social Communication Service (ASSC) – providing assessment and advice on teaching strategies in support of pupils with ASD (not subject to an SLA).
2. Support for Learning - specialist teachers who are available to assess and directly teach children with SEND, in particular those with SPLD (subject to SLA and buy-back).
3. Education other than at school service (EOTAS) – support for home educated children and young people with SEND.
4. Traveller education service – support for traveller families such as to increase school attendance and effective learning by pupils who are travellers.
5. The Child Development Centre early years support.

Other services that might be anticipated to be supported by the HNFB, such as educational psychology or the SEN Team, are funded from other BFC budgets. Time has been taken up to connect budget codes to the services and some service managers were unclear that part of their service was supported by the HNFB.

3.7 Surveys with school leaders and parents / carers

The Review team conducted online surveys with two key groups of stakeholders in the local SEND system: headteachers and parents and carers of children with SEND. The purpose of the survey for headteachers was to gauge the views of the majority of headteachers in Bracknell Forest about the SEND system, identifying areas that are working well and areas for improvement, and also to communicate that the HNFB Review is taking place, so they can be alert to the recommendations.

The survey with parents and carers took place later, which enabled some cross-referencing to the views of schools and some reflection of their experience of the SEND system on behalf of their child. A summary of findings is set out below.

3.7.1 SURVEY OF SCHOOL LEADERS

A short online survey of school leaders was carried out, drawing on questions from research into high needs funding that was commissioned by the DfE (DfE 2015c).

A total of 28 (72%) of schools in Bracknell Forest responded to the survey, including all six secondary schools. The national comparison sample was of 76 schools from 13 LAs across England, meaning this sample is not fully representative.

Figs 11 and 12 suggest there is a desire for changes to be made to the SEND funding arrangements across Bracknell Forest and in the process for funding allocation to schools. In a time of scarce resources this is to be expected, but the responses to both of these questions were markedly less positive in Bracknell Forest than the national comparison group of schools.

School leaders also offered the following responses when asked to describe certain aspects of the system currently.

What is working well:

- Schools identified that aspects of the SEND system in Bracknell Forest, especially those under their direct control, work reasonably well.

- 26 out of 28 schools (92%) rated themselves as effective or very effective at identifying SEND need among pupils.
- 88% of schools in Bracknell Forest rated themselves as effective or very effective, at using their SEND funding to meet needs, compared to 92% in the national sample.
- Schools also highlighted certain Bracknell Forest support services as being strong parts of the system, in particular the SEND team.

Fig 11: How effectively do local funding arrangements contribute to improved outcomes for SEND pupils?

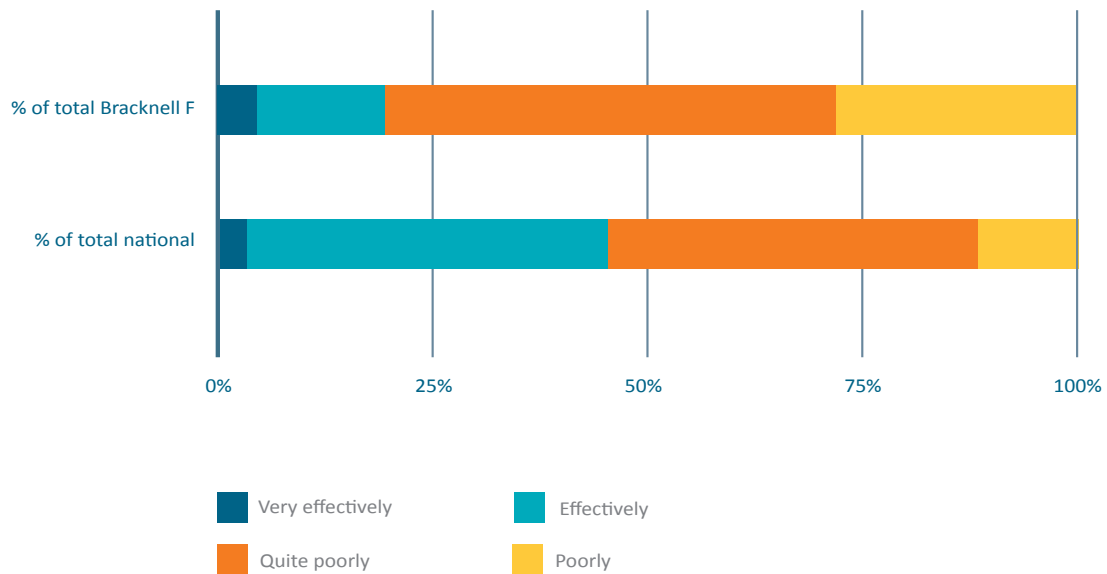
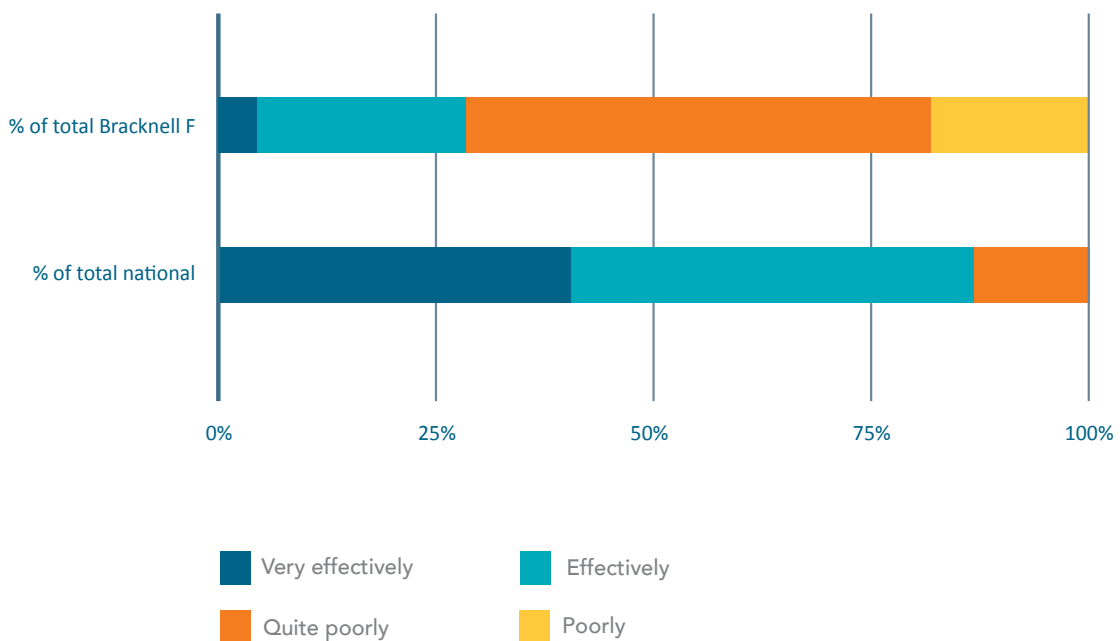


Fig 12: How effectively do you think SEND funding is allocated to your school?



Areas to improve:

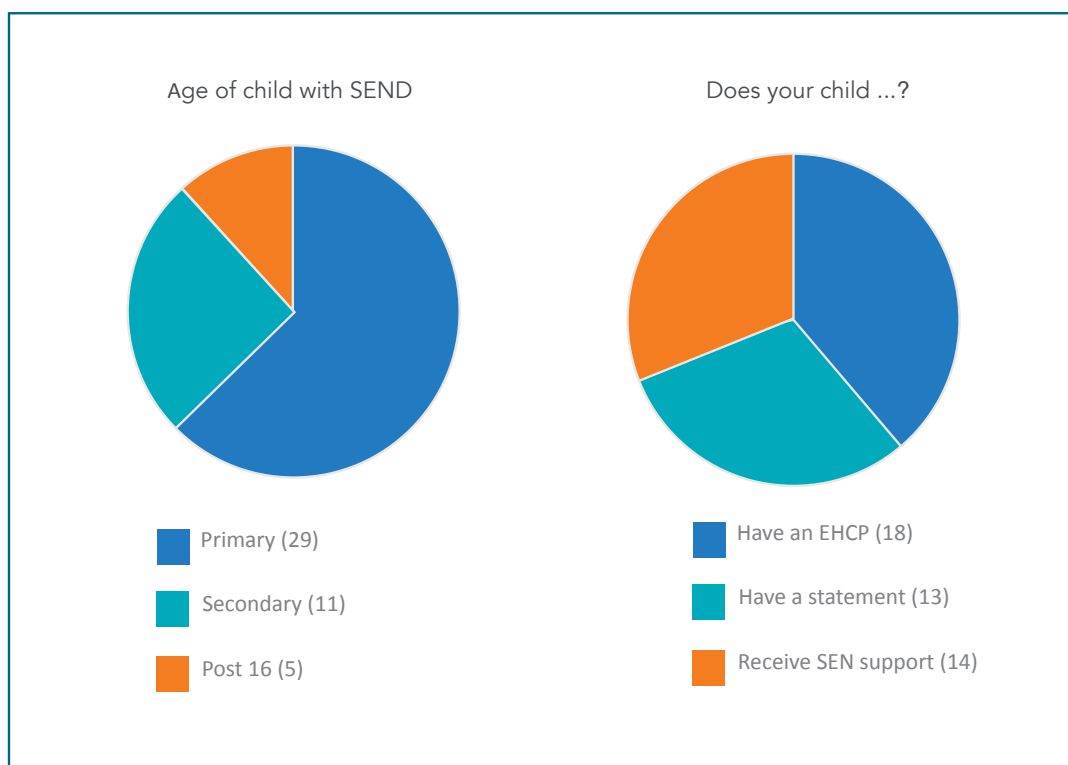
- Specific mention was made about improving the statutory SEND processes, eight commenting specifically on making the processes more straightforward and less time-consuming in terms of paperwork.
- Another eight respondents specifically raised increasing support for impactful early intervention, whilst others identified certain services (e.g. CAMHS and SALT) as in need of improvement.

3.7.2 SURVEY OF PARENT / CARERS

An online survey of parents and carers of children and young people with SEND was also carried out as part of this Review. The design of the questionnaire was informed by the questions that school leaders responded to and through two consultation sessions with those attending Bracknell Dialogue Parents Forum.

Responses were received from 40 parents / carers and predominantly from mothers (92.5%). Their families consisted of between one and four children; a total of 90 children and young people of whom half (45) have SEND. 85% of the families have one child with SEND and the remainder have two children with SEND. Two thirds of parents / carers have children of primary school age, whilst about 70% of the children have been assessed as requiring an EHCP or statement (fig 13).

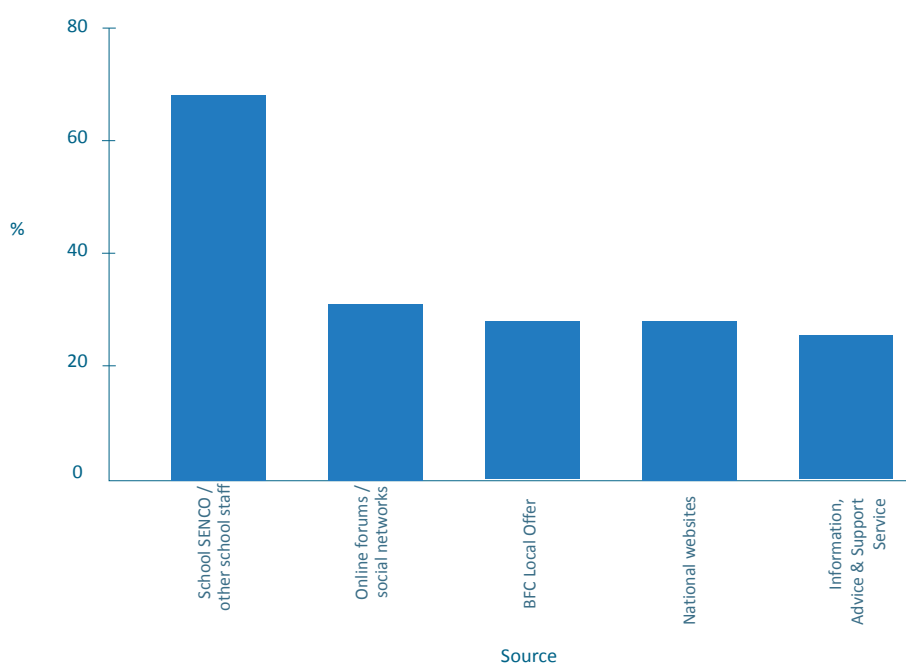
Fig 13: About your child with SEND



Parents were asked about the effectiveness of the identification of their child’s need, about their relationship with the school and whether their child enjoys school. There was a consistent two-thirds split in the answers: one-third split between those describing identification of SEND or the partnership with the school as being largely positive (two-thirds) or largely negative (one-third). Of the eight responses that were consistently more negative to these statements, six of their children are in receipt of SEN support (two others have EHCP) and these were submitted by seven different parents / carers.

Feedback about parents’ access to SEND information was more mixed: 59% reported that they felt they did not have enough information about the SEND system in Bracknell Forest. In terms of what the most useful sources of information listed include the staff in school, in particular the SENCO, was listed by nearly 7 out of 10 of the parents. Other sources such as social networks and the Local Offer pages were also identified by many parents (see: Fig 14).

Fig 14: Most important sources of information about SEND



Finally, those that had experienced the EHCP process (a total of 18) reported that most (60%) were broadly positive about their experience; nearly 80% confirmed they felt their views were taken into account and over two-thirds felt they had been kept informed during the process. One comment offered was: *“The change from a statement to an EHCP was great; getting an EHCP for our other child has been a living hell.”*

4. Summary of the Key Evidence

The Review team analysed documentation provided by officers in Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) (see: [appendix 3](#)), together with the evidence gathered from school visits and interviews, data provided by these schools and the data from local surveys and national sources. The key evidence about Bracknell Forest’s SEND system is summarised below under four themes:

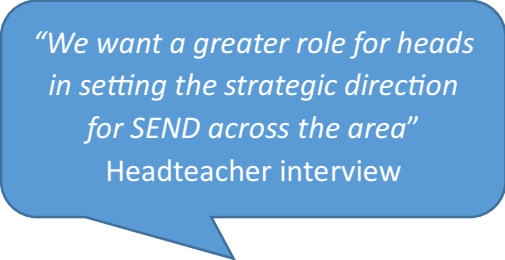
1. Increasing strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system.
2. Strong, coordinated local authority leadership for planning of SEND places, funding and commissioning.
3. The coherence of the SEND system, designed with the needs of children and young people at its centre.
4. A data-rich SEND system that understands the difference it is making.

Three case studies of practice from elsewhere in England are included as illustration of good practice.

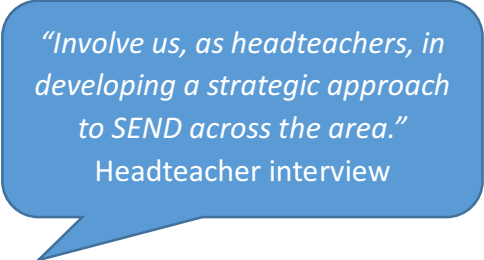
4.1 Increasing the strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system

4.1.1 INCREASED SCHOOL LEADER INVOLVEMENT IN ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A LOCAL STRATEGIC VISION FOR SEND

“It will be the performance of local partners and settings [especially schools] which will underpin the successful delivery of the reforms.” (p. 8 ‘Special Educational Needs and Disability Code Of Practice: 0 to 25 years’; DfE 2015b)



“We want a greater role for heads in setting the strategic direction for SEND across the area”
Headteacher interview



“Involve us, as headteachers, in developing a strategic approach to SEND across the area.”
Headteacher interview

The Review team found that procedural changes set out in the SEND Code of Practice have been implemented by BFC. We found less evidence, however, of clarity being established between the Council and schools about the new SEND accountabilities and strategic priorities for the SEND system. The main focus for monitoring of the SEND system by BFC has been the implementation of the statutory processes required by the Children and Families Act 2014 including progress with the conversion of statements of SEN and learning difficulty assessments (LDAs) to education and health care plans (EHCPs) and the aim to complete the assessment of all EHCPs within 20 weeks of the process commencing. These new procedures have been a challenge for BFC, as it has for most LAs, however, following the commitment of additional resources to the SEN Team, the performance is reasonably strong: 92% of new EHCPs were completed in time during the first half of 2016 - 17. In the first half of 2016 - 17, 125 statements or LDAs were converted to EHCPs and the proportion completed in time has increased from about 39% in 2015-16 to nearly 62%. This compares favourably with their statistical neighbours (LAIT 2016).

The school survey, carried out by the Review team (see: [3.7.1](#)) reported that schools see themselves as both being effective in their identification of SEND need (92%) and in their deployment of funding to support learning (88%). This is significantly higher than schools' assessment of the operation of the local SEND system. This suggests that there is some disconnect across the system in Bracknell Forest, or that there is expertise in local schools that is not being harnessed as effectively as possible across the area. Greater school sector involvement in the vision and strategy for SEND would help to address the gaps reported in the survey and is a theme central to the Review.

Insights from other parts of England inform us of the importance of concerted strategic leadership by schools, including some evidence that school-to-school challenge to achieve more consistent inclusive practice for SEND is more effective than that solely led by a local authority. In Nottingham City for example years of delegating significant responsibilities for SEND to families-of-schools along with a budget for them to make decisions about additional support has resulted in lower levels of EHCPs, swifter early intervention and flexible support services being secured (NHS E Mids 2016 p12).

4.1.2 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP OF STRATEGIC ACCOUNTABILITY ACROSS THE LOCAL SEND SYSTEM

"A more consistent system of funding across the borough that is understood by all."

Headteachers' survey

"There is a need for greater transparency from the local authority around SEND"


Headteacher interview

National policy discussions about likely changes to school funding formulae, together with other changes, such as to responsibilities for alternative provision and excluded pupils, are important considerations for local headteachers. The current national uncertainties make forward planning more difficult for senior leaders. The Review's Headteachers' Reference Group reminded the team about the short term arrangement, approved by the local Schools Forum, for £2.093 million of DSG funding to be transferred to the high needs funding block (HNFB) for 2016-17 (see: [3.2](#)). These views also highlight the importance of headteachers being invited to scrutinise and make recommendations for the HNFB budget and SEND expenditure in the future as part of the strategic oversight of a renewed, local SEND system. Clear delineation of responsibilities between the Schools Forum and any strategic SEND group will be essential. Headteachers were also indicating that cost-savings achieved to HNFB expenditure should, at least partially, be seen to be returned to schools in an uplift to the local per pupil funding (see [table 2](#)).

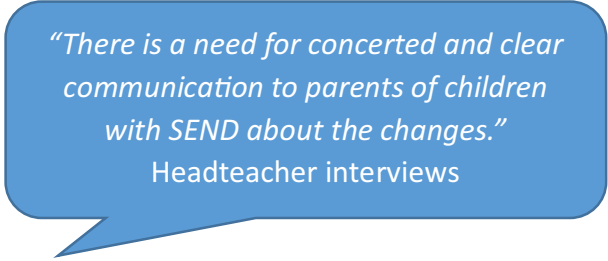
In addition, the survey of school leaders across Bracknell Forest (see: [3.7.1](#)) offers evidence for the need to develop increased confidence in the local SEND funding system across the school sector. Only 20% of Bracknell Forest school leaders reported that the funding arrangements contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND, as compared to nearly 50% of the national sample (see: [fig 16](#)). Similarly, 88% of the national sample felt SEND funding is allocated

effectively to their school, as compared to 28% of the Bracknell Forest sample. Developing specific SEND accountability arrangements, especially around the HNFB, with headteachers should help to increase their confidence in the effectiveness of how local funding is deployed.

4.1.3 BETTER COMMUNICATION ACROSS A RENEWED SEND SYSTEM, IN PARTICULAR WITH PARENTS/CARERS



“We feel there was very limited information about, or provision for, my child during the transition to secondary.”
Parent comment in survey



“There is a need for concerted and clear communication to parents of children with SEND about the changes.”
Headteacher interviews

The SEND Code of Practice has a clear emphasis on the involvement of parents and carers (and children and young people) in decision making for individuals and about SEND strategies (NASEN 2015). The local survey of parent and carers (see: [3.7.2](#)), highlighted the value they place on school SENCOs as a source of information, together with a general perception that more local information should be available for parents and carers. Headteachers also report seeking a stronger partnership with BFC to communicate more effectively with parents and carers.

This is particularly important with the future pressures on the SEND system, as a result of the increasing local population. Responses to the parent and carers survey gave a largely positive view from those who had either experienced the process of conversion to an EHCP or assessment for a plan, both in terms of their views being reflected in an EHCP or feeling communicated with during the process. These are strengths that can be built upon.

The Review team found limited evidence of a strategic approach being taken to communicating with stakeholders about the SEND system and its challenges, or the deployment of the HNFB budget for the current or future years. For example, limited evidence was found of a wider discussion with parents and carers about responding to the challenge for SEND of future population growth or the need for more robust projections for the likely increasing numbers of children with SEND (see: [3.1](#)).

Case study: high needs funding for mainstream schools outside statutory processes

This case study summarises arrangements that have been developed in three local authorities (LAs) to facilitate schools accessing 'element 3' top-up funding outside of their statutory education and health care assessment and plan processes. Common threads to the examples are active involvement by schools in the local area and flexibility that seeks to keep the needs of the pupil central. All these examples require a school to evidence, when applying, the strategies that have been implemented in support of the pupil and how these have exceeded their £6,000 notional per pupil SEN allocation.

a. Bromley – Pupil Resource Agreements

A pupil resource agreement (PRA) is a non-statutory agreement between the LA, school and parents where a higher level of support in school for the child is required. A PRA enables individual pupils' learning needs to be met quickly, in a targeted way without going through the 20 week, statutory assessment process. The school compiles evidence of the needs identified, informed by local guidance about thresholds, and the strategies that have been implemented. This summary is submitted to the LA's SEN and Disabilities Team who undertake regular assessment meetings, involving school representatives and educational psychologists and decide whether or not the process for a PRA should be started.

The PRA is produced in partnership with parents at a meeting with the school, the educational psychologist and other involved professionals, where outcomes and support levels are agreed. This is a single meeting to assess strategies, resources required and to agree the contents of the implementation plan. A PRA is reviewed annually by the school SENCO, parents and child, just like an EHCP, and the top-up funding mechanism is the same for both in mainstream schools. This means that a child with an EHCP with the same level of learning needs as a child with a PRA would get the same funding resource. It also means that an EHCP may be recommended should a pupil's needs change over time.

A PRA is a non-statutory agreement, and parents do not have the same rights that an EHCP brings. For example, parents will not be able to express a preference for a school for their child, make an appeal to the First-tier Tribunal or be offered a personal budget.

<https://bromley.mylifeportal.co.uk/assessmentofsenlo/>

b. North Somerset – All Top-up funding outside the statutory process

Agreement was reached between the LA and schools that top-up funding, to support pupils with SEND, would not be linked to the statutory assessment processes and would not require a pupil having been assessed for an EHCP. Instead, North Somerset have developed a local process for top-up funding, supported by guidance and forms, for use by schools when there are additional SEND needs. A school's SENCO summarises the needs and strategies they have implemented and additional resources required for any pupil with higher levels of SEND need. There are two deadlines for submission of applications during each academic year: the first week of November and the second week of the summer term.

These applications and the evidence in the forms, are then assessed and moderated by a panel of LA officers and health professionals. Recommendations about the needs and levels of resources are made for all applications submitted. These are then taken to a Quality Assurance Panel (QAP) meeting. This Panel is coordinated by the LA and made up of school representatives, SENCOs and senior leaders, who sample check applications and the recommendations, to ensure consistency and fairness and can also advise that the recommended decisions or the band for funding are changed. Finally, LA officers compare recommended top-ups against the budget available.

If total demand exceeds the total budget, a formula has been agreed to proportionately reduce all top-ups, in order to keep within the allocated high needs budget. Each school is notified of the decisions and this all takes place within three weeks of the application deadline.

The top-up, assessment process and the funding levels for each band were developed, with close involvement of schools, through a pilot year. During the trial, all schools participated in the assessment of applications over one day. The learning from this was applied and adapted to the on-going process, with school leaders preferring LA officers to make the initial assessments and recommendations, and for schools' voices to be heard in the QAP. Detailed guidance advises that, for certain categories and types of need, the top-up funding should apply for a three-year period, whereas for other categories of need, a school should re-submit annually. The design of the process anticipates that pupils with known levels of SEND form the bulk of those assessed in the autumn term and that the summer term cycle focuses on pupils whose needs have emerged during the school year and have undergone an assessment cycle in their school.

<http://www.nseesp.org/Page/206>

c. Wokingham – Exceptional Needs Funding through school clusters

The development of the exceptional needs funding by Wokingham District Council (WDC) was driven by an aim to make funding decisions more transparent to schools, give schools greater involvement and control in the allocation of resources and to use SEND funding more flexibly. The exceptional needs funding process builds on the established school clusters and the collaboration between schools that these facilitate. The LA oversees the process and ensures that support materials such as pro-formas for applications and guidance on thresholds are available and understood by schools, particularly their SENCOs.

Each school cluster was supported to develop a common understanding of what predictable and exceptional needs 'look like' in their schools, which was then shared across Wokingham and summarised to promote consistency and transparency. Each school cluster meets once a term to consider individual applications where a school feels that the needs of a pupil are exceptional or where they feel that their school finds itself in an exceptional situation, and the level of resource that is sought. As a result of the cluster meeting, a list of recommendations for individual or school exceptional needs funding is produced and submitted to the termly LA Moderation Meeting, which makes the final decision about the funding proposals. Each cluster is represented at the Moderation Meeting by its chair. The expectation is that many applications will be for relatively long term funding (three years) and the top-up agreed can be up to the highest funding band. There are standardised units of funding agreed across the area, for example therapeutic session rates and standard rates for support staff hours.

Schools report to their clusters about the progress being made, by the pupil or the school as a result of exceptional needs funding. This is monitored by the cluster group and updates and lessons learnt shared at the Moderation Meetings.

<http://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/learning-and-teaching/sen/enf/>

4.2 Strong, coordinated local authority leadership for planning of SEND, including place numbers, funding and commissioning

The DfE recognises that the bulk of statutory duties in the Code of Practice lie at local level and require that the LA, with support from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), ensures integration across the new system and to oversee that their best endeavours are used to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND (DfE 2015b). Central to this is the effective deployment and monitoring of the HNFB. Much of the evidence analysed by the Review team focuses on these areas: local specialist provision and the use of the high needs funding block (HNFB) to support local children and young people educated outside of Bracknell Forest.

4.2.1 BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL AND SPECIALIST PROVIDERS SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO ADAPT CURRENT SEND PROVISION TO MORE CLOSELY MATCH FUTURE DEMAND

This section will consider the evidence for how nearly 90% of the £13.812 million HNFB is deployed in Bracknell Forest. This will be sub-divided between the deployment in:

- a) mainstream schools, both top-up payments and resource centres;
- b) local specialist provision – the special school and the pupil referral unit (PRU); and
- c) deployment to independent and non-maintained special schools (NMSS) outside Bracknell Forest for 16s-and-under, and to NMSSs and FE colleges for those older than 16.

Before considering these specific sectors, evidence about the future numbers of pupils with SEND from Bracknell Forest will be discussed. The local 'School Places Plan' (BFC 2015) estimates an increase in the whole school-age population of 21.4% by 2020 (see: [appendix 1](#)). Only limited evidence was found of specific work to estimate future numbers of high need SEND places (BFC 2015, annex 3). The SEND section of the report mostly focuses on the past three years and concluded that most increases in numbers had been in the post-16 age group due to new, extended duties in the Children and Families Act 2014. Fig 17 and [fig 18](#) show that BFC has marginally reduced its number of high need places over the past three years, and this has been achieved in contrast to trends across England.

It is the view of the Review team that there is no reason to assume the rate of demand for high need places in Bracknell Forest will be any less than the demand for all school places, due to inward migration and an increased birth-rate. In the absence of more robust local forecasting, the Review team has produced estimates to 2020 of numbers of high needs places, broken down by sector (table 5). Should there be no change in pattern or profile of where young people are educated there is a potential additional cost to BFC's HNFB of about £2 million.

Table 5: Estimates of SEND numbers and costs in 2020 based on current profile

	High need pupils in mainstream	Kennel Lane School	College Hall	NMSS pre-16	Post-16 FE / independent	Totals
2015-16 high need numbers	230	177.5	32	103	135	677.5
2015-16 costs (in '000s)	£723	£3750	£761	£3315	£1937	£10,487
Estimated 2020 places	279	214	38	125	164	820
Estimated 2020 costs (in '000s)	£878	£4521	£761	£4023	£2354	£12,536

The Review team found limited use of data and other intelligence to understand current levels of SEND need across BFC or to project future demands and develop strategies to meet these. There is evidence of under-utilisation of funded SEND places at some specialist Bracknell Forest provision. The Review team feel that it is important to recognise that specialist per pupil place payments of £10,000 per pupil per annum form a significant element of the HNFB. These place payments should be managed as actively as 'top-up' funding for pupils with an EHCP or statement in mainstream schools.

a) Mainstream schools

A total of £693,000 is budgeted to support high needs students attending mainstream schools in Bracknell Forest in 2016-17 (see: [table 2](#)). Figs 4 and 5 (see: [3.3](#)) show that this funding supports 229 students. From attending SEND Panel and considering examples of supporting papers, the Review team are of the view that there is good value for money achieved by BFC in the statements and EHCPs agreed, and updated through Annual Reviews; in particular, the provision mapping is very clear and specific. If there are any issues with this aspect of the local SEND system it is over-thoroughness, which is discussed below (see: [4.3](#)).

A total of £798,000 from the HNFB (including the £132,000 for Ranelagh School, deducted before allocation to BFC by the EFA) is invested in the operation of the specialist resource centres in Bracknell Forest (see: [table 2](#)). The newest of these centres is The Rise, operated by Garth Hill College. The Rise has been open for one year and taught its first group of year 7 pupils. The Rise and

the Rainbow Centre at Great Hollands Primary (early years and reception) provide specialist support for pupils with autism (ASD). This currently leaves no resource centre provision for primary-age children with ASD.

A priority, when developing The Rise, was to meet the needs locally of more complex and high-functioning pupils with ASD, so those who are currently in NMSSs could be moved back into Bracknell Forest. The Review team heard evidence that there should have been more detailed analysis, at the planning stage, about the specific needs of the target group of pupils and identification of the resources The Rise would require to best support them (for example, sufficient access to speech and language interventions). Other schools also commented that they had not felt sufficiently consulted about the development of The Rise and how it fits into the local SEND system. The other two resource centres are at Meadow Vale Primary School, support for pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), and at Ranelagh School, support for secondary students with specific learning difficulties (SPLD). The Review team was provided with no evidence of a service level agreement (SLAs), or equivalent, in place for any of the school resource centres. SLAs would help to clarify the partnership arrangement with BFC, the costs to be met, the desired outcomes for the pupils and the processes for review and making changes to commissioned places. Evidence given to the Review team was contradictory about whether or not there would be the development of a new SEND resource centre in a new free school at Binfield Learning Village (see: [3.3](#)). The Chief Officer leading the project for BFC confirmed that there would not be a resource centre funded in the facilities at the new school.

The place numbers for the resource centres in Bracknell Forest, together with those for specialist provision are shown in table 6. There is significant under use of places at Ranelagh School and some under-utilisation at Meadow Vale and Great Hollands. Evidence was heard about the need for increased provision for primary aged children with ASD and that led the Review team to question the level of need for so many resource centre places for SLCN and, even more so, for SPLD students, many of whose needs should be able to be met in mainstream classes.

Table 6: Bracknell Forest specialist provision capacity

Name of provision	Planned place numbers	Av number on roll (NOR) 2016
Kennel Lane School – pre-16	135	121.3
Kennel Lane School – post-16	50	47.5
College Hall PRU	46	29
The Rise at Garth Hill College	7 (56 when full)	7
Ranelagh School	16	4
Meadow Vale Primary School	20	17
Great Hollands Primary School	6 (fte)	4 (fte)

b) Local specialist provision

There is one all-through special school in Bracknell Forest: Kennel Lane School, and a PRU: College Hall, providing education for secondary age students who have been excluded or are being tutored due to a diagnosed medical need. A total of £4.302 million of the HNFB supports just over 200 pupils educated by these two schools (see [tables 2](#) and [5](#)).

Kennel Lane School has a very comprehensive offer for its pupils, including those with complex and severe learning difficulties. The outcome data from the school indicates that pupils make good progress and the school was judged by Ofsted as being 'good' in November 2015. The school's total budget is £4.03 million, including £0.3 million in payments received from other LAs placing students at the school. As with all schools, the largest proportion of Kennel Lane's budget is committed to salaries and table 7 summarises the staffing profile. External therapeutic support is commissioned by the school for its pupils, such as counselling and physiotherapy, whilst teaching staff are equipped to offer certain specialist interventions such as music therapy and support for pupils with sensory impairment and specific learning difficulties.

Table 7: Kennel Lane breakdown of staffing (June 2016)

Role	FTE
Senior leader	5.6
Primary teacher	10.2
Secondary teacher	13.6
Higher level teaching assistant	3.2
Teaching assistant	81 (total staff not fte)

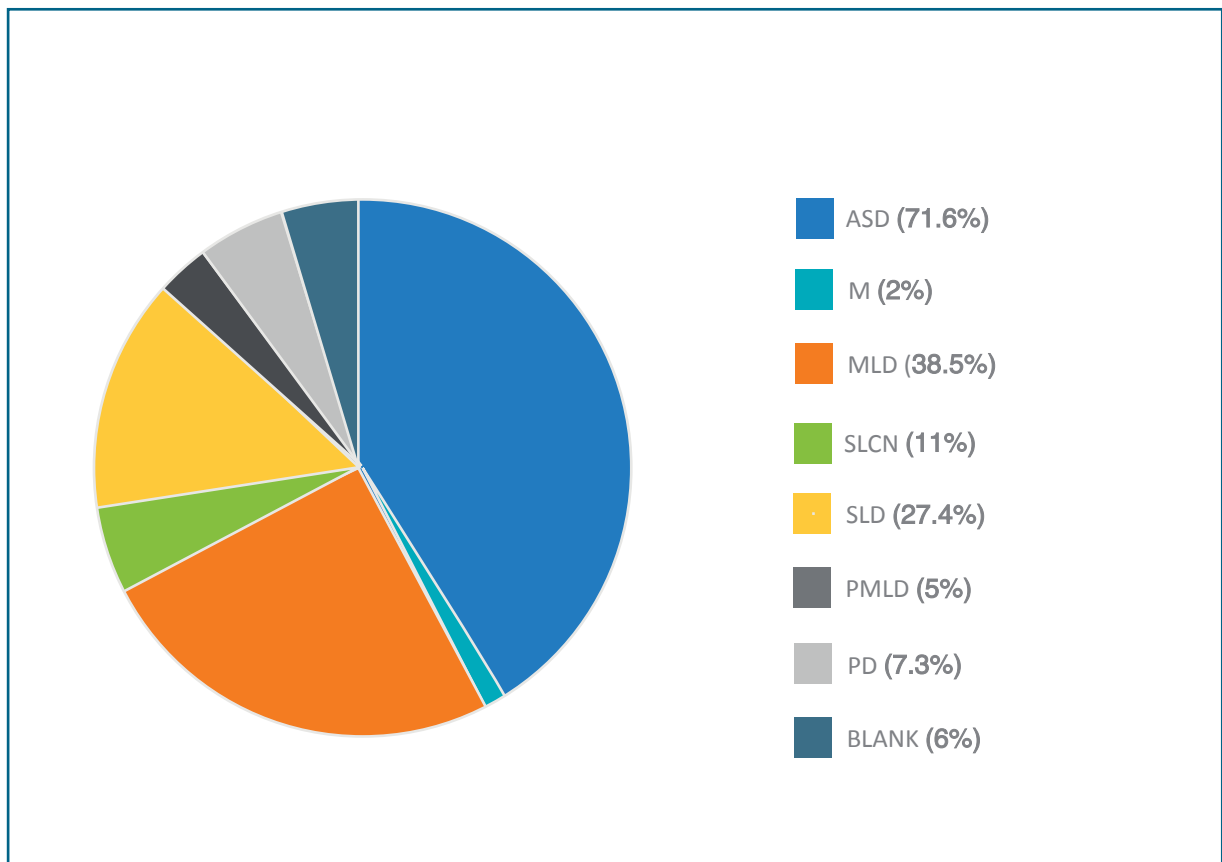
The 2015-16 key stage profile of pupils in Kennel Lane School (KLS) is shown in table 8. This shows there is an uneven distribution of ages through the school: 47 students in sixth form provision compared with 21 in the nursery and key stage 1. The Review team saw an under-utilisation of the reception and key stage 1 facilities and there is also a primary class of 8 children who spend most of their week at a shared facility located in a mainstream primary school. Evidence was given that the main entry points for pupils to Kennel Lane were at traditional school transition points: at the start of a key stage, especially year 7.

Table 8: Kennel Lane pupils by key stage (KS) (summer 2016, n = 169):

Key Stage	Nursery/ KS 1	KS 2	KS 3	KS 4	KS 5
Number of pupils	21	47	32	22	47

Fig 15 shows the recorded primary need of the pupils at Kennel Lane School. A note of caution with this data is that, particularly in specialist provision, pupils are likely to have more than one area of need which is not reflected in the primary need, for example some of the pupils with a primary need of ASD also have severe learning difficulties (SLD). The largest single group at the school are those with autism (ASD) and there are a significant proportion with severe learning difficulties (SLD). The second largest group of pupils, by primary need, is those with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) who are distributed quite evenly across the year groups in the school. This is an unusually high proportion for a special school with a core offer for those with complex and severe learning difficulties.

Fig 15: Summary of KLS pupil by primary SEND need (2016)



Case study: examples of commissioning for specialist provision

The three schools selected for this case study are as follows:

- New Siblands School, South Gloucestershire (ages 2-19)
- Uplands Special School, Swindon (ages 11-19)
- A central London, complex needs special school (ages 2-19)

Partnership and commissioning arrangements

All of these schools enjoy a strong and positive arrangement with their LA. Each of the schools have been commissioned to extend provision to meet local demand and/or provide additional services to support local mainstream schools, such as:

- outreach services for ASD;
- coordinating local SEND partnerships;
- delivering teacher professional development and coordinating SENCO networks; and
- ensuring representation of SEND leaders in strategic discussions.

The schools have an in-depth understanding of Ofsted with all headteachers qualified as Ofsted inspectors. The schools are represented on strategic SEND boards and consequently participate in commissioning discussions and decisions with the LA and health partners. One of the schools, as a teaching school, is also a member of the local Strategic School-Led Partnership, where proposals for the future of the school system are considered with the LA and representatives of the Regional Schools Commissioner. The schools are actively involved in developing new specialist SEND provision in their LA where it is needed. One of the schools provides post 19 provision and another one is planning this type of provision from 2018. All the schools act as a champion for specialist provision and inclusive practice across schools in their LA area.

New Siblands School, South Gloucestershire

The school has well- equipped classrooms and specialist facilities across two sites including: a music and art room, science / design and technology room, life skills suite, sensory diet area and sensory studios. A nursery is planned to open in January 2017 and the school is exploring the options of providing post-19 provision as a Specialist Post-16 Institution (SPI). The school enjoys an active partnership with the LA.

Places	SEN need	Key Stage	Ofsted	Pupil Premium
112	Severe learning difficulties; profound and multiple learning difficulties. Some have autism.	KS1 to KS5	Good July 2013	For 2015-2016: £40,115
Funding Settlement		Bandings used for special schools		
There are 120 planned places; 100 are pre 16 and 12 post 16. Total budget £2,260,000. As part of this the indicative top up is £945,500 although this is likely to increase to £1,261,000 as new pupils join the school.		Funding bands 2106 - 17: 1 - £1,000; 2 - £2,500; 3 - £4,500; 4 - £6,000; 5 - £8,000; 6 - £11,000; 7 - £12,500; 8 - £14,500; 9 - £19,000; 10 - £21,000; 11 - £27,000; 12 - £31,000. Only three pupils are placed at band 11 and 12. The majority of pupils with SLD are at band 4 and those with complex learning difficulties and autism are placed at bands 6 – 8. Average funding per place: £21,000 (inc place value).		

Uplands Special School, Swindon				
<p>Uplands is a purpose built Partnership Funded Initiative (PFI) school co-located within a learning campus with mainstream primary and secondary schools and a primary special school. Uplands School is part of an academy trust, delivering outreach services and a Learning Centre (SPI) for students aged 19-25. The trust is also the proposer for a new free school – Brunel School (50 places for ASD). The school provides a number of services commissioned by the ILA.</p>				
Places	SEN need	Key Stage	Ofsted	Pupil Premium
138 (86 pre 16; 52 post 16)	Severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and/or autistic spectrum disorder.	KS3 to KS5	Outstanding, July 2014	For 2014 – 15: £42,255
Funding Settlement		Bandings used for special schools		
<p>Pre 16 is 86 places; post 16 is 52 places. Pre 16: £860,000 planned places; £1,202,303 top-up (average top up £13,980). Total: £2,233,793.* Post 16 £52,000 planned places; £697,972 top-up (average top-up £13,423). Total: £1,217,972.* Plus Visually Impaired Service, ASD Support Service, and Assisted Technology Service commissioned by the LA (circa £240,000 pa).</p>		<p>Average funding per place: £25,974 (pre 16). Average funding per place: £23,423 (post 16). Estimated average cost for SLD = £25,000, estimated average cost for Learning Mentor Programme (for students with ASD) = £31,000 (on site) and £36,000 off site.</p>		
A central London, complex needs special school				
<p>The school is a purpose built PFI school, co-located within a learning campus that also incorporates a mainstream secondary school. It is an integral part of its borough’s SEND system and a member of SLT attends all SEND Panels and works closely with the SEN Team to support mainstream inclusive practice, for example with pupils with MLD. It is a teaching school. The school has been commissioned by the LA to promote inclusive training and deliver initial teacher training and research in pedagogy and technology for SEND. The school has a Family and Inclusion team that are linked to LA disability teams and CAMHs.</p>				
Places	SEN need	Key Stage	Ofsted	Pupil Premium
237 (24 from OLAs)	Complex needs: mainly profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, complex autism.	Nursery KS1 to KS5	Outstanding Jan 2014	For 2014-2015: £147,705
Funding Settlement		Bandings used for special schools		
<p>For 2016/17: 210 places pre-16; 27 places post-16. The total pupil budget for the school is £7.4 million. This includes £2.1 million in place payment, plus another, £162,000 from the EFA.</p>		<p>The LA has two levels of banding for pupils with complex needs. The average per pupil ‘top-up’ received by the school is £21,089, including an allowance of £3,300 pp for the PFI element of the school’s budget.</p>		

College Hall is the commissioned pupil referral unit (PRU) for Bracknell Forest and is funded for 46 planned places, 10 of these are short-term turnaround placements. The funding is based on an assumption of 70% occupancy basis, which builds in the aim to reintegrate students back into mainstream school where possible. The school was judged as good by Ofsted in December 2014. College Hall is also commissioned to provide up to 25 hours per week home tuition for students who are unable to attend mainstream school due to a diagnosed medical condition. College Hall has an annual budget for 2016-17 of £1.031 million (see tables 2 and 4). The staffing breakdown is summarised in table 9, showing staffing across the services provided. The Review team's view is that there is a high proportion of senior leaders employed and the use of unqualified teachers may impact on the delivery of a core curriculum.

Table 9: College Hall breakdown of staffing

Role	FTE
Senior leader	3.8
Teacher (incl 2 x unqualified teachers)	5.4
Outreach workers / teaching assistant	7.62
Home tuition - senior leader	1.0
Home tutors (x 15)	8.1

College Hall is located in two adjacent, converted residential properties on the edge of Bracknell Forest: one property dedicated to excluded pupils and the other to those on home tuition. In the view of the Review team, these offer limited, fragmented learning facilities. There are SLAs in place for certain services delivered by College Hall, the outreach service and the home tuition service, but the Review team found no evidence of an SLA for the PRU provision.

The SLA for home tuition is for up to 25 hours teaching per student, and the statutory minimum entitlement is for 15 hours per week. Attendance data (see: 3.4.2) records 25 students attending for home tuition in the last academic year. The Review team is unclear how, given the budget for home tuition, this provides sufficient learning time for all pupils. The evidence provided also shows that College Hall has limited capacity to commission therapeutic or other external support for its vulnerable pupils. Pupils have access to a substance misuse worker, but there is no school nursing or counselling service and this is of particular concern given the medical needs of the pupils.

The Review team understand that referral routes to access home tuition in Bracknell Forest are being reviewed to ensure that an individual healthcare plan (IHCP) is in place and that a medical clinician has oversight of the needs of the pupil. In some other LAs, access to this kind of service is only achieved through an EHCP being in place and the involvement of a third tier clinician such as a

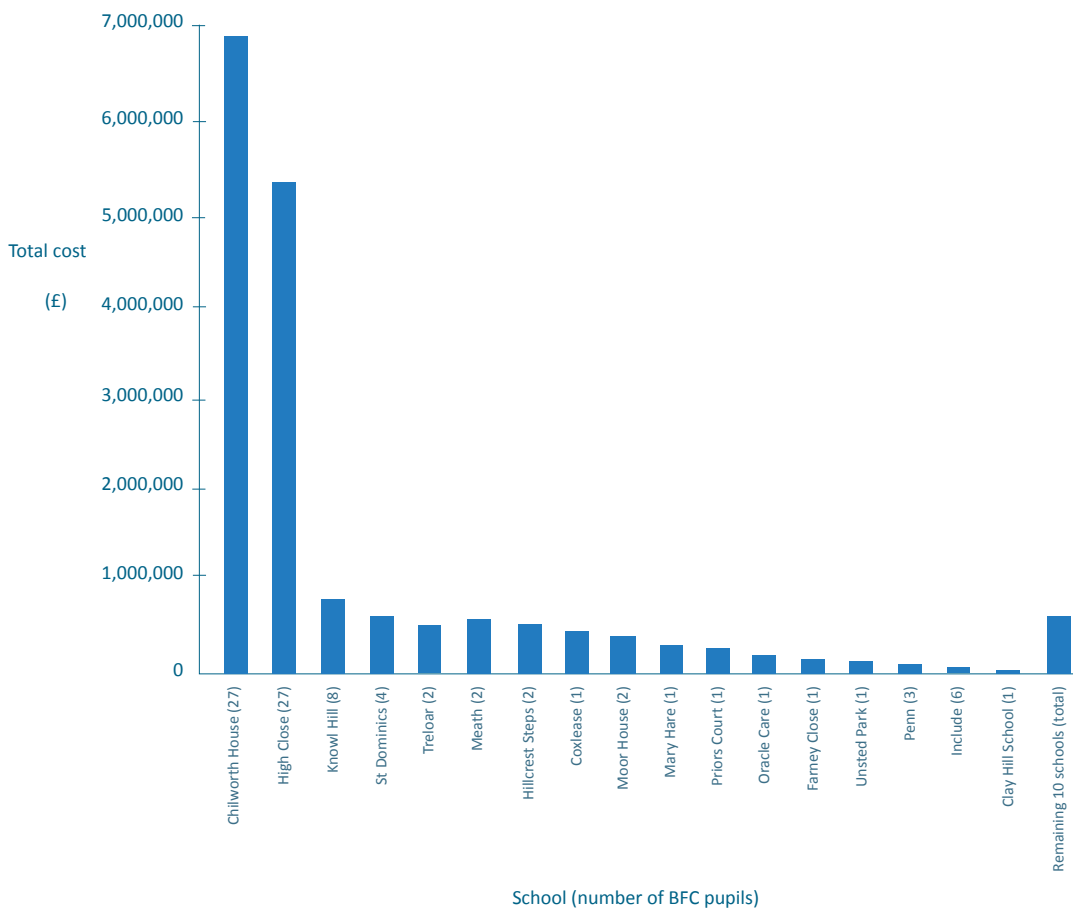
paediatrician or CAMHs psychiatrist. In some areas CCGs provide additional funding to meet the needs of children and young people with mental health needs and to support them in a home tuition service.

There was a lack of a clear performance indicator evidence for College Hall, either from within the LA or from the school, for example about attendance and attainment targets for students and achievement. A strategic dialogue involving other headteachers could help to re-shape and update these resources to make the best use of the funding available.

c) Pupils placed in independent and non-maintained special schools (NMSSs)

In common with all LAs, BFC commissions many places for pupils with specific or complex SEND from independent schools and NMSSs outside the council area and these pupils often spend their remaining ‘school career’ at these schools once they have a funded place. Due to the complex needs of the children and young people and also the fact that the institutions have to cover total costs, or, for some, are profit-making, these involve the commitment of large amounts of funding.

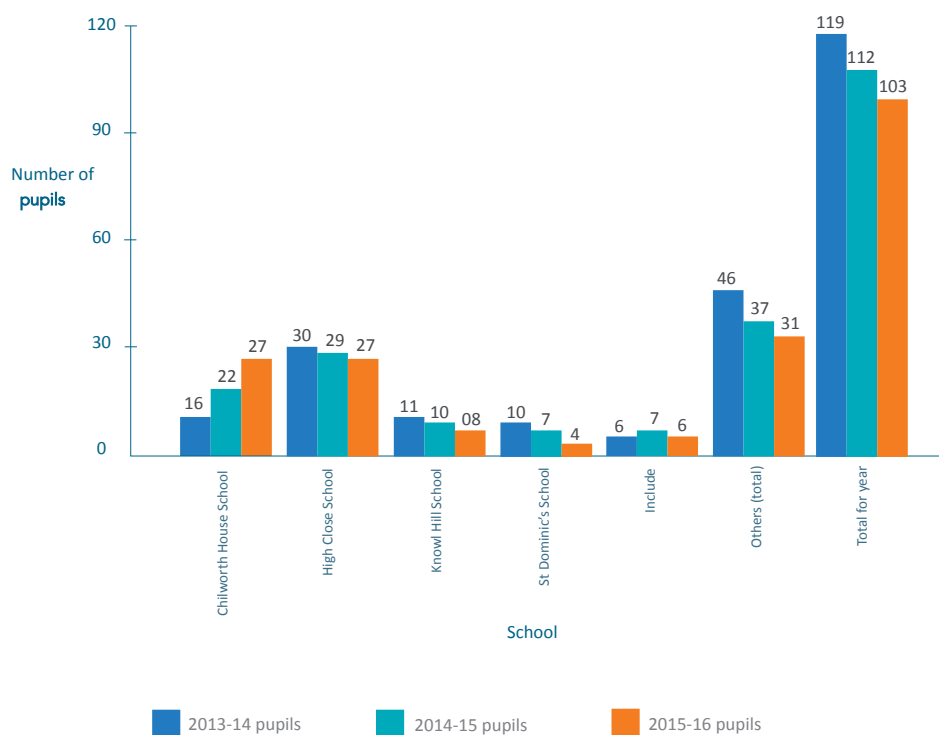
Fig 16: Pre-16 out of area placements - estimated total placement costs (based on 2015-16)



The Council's combined budget for places commissioned up to the age of 16 and for places for 16 to 25 year olds is £4.568 million in 2016 – 17 (see: [table 6](#)), which represents about a third of the HNFB and around 15% of the total population of children and young people with an EHCP or statement. Comparisons with national and statistical neighbours (LGA 2016) and with data from another region indicate that this is a high proportion for a LA (NHS E Mids 2016), about twice the level of the average across England, whilst levels as low as 4% of the 5 to 16-year-old population with an EHCP, are achievable. A small, unitary authority with only one maintained special school faces challenges of scale by comparison with larger councils, but even when compared to smaller authorities the proportion in BFC is relatively high.

For the financial year 2015-16, two providers, High Close School and Chilworth House School, educated 54 of the 103 pupils in pre-16 places (a total payment to these schools of £800,948 and £1,234,284 respectively). The average full-time placement cost per Bracknell Forest pupil at High Close School is £42,850 pa and £63,105 pa at Chilworth House School, plus £10,000pp deducted at source by the EFA (EFA 2016). Analysis of full placement costs at the main providers for BFC (from start date of placement until the proposed date of completion) is set out in fig 16. The overall costs for all providers totalling greater than £100,000 in 'total placement costs' are set out with the number of children and young people placed from Bracknell Forest in brackets. The Review team also found that out of area places tend to be one-off purchases by the BFC SEN Team, rather than part of a commissioning strategy.

Fig 17: Bracknell Forest pre-16 pupils in independent or NMSS 2013 to 2016



The total cost to Bracknell Forest to educate the 27 pupils placed at Chilworth House School would be £6,810,292, an average 'school career' cost of £252,200 per pupil, and the figure for those attending High Close School, £5,317,353: an average school career cost of £196,939 per pupil.

Over the past two years there has been some closer attention given to the management of the numbers of pupils placed out of area. Fig 17 demonstrates that, for pre-16s, there is a downward trend with the 'total pupils placed' reducing from 119 (2013-14) to 103 in the 2015-16 financial year. The principle strategy implemented during this time is the opening of the new resource centre for students with ASD at The Rise.

Another financial consideration for BFC is the cost of transport for pupils placed out of area, although this is not funded by the HNFB. Indicative costs provided by council officers for the two main providers include:

- average total travel cost per pupil in 2015-16 to Chilworth House School was: £5,843 pa and to High Close School: £4,757 pa;
- a total of about £155,000 and £128,000, respectively, for the 2015-16 student numbers.

Chilworth House School was visited by the Review team and provides a good quality of education for primary and secondary pupils with SEMH and autism. The school expressed interest in developing their partnership with BFC to ensure better provision of joined-up services for Bracknell Forest pupils, similar to partnership arrangements in place with some other LAs that place pupils with them. This would also present an opportunity to develop shared medium-term strategies for supporting the return of pupils to appropriate local provision, thus reducing the cost of placements in the medium term. If such a partnership could be successfully established, a similar arrangement might be possible with High Close School as well. Fig 17 illustrates the potential value of such a partnership, because an increasing proportion of pupils placed out of area by BFC attend these two schools. Nearly all of these students have a primary need of SEMH (social, emotional and mental health) or ASD (see [fig 9](#)). The Review team was also informed that both these schools are at, or near, their capacity.

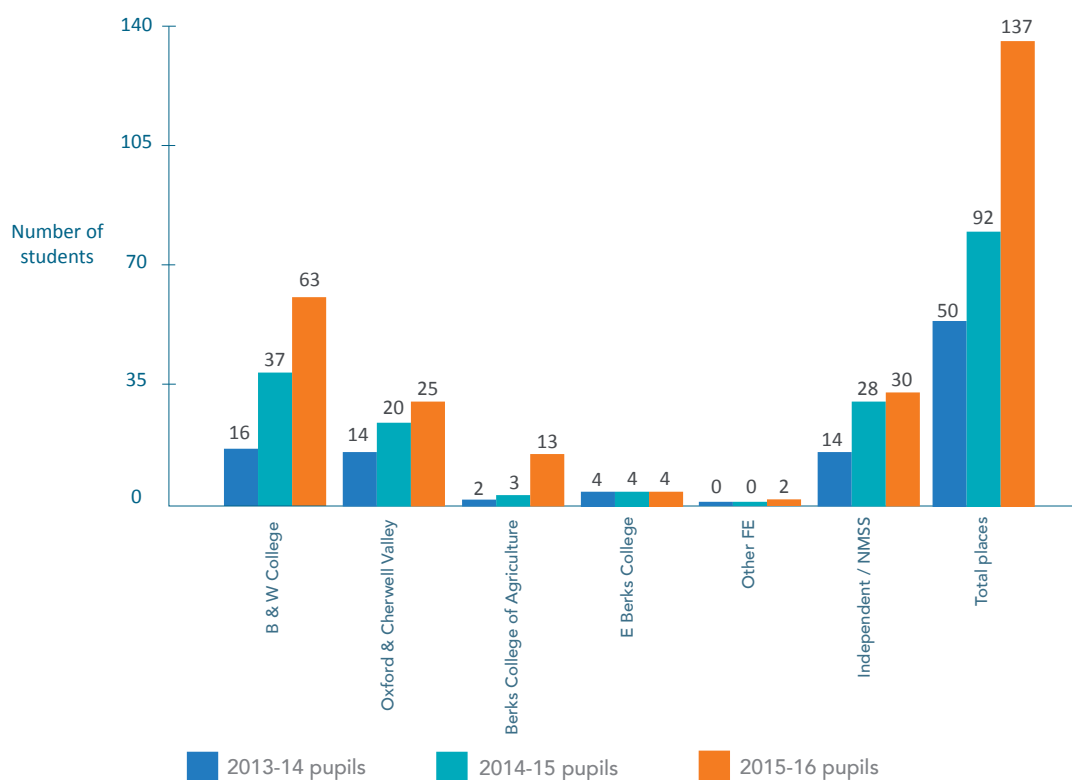
A small reduction in charges for places (for a term) that commence in the autumn term has been offered by Chilworth House School. No arrangement has been offered by Barnardo's, who run High Close School. Given the number of places commissioned it would be advisable for BFC to commission these places on a group or reduced rate basis.

The profile and trends for young people with an EHCP or statement that are over 16 are harder to assess because, prior to 2014, LAs did not have responsibility for funding all post-19 places and consequently data compiled from before 2015-16 is likely to be incomplete. Whilst the chart in fig 18 suggests substantial increases in numbers, it can only reflect incomplete data from first year to 18 months of reporting. There is undoubtedly an increase in the number of post-19 placements, but it is, as yet, hard to report on the trend and, therefore, difficult to make accurate projections for the future.

A further complication is that in BFC post-16 financial data combines together placements at FE colleges with those at independent and NMSS. The Review team have separated these data (see: [3.3.2](#) and fig 18) because the cost of placements at FE colleges are lower than placements in NMSSs,

attract a lower EFA place payment deduction (EFA 2016) and the travel costs are lower at FE colleges. BFC officers reported to the Review team that they viewed the costs charged by some FE colleges as unnecessarily high, but attempts to address this issue with a pan-Berkshire SEND consortium have so far been unsuccessful.

Fig 18: Bracknell Forest post-16 students in FE college or independent / NMSS 2013 to 2016



4.2.2 DECISION MAKING AND JOINT COMMISSIONING PROCESSES

The fortnightly SEND Panel reaches decisions on whether pupils require an EHCP and confirms conversion decisions from statements or LDAs to EHCPs and notes changes reported through the Annual Review process. The SEND Panel requires the evidence submitted to include detailed provision mapping to meet the additional needs of each pupil presented and this enables officers to use this, to set the top-up funding transferred to the school.

A separate framework for top-up funding is adopted with the special school, Kennel Lane (see: [appendix 5](#)), with very broad band descriptors, only two of which, bands 4 and 5, affect additional, 'top-up' payments. The provision mapping evidence required of mainstream schools enables BFC officers (and parents) to be well-informed about the provision being made for a pupil and able to alter levels of funding should there be future changes in need. The Review team see this as good practice, whilst the broad banding descriptors for Kennel Lane School are anomalous and should be updated. It is debatable whether bands 2 and 3 are of relevance for the funding of the needs of pupils at the school. The view of the Review team is that provision mapping in specialist provision

should be informed by the good practice with local mainstream schools and with special schools elsewhere in England.

Whilst the SEND Panel is the decision-making group for EHCPs, the SEN Team identify the school options if an independent or NMSS placement is required, in consultation with parents and carers. As reported in [4.2.1](#), the Review team found that these are 'spot purchase' decisions rather than via a commissioning framework. Despite the large sums involved, the decision to place out-of-area is currently made at middle manager level and is largely driven by availability and suitability of a placement suited to the pupils' current needs. Little or no evidence was found of consideration being given to future destinations or potential for partnership to achieve a move back into a local school in this decision-making process.

BFC has a 'statement of approach' (BFC 2013) for the joint commissioning of services for children and young people with the Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group (BACCG). The only specific action listed in the statement that relates to SEND is to improve the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of pre-school children. Although outside the scope of the Review, the team understands that this has underpinned positive developments at the Child Development Centre in Bracknell. Despite the number of children and young people with need of SEMH, there was little engagement by mental health professionals in annual reviews or progress with the CCG about contributing to the funding of specialist placements in NMSSs or home tuition for pupils when a clinician has advised not to attend school.

The Council also has 'A Policy and Procedure for Transition to Adulthood' (BFC 2016b). Whilst this policy adopts approaches aligned with the Care Act (2014), the Review team is of the view it does not sufficiently address statutory requirements of the SEND Code of Practice (DfE 2015a). Interview evidence indicates that the procedures are not being implemented as set out in the document, for example, there is irregular attendance from education (whether LA officers or schools) at the operational Approaching Adulthood Panel. The SEN team also informed the Review team that they are unaware of Panel dates, whilst attendance by social care or health professionals at annual reviews is inconsistent.

The Review team found evidence of weak arrangements with adult social care and health to make decisions about the commissioning of care and education for those over-19 with complex needs. Little evidence was found that adult care assessments are completed systematically or in a timely fashion for all young people with an EHCP or statement whose needs meet the thresholds, including consultation with parents and carers to build their confidence in any planned changes. Elsewhere in England describes LAs and CCGs developing joint procedures so that a young person's EHCP becoming the primary joint commissioning tool for all partners (NHS E Mids 2016). The recent upper tribunal judgement (Buckinghamshire case) highlights the importance of good joint commissioning arrangements for 19 to 25 year olds. This found that whilst educational outcomes for a young person over the age of 18 might be achievable through a social care budget, until this is in place the LA needs to maintain an EHCP and its provision. Even if the young person was unable to achieve any further qualifications, this was insufficient reason for ending an EHCP (CDC 2016b).

Case study: Organising support for SEND via traded services

Overview of three traded services.

Area	South Gloucester	Kingston & Richmond	Manchester
Name of Company	Integra Schools	Achieving for Children	One Education Limited
Number Schools	139 (edu base)	78 schools Kingston; 91 Richmond upon Thames	1,000 plus schools and academies
Core Market	5 Gloucestershire primary and secondary schools. Around 80% of schools buy back Inclusion services.	School support services offered to all primary and secondary schools in Kingston and Richmond. Integrated education, health and social care services for children in the two boroughs too.	School support services offered to all primary and secondary schools in Manchester. Only forms a minority of turnover now.
Product/Services offered	Specialist professional support services & facilities management for schools and academies.	School support services with two types of membership: standard - no charge for schools and provides a core offer. Premium membership - access to further support and enhanced level of membership.	Specialist Pupil Services - support at individual pupil and whole-school strategic level, such as educational psychology and safeguarding, plus Specialist Management Services.
Type of Company/Model	LATC - Local Authority Trading Company single shareholder South Gloucestershire Council. In the process of becoming a limited company.	Social enterprise - community interest company.	Limited company with share capital – LA is 100% shareholder.
Governance Structure	Four directors and managing director. South Gloucestershire will become 100% shareholder.	Board of Directors; - The governance arrangements for the company are set out in its Articles of Association. Jointly owned by both boroughs and overseen by directors and number of NEDs.	Six directors on the Board.
No of staff	Over 700 in Integra. There are 4 fte in the inclusion team.	647 FTE including social work, teaching, health services & public sector management.	170 plus team of associates – 8 in the inclusion team
Financial	Commercially sensitive information and no figures available for inclusion in the case study but willing to discuss with BF separately	The company was incorporated on 5 February 2014 and commenced trading on 1 April 2014. Its revenue for its first trading year was £102.1 million of which £91.1million (89%) was in respect of its contract for the provision and operation of children's services to the Councils. For the reporting period the company incurred a loss of £22.369 million which is attributable in equal proportion to its parent Councils.	One Education broke even according to documents filed on company house for end 2015
Website	https://edocs.southglos.gov.uk/integra/	https://www.afcllocaloffer.org.uk/	www.oneeducation.co.uk

These examples range from the setting up of 'stand-alone' improvement services jointly owned with schools to an LA that provides a comprehensive range of services that are all traded with local schools.

a. Integra Schools

Integra Schools is the trading arm of South Gloucestershire Council providing support services for schools that includes facilities management and specialist, professional support. The LA's existing traded service was restructured in 2011 and all the support that fell under education, learning and skills became Integra. Integra Schools was relaunched in November 2015 and is currently in the process of becoming a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC). The LA is the company's only shareholder and the governance structure includes Directors from the LA and a managing director who was appointed in April 2016 from a commercial background.

Integra is a profitable company and the school improvement service benefits by being aligned with the overall operational side of the LA. This has helped to ensure that there is always sufficient funding to help manage cash flow across all services and it is felt that the school improvement service would find it much harder to exist without this back up.

Integra Schools offers schools a range of support and provides them with a choice of a School Membership service that allows them a discount on purchasing a range of products, or a 'pay-as-you-go' basis. The prices are determined using different metrics. For example, the governor support is based on number of governors in school, the curriculum support is based on number of days for the school, the therapeutic service is based on cost of counsellors. Services are offered to schools in South Gloucestershire and to other areas.

Schools are making tough decisions on what services to purchase based on finance constraints. As a result, some schools have purchased operational services from other areas but the inclusion services are still popular with schools, with 80% of S Gloucestershire schools purchasing the products. The Inclusion Team is skilled and over the past few years they have become much more commercially aware and are able to adapt their products to better meet the needs of schools. Integra also have a strong contractual system in place with schools. The area of greatest demand for the Inclusion Team is ASD and early years. Staff are employed by Integra Schools whereas some services use external staff, for example, the therapeutic service uses counsellors from other services and are sub-contracted to schools.

b. Achieving for Children

Achieving for Children (AfC) is a social enterprise company created by the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames and London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames in April 2014 to provide children's services. They were the first children's service in the UK to spin out from its local authority partners and this is a large scale business with a multimillion-pound budget.

AfC has combined staff from both LAs into one company and integrating many of the children's services into single structures, for example the disabled children's services have been co-located, and can now be accessed by children from the two boroughs. AfC have impacted on the area's children's services as a whole and transformed Kingston Council's from inadequate to good.

Services for schools are delivered by the School Performance Alliance for Richmond and schools (SPARK). It is led and governed by the Schools Improvement Strategy Group made up of representative head teachers,

the Director of Education Services and the Head of School Standards and Performance. SPARK offers two types of membership:

- standard membership – core offer and no charge to schools, funded by the LA
- premium membership – the core offer, plus an additional support including access to a range of networks and bespoke in-school support.

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames are the joint owners of Achieving for Children, which is a company limited by guarantee. Their responsibilities and the ownership are set out in an Inter-Authority Agreement and the LAs fulfil their ownership role through a Joint Committee. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the company operates and develops in accordance with the wishes of both Councils. Decisions about the services that are commissioned from Achieving for Children are delegated to a Children’s Commissioning Board. An Operational Commissioning Group is responsible for monitoring how well the company performs in terms of financial management and the services provided.

c. One Education

Manchester City Council (MCC) established One Education as a stand-alone, commercial company in 2011 and it replaced its previous Education Traded Services. The aim is to operate at arms-length from MCC and to grow its customer base beyond Manchester so that it would be a long-term, viable business.

One Education was also envisaged initially to be a Strategic Business Partner to MCC, providing services to Manchester schools in line with MCC’s priorities, with 42% of its sales and support services initially directed by MCC. However, this subsequently changed due to MCC establishing a Strategic Education Partnership and the Manchester Schools’ Alliance; the Council had to step-back to ensure that there was no conflict of interest in the service offered to schools.

One Education made a loss in 2013-14, which was attributed to the LA market declining at a quicker rate than anticipated: as a result of a review by MCC there was a £2.5 million reduction in central contracts. In response One Education reviewed their delivery model to ensure that they were providing services that were marketable for the changing market. Current sales projections show that trading with MCC will have reduced to less than 10% of total sales by April 2016. One Education are now working with other LAs across England and has contracts with over 500 schools from Yorkshire to Somerset and Wiltshire.

One Education’s services to schools are primarily in two key areas: Specialist Pupil Services and Specialist Management Services. The SEND and safeguarding services and specialists offer support for improving attendance, dyslexia assessments, educational psychology, safeguarding support, SEND support and therapeutic interventions. There are some set fees for services but the cost of a school’s contract is set according to the combination of services they require and is specified against a number of indicators such as number of days, type of support and number of pupils.

4.3 The coherence of the SEND system, designed with children and young people's needs at its centre

4.3.1 SCHOOLS FIND THEMSELVES NAVIGATING A DISJOINTED SEND SYSTEM

"Can we have a map of SEND support services and how they interconnect?"

Headteacher interview

"Can we have clearer pathways for referrals to external/support services?"

Headteacher interview

The headteachers and SENCOs who were interviewed all made comments similar to the above quotes. Schools gave the overwhelming impression that while there are pockets of effective and valued support that schools can access for pupils, there is no overview about how one service relates to another. In particular, most of the schools asked for a summary of the assessment and support pathways for the main categories of SEND and at what point different services can be accessed for support.

Headteachers reported that certain services, such as speech and language therapy (SALT), at times were reluctant to adapt working practices: they want therapists to more often support strategies delivered by TAs or teachers, rather than the therapist treating the pupil directly. There were markedly contrasting experiences of accessing SALT support reported by schools: from a primary with a resource centre and access to 2fte SALTs, to another expressing frustration about the length of waiting times for SALT and disappointment in the strategies provided. Similar frustrations were voiced about the level of mental health support for pupils and that clinical services made time to undertake diagnoses and make placement recommendations but were much less available for support and interventions.

There were calls by headteachers for more resources and responsibilities for high needs to be delegated to schools. Examples included the delegation of funds to schools to shape and lead the commissioning of alternative provision, thus being able to specify and fund external services needed.

Another shift in the system highlighted in most of the interviews was the inflexibility of the local statutory processes. Whilst acknowledging the thoroughness, there was a strong feeling that the insistence on all paperwork being presented to the SEND Panel resulted in delays to support being put in place for pupils. Headteachers, whilst understanding that an EHCP was only appropriate for pupils with the most complex needs, felt that the volume of the paperwork was a burden on school staff: three schools independently estimated a minimum of five full days of a SENCO's time per EHCP application.

A number of schools expressed a view that there is an increasing unmet need of support for children and young people with ASD. Schools are experiencing increasing numbers of children with

autism, yet there is no specialist resource centre support for the primary age group and that external support from the Autism and Social Communication Service (ASSC) was having to be rationed and was overly focused on assessment of need.

4.3.2 SCHOOLS ARE POSITIVE ABOUT SUPPORT PROVIDED BY SOME PROFESSIONALS AND WOULD LIKE OPPORTUNITIES TO PURCHASE MORE AND/OR SEE INCREASED CAPACITY

"The Educational Psychology Service is a strength. We feel the advice given does improve outcomes for SEND pupils."

School survey

"The support that we had [from the SEN Team] to transfer Statements to EHCPs was very good."

Response to school survey

Through the online survey of schools, 24 out of 28 highlighted the good support from certain teams at BFC. Nine schools remarked specifically on the good support provided by the SEN Team, four about support from educational psychologists and three about the ASSC service. Three schools also remarked positively on support from external agencies such as SALT. One school specifically reported that the SEN Team had contributed to them being able to step-down several pupils from having an EHCP to having SEN support.

This positive feedback, when sat alongside evidence in 4.3.1, illustrates the inconsistencies across the local SEND system. A further example is feedback received about the sensory impairment service: one school reported that the service visits their three pupils regularly and leads the liaison with the parents, while another school's comment was that the service feels remote and is reluctant to liaise with their SENCO.

4.3.3 THE COST AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT OF CERTAIN LONG-STANDING, SEND SUPPORT CONTRACTS

"My school and others feel we can't influence SLAs from Bracknell Forest services."

Headteacher interview

The above quote from one headteacher was echoed by most of the schools: that the current options for SLAs with services such as Support for Learning were too inflexible whereas for some other services, such as ASSC and for SALT, they would like to be able to buy-in additional support, but this option did not appear to be available. BFC has several high needs services that offer an SLA for local schools (these can be found here: <http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/services-schools/slas-2016-2019>). Several headteachers also expressed frustration with neither being able to influence the package of services provided and having to make a three year commitment.

It should be noted that not all services that support SEND, including the Educational Psychology Service and the SEN Team, are funded from the HNFB. The managers of these two services are supported by the HNFB, however, felt they lacked influence over the structure of charges and content of their service's SLA: they had no consistent mechanisms to consult with schools about the best services to offer and felt that SLAs were finance-driven rather than business driven.

A number of these teams are looking towards increasingly trading their services to schools, which is frequently the case in other areas, and the Review team holds the view that this process should be given a specific timescale for implementation. The percentage charged for management overheads for certain SLAs was also noted by the Review team: for example, 20% of the contract payment for the home tuition and for the outreach service commissioned from College Hall is retained by the Council for this reason. These levels are higher than in some LAs and should be reviewed as part of discussions with the SEND Strategic Group about the HNFB budget.

The commissioning of external services such as SALT and Sensory Impairment, funded from the HNFB, lies with the Council. Though responsible for these contracts, the Head of Targeted Services was only sent details of the agreements as part of the evidence search for this Review. Both contracts with Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT), for SALT and OT, and with the Sensory Impairment Consortium were up for renewal in March 2016 and appear to have been rolled-forward.

The view of the Review team is that there is a need to update the approach taken to services commissioned from the retained HNFB budgets and these should come into closer alignment with most LAs in England. It is unusual for schools to only have access to a 100% funded SALT service and this is partly responsible to the lack of responsiveness of the service. It is more common for services for the most vulnerable children and young people to be commissioned, or for funds to be delegated to groups of schools to commission these. For pupils with low to medium levels of SEN, it is more common for schools to commission any external support from their notional SEN budgets.

The total contract cost for 2016-17 for support for sensory impairment is £251,000. In addition to the 20 pupils with sensory impairment with an EHCP or statement in Bracknell Forest, there are about another 45 to 50 at SEN support. This contract, therefore, works out at nearly £4,000 per pupil, per annum.

The wording of the current contracts for Sensory Impairment and with BHFT include elements of performance indicators in them, but these are in need of updating to reflect the service sought by schools. There is some provision for refund if the service delivered is less than the level contracted. However, best practice would revise these clauses so they linked to clear and timely outcome indicators and regular performance management.

4.3.4 MORE CONSISTENCY OF SEND OFFER ACROSS SCHOOLS

There is good practice in SEND in place in parts of Bracknell Forest, including in many of the schools. Areas of best practice shared during the headteachers' interviews include:

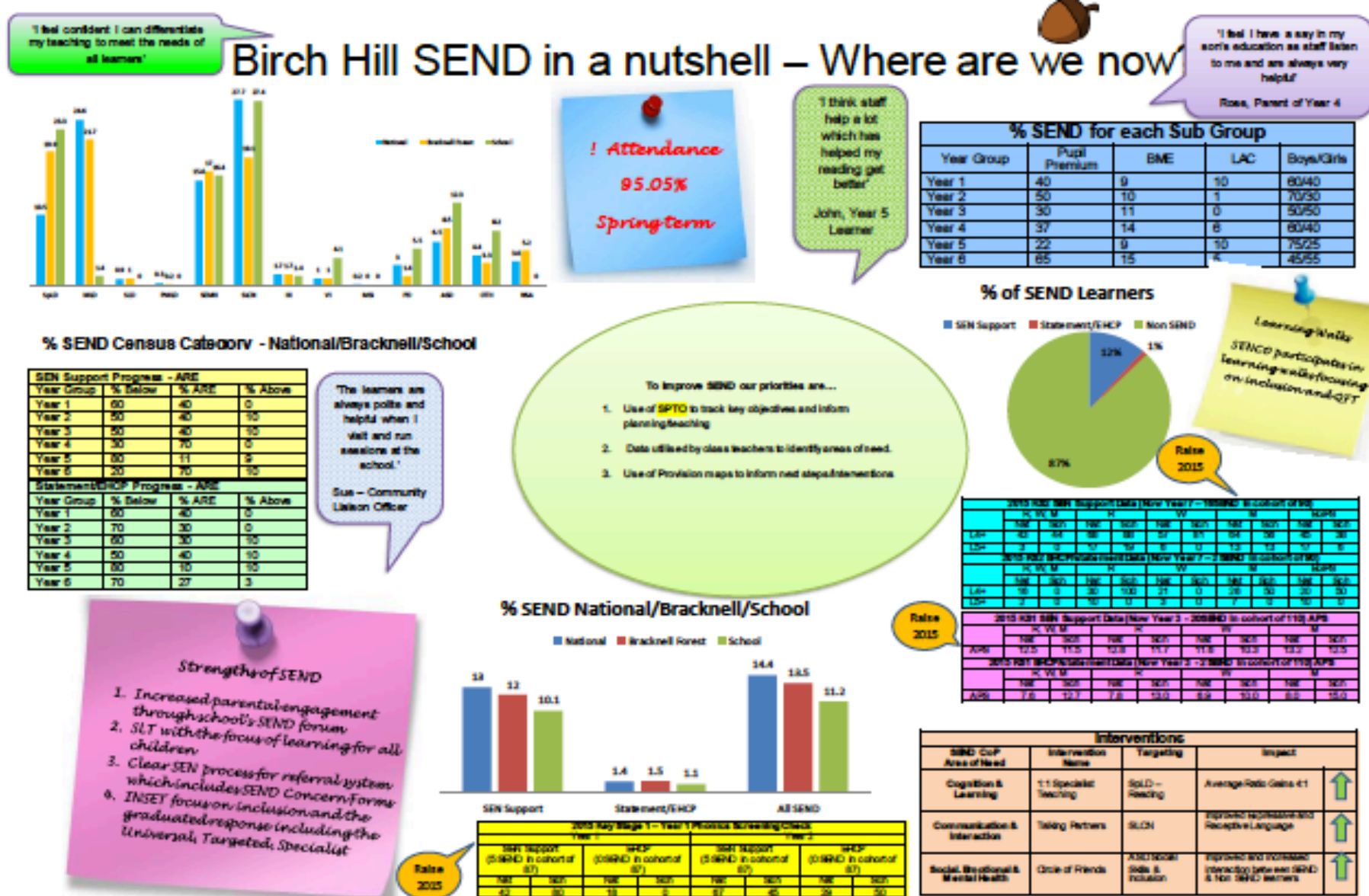
- *“Our main emphasis has been on SEND training for all staff, as well as getting inclusion structures in place so teaching assistants are now deployed across a year group & transfer up with pupils.”*

- *“Secondaries have taken charge of their SENCO forum and it runs how they want it now and has a strong focus on developing practice.”*
- *“In school, years 7 and 8 literacy catch up is working well. Small bases have been set up around school, staffed by trained learning support assistants. Each has a different focus and supports a specific group of students: an ASD base, 'soft-landing' base for anxious students, and homework club (run by a higher level teaching assistant) that successfully targets SEND students.”*
- A number of primary schools have adopted a format to summarise their SEND provision and progress, which provides a good tool for communication with parents and with school staff (see: Fig 19).

Most schools interviewed also highlighted additional resource, over-and-above the notional budget of £6,000 per SEND pupil and top-ups, that they commit to provision for their pupils with SEND. This resource is sourced from their general budgets.

Headteachers expressed the view that there is some way to go for there to be sufficient consistency of practice across schools in Bracknell Forest. Specific areas mentioned included the assessment and identification of SEN across schools, with one suggestion being to establish moderation arrangements for SENCOs to review one another’s assessment of needs. Whilst there were several positive comments about the school-led secondary SENCO forum, this was not the case with networking between primary school SENCOs. Finally, the Review team heard of few opportunities to regularly share best practice in SEND support across schools in the area and heard little reference to challenge to practice being accessed from schools outside Bracknell Forest.

Fig 19: "SEND in a Nutshell" from Birch Hill Primary School



4.4 A data-rich SEND system that understands the difference it is making

High performing systems across all kinds of settings demonstrate, including outstanding schools, excellent achievement and outcomes are underpinned by good data that is understood by those leading the organisation.

4.4.1 MUCH SEND DATA IS IN SILOS AND NOT READILY AVAILABLE ACROSS CHILDREN'S SERVICES NOR SHARED WITH SCHOOLS

To both understand the way that BFC deploys its HNFB budget and to identify areas for improvement and better value for money, the Review team sought and analysed considerable amounts of data as well as generating its own evidence from interviews, surveys and visits. Support was provided from the Education Finance Team and the SEN Team and a considerable amount of information provided (see: [appendix 3](#)).

The experience of the Review was of piecemeal provision of data and information and that there are islands of data in BFC. The SEN Team has ensured that it has reports and generates updates from the school census together with its own placement and annual review information. This gives an overview of children and young people with EHCPs or statements, where pupils are placed and the cost. Similarly finance officers effectively manage the budgets for placement expenditure and for LA services supported by the HNFB by financial year. There is also regular reporting and update on some SEND Code of Practice processes through the Council's departmental performance management (the Lilac Book) and these include the progress of conversions of statements and LDAs to EHCPs and the number of EHCP assessments completed within 20 weeks.

The Review team found insufficient linking of data between teams directly involved in SEND services in Children, Young People and Learning and an absence of effective sharing of SEND data across teams, such as between children's social care and the SEN Team. An area of the difficulty was that finance data are reported by financial year, robust updates on pupil numbers are received in the January Schools Census information and, especially for post-16 data, the start of the academic year is a key update point for final college or school numbers. Improved reconciliation of SEND data at these three key data points through the year would result in better monitoring of costs and performance.

There were three areas of data where the Review team found little or no activity:

1. the collation of the SEN support data from Bracknell Forest schools and linking these with EHCPs and statements to outcomes such as attainment, attendance and exclusions;
2. projections of future SEND demand and modelling of financial pressures and scenarios;
3. surveying and collation of the view of young people about the SEND system and its performance alongside those of parents and carers.

The absence of the above data or its collation, limits the ability of the LA to discuss with schools their performance or that of the SEND system across Bracknell Forest and to rigorously address issues and gaps. Of particular relevance to the Review is that the disconnected data hampers carrying out good quality projections of future demand. Even a key metric for data management, whether to report by full-time equivalent (fte) numbers or by number of places irrespective of when the placement started, has not been clarified and has left some financial reports of limited value to assessing demand.

The absence of survey evidence about SEND across local schools or from young people, parents and carers meant the Review team carried out its own surveys (see: [3.7](#)). These, therefore, are

standalone snapshots rather than updates adding to an evolving profile the Council has developed over time.

4.4.2 THE FRAGMENTATION OF SEND DATA RISKS LIMITING LEADERS' ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND SUCCESSES AND PRESSURES ACROSS THE LOCAL SEND SYSTEM

"How well do LA leaders know the SEND data?"

Headteacher interview

There are significant pressures on the SEND system in Bracknell Forest. Some of these are similar to those being faced by local areas across England and others are a result of local arrangements. The Review has tested and confirmed an underlying assumption of its commissioners that there has been a gap in the strategic leadership of SEND across Bracknell Forest and that school leaders have an appetite to join with BFC to address this.

A symptom of the leadership gap is the fragmented data profile for SEND described in 4.4.1 as well as the partial performance management of the SEND system. The main on-going high level reporting of SEND performance within BFC focuses on important changes to the statutory processes that are required by the new Code of Practice (BFC 2016c). Over the past year there has also been a Departmental Management Team sub-group focussed on the financial pressures on the HNFB budgets internally in Children, Young People and Learning. An improved system leadership of SEND across Bracknell Forest, should be accompanied by reporting to a strategic body such as the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

There is also insufficient clarity about the breadth of performance indicators for the local SEND system and a lack of strategic discussion across the LA and schools to reach cross-sector agreement on what to monitor and how. A further lever for leaders in Bracknell Forest is that Ofsted has now started to carry out local area inspections of SEND with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), as tasked under the Children and Families Act 2014. These inspections expect leaders across education, social care and health to have a well-informed picture of their SEND system and its strengths and areas for development. Linked to this, Ofsted and the DfE have proposed a core dataset (see: appendix 6) that covers educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND, as well as system-wide performance indicators. The Review team's view is that this dataset provides a good place for system leaders to consider how well they know SEND in Bracknell Forest, alongside existing process and financial data, and to select a core of local measures that will be actively monitored by leaders and with stakeholders. These should also be supported by regular canvassing of wider views from those in the SEND system and this could involve the replication of the Review's survey questions with school leaders and with parents and carers. The SEND Diagnostic Checklist for CCGs produced by the Council for Disabled Children would also help conversations involving the CCG and health providers (CDC 2016a).

5. Recommendations for a Renewed SEND Strategy Delivering Value for Money

The purpose of the Bracknell Forest HNFB Review is to report on:

- the effectiveness of the current school SEND system, and externally commissioned provision and how the HNFB is deployed in Targeted Services;
- emerging and future pupil and student demand;
- existing SEND provision funded from the HNFB and analyse against current and projected levels of need;
- options for better alignment of service provision to demand and the potential for savings
- options for reinvestment of savings in an improved SEND system.

Due to the challenges that local SEND systems such as Bracknell Forest's are facing, it is timely for partners across the local area to work together more strategically. A core aim should be to establish a strong continuum of SEND provision, with children and young people at its heart. The recommendations below are based on the evidence gathered during the Review and, if taken forward, will lead to more strategic and cost effective support for SEND across the education system in Bracknell Forest.

Table 10 provides the headline summary of the recommendations together with estimates of the potential savings. These possible savings are calculated for a three year period, and the table includes the assumptions that were used to reach these estimates. The total, indicative savings are based on an assumption the recommendations are all fully implemented (potential savings are in black and potential additional expenditure in red). The one area of likely increased expenditure that the Review was unable to make estimates for is the consequences of greater demand for post-19 places.

The detailed recommendations are presented under the same headings as the Review evidence:

- Increasing the strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system.
- Strong, coordinated local authority leadership for the planning of send provision, including place numbers, funding and commissioning.
- Greater coherence to the SEND system, designed with the child's need at the centre.
- A data-rich SEND system that understands the difference it is making.

Table 10: Summary of the estimated, potential future savings as a result of implementing the recommendations (against current HNFB budget**)

HNFB Area	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	Assumptions
Independent chair for the SEND strategic group (one year)	£5,000			
Specialist provision: Closing Ranelagh School resource centre from Sept 17	£66,000	£132,000	£132,000	Subject to agreement with the school and agreement with EFA (post-16 places). Nov is key notification date.
Meadow Vale shift of designation to ASD (assumed for up to 10 places)	£56,250	£168,750	£281,250	Savings due to shift of the 3 primary children with ASD at CHS / HCS* from Sept 17. Then further 3 children pa not going out of area. Assume increased 'top-up' to equivalent to KLS band 5 (£25,400 pp). Hence average saving is £37,500 pp pa.
Kennel Lane School – move to place payment per pupil	£0	£0	£0	Assumes no change in 2017 due to remodelling. Then at-or-near 100% of 185 place capacity.
Changes to Kennel Lane 'top-up' bands (phased in from Sept 2017)	£100,000	£250,000	£380,000	Assumes a change to 4 top-up funded bands, to replace current 2 (bands 4 & 5). Taking 2015-16 pupil profile, assumed half of respective bands move to one lower, from Sept 17.
Re-commissioning of College Hall provision, including home tuition and outreach	£0	£0	£0	Assumes existing SLAs are re-wrapped together in a single new SLA for AP, PRU & home tuition.
NMSS / independent school places (over-and-above primary ASD places). Reduction by 5 places pa & move back to BF specialist provision from Sept 2017.***Savings against 2016-17 will continue to accrue, so are aggregated	£187,500	£375,000	£512,500	Moves back into area assumed to take up 10 'vacant' KLS places for 2 years and require band 5 'top-up' funding. Primarily pupils from CHS / HCS*. Savings average £37.5k pp in first 2 years, £27.5k pp thereafter.
BFC retained budgets: a. cut contingency payment (from Sept 17) provision from Sept 2017.***	£50,000	£100,000	£100,000	Following consultation with SEND Strategic Group.
b. move to reduction in SALT contract by 50% by 2018-19	£55,000	£113,000	£113,000	Assumes successful negotiations plus a framework agreed with provider for schools to purchase additional service.
c. reduction in sensory impairment contract by 50% by 2018-19	£63,000	£126,000	£126,000	Subject to negotiation with service prioritised for pupils with an EHCP / statement.

Table 10: Continued

d. maintain the core HNFB funding for ASSC move to traded provision to expand the service	£0	£0	£0	Move to traded arrangements ready to launch from April 2017.
e. phasing out of subsidy of Support for Learning	£0	£50,000	£100,000	Phased move to fully traded service; schools increasingly having capacity to deliver interventions and assessments.
f. phased reduction of BFC overhead charges	£25,000	£50,000	£75,000	Review charges to the HNFB with the SEND Strategic assessments. Group and change from 20%.
SEND dataset development project (one off)	£25,000			One off project currently to 10%.
TOTAL savings	£572,750	£1,364,750	£1,819,750	

* CHS = Chilworth House School; HCS = High Close School

** NMSS / independent school placement costs based on 2015-16 payments; remainder based on 2016-17HNFB budget.

*** most of these savings are already committed to support the year-on-year increase in places at The Rise.

5.1 Increasing the strategic leadership by the school sector across the SEND system

5.1.1 INCREASED SCHOOL LEADER INVOLVEMENT IN ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGIC VISION FOR SEND

The Review recommends:

- Establishing a Bracknell Forest SEND Strategic Group that is a partnership between nominated headteachers and the council's Department of Children, Young People and Learning (CYPL). The Group should start its work before the end of 2016 and act as champions for a renewed vision for SEND.

The views of headteachers are clear: they wish to see changes to the SEND system across the area and are willing to contribute to the strategic leadership of these developments. Local authorities (LAs) that have successfully adapted SEND provision to better meet need and have implemented demand-led budgets and achieved this through a strong partnership with local schools. Through the SEND Strategic Group, the LA should develop accountability for the commissioning of SEND specialist placements and work with the schools' sector so there is more consistent provision of support to meet locally identified need.

The SEND Strategic Group should have oversight of developing the local vision and a renewed SEND strategy and ensuring its implementation whilst retaining alignment with other changes across the local education system. The SEND Strategic Group should report to the Children and Young People's

Partnership Board and work closely with the Bracknell Forest Schools' Forum and with joint commissioning arrangements. To ensure the work of the group is driven forward and the vision becomes established locally, we suggest consideration is given to appointing a paid independent chair person, who has a strategic SEND track record, for the group's first year. This renewed vision and focus on SEND will prepare the ground for the implementation of the Review's other recommendations.

5.1.2 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP OF STRATEGIC ACCOUNTABILITY ACROSS THE SEND SYSTEM

The Review recommends:

- The terms of reference for the SEND Strategic Group ensure that the group has a clear role in decision-making and driving the changes. It should be supported to develop a business plan to take forward priority recommendations, hand-in-hand with the local SEND Strategy that will be developed.
- Consultation with schools about launching the SEND Strategic Group should start as soon as possible.
- An independent chair should be appointed and the role funded for the first year. Through employing a chair with significant national SEND expertise, this will help to set a strong foundation and also ensure there is leadership capacity for the Group in the short term.

Responsibilities of the Group should include scrutinising how the HNFB is deployed through the year, as well as being consulted about the proposed HNFB budget each year. The SEND Strategic Group will need to address some tough decisions to ensure that available high needs funding is used effectively to deliver positive outcomes and targets the children with the most need. The SEND Strategic Group should seek to keep the best interest of all children and young people with SEND central to its work and ensure there are opportunities for parents and children to be consulted and have their voices heard.

5.2 Strong, coordinated local authority leadership for the planning of SEND provision, including place numbers, funding and commissioning

A feature of strong leadership is the openness to learn from best practice, locally and nationally, and, through benchmarking, know how well the local system is performing.

5.2.1 BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL AND SPECIALIST PROVIDERS SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO ADAPT CURRENT SEND PROVISION TO MORE CLOSELY MATCH DEMAND

The Review has identified a mis-match between some commissioned specialist places and likely demand, whilst, at the moment, there is no clear mechanism to formally amend specialist place numbers.

To action the recommendations, time will be needed for consultation and to plan the implementation of the changes. It is imperative that this work is prioritised if changes are to begin from the start of the 2017-18 academic year.

The recommended changes are set out below across local specialist provision, including Kennel Lane School and College Hall, and out-of-area place management.

a. Kennel Lane School:

There is evidence over the past three years of reducing demand for places at school (see: [3.4.1](#), fig 8), specifically, an under-utilisation of early years and key stage 1 provision (see: [4.2.1](#), table 8). Despite some over-provision currently, there is demographic evidence that, over the next five years, the demand from Bracknell Forest for specialist places is likely to increase ([table 5](#)). With oversight from the SEND Strategic Group, BFC should work with school's leaders and the governing body to not only remodel provision at the school to better fit with current and future demand, but also to ensure there is a better alignment of the school's offer with rest of the local SEND system.

The Review recommends:

- a) Kennel Lane School works with BFC officers to remodel its provision, informed by more detailed modelling of future, medium term SEND demand, in terms of numbers and primary needs. This will probably include a shift of places to secondary and post-16 and more complex needs, such as ASD / SLD and away from MLD.
- b) An early assessment resource is established during the current academic year for reception and year 1 children that offers dual placement for up to two terms, with the pupil's mainstream primary within existing resources. These assessment places would ensure that the children's needs are identified and that the most effective intensive strategies that could, where appropriate, support them in mainstream schools are trialled. The Review team suggests that between eight and twelve assessment places are created. A clear assessment protocol would need to be developed to ensure that parents understand that the places are not permanent. The pupils would not necessarily need an EHCP to access an assessment placement.
- c) Kennel Lane School work with BFC officers to review the current, limited, bands for top-up funding for higher need pupils. This work should begin as soon as possible so that implementation can commence by September 2017 and be informed by good practice within and outside Bracknell Forest. The step up between bands is currently, in the Review team's view, too high.
- d) An appraisal, involving the Head of SEN and the school's leaders, of the potential to establish a partnership for the school to apply to the EFA to become a special post-16 institution (SPI). This work should commence in the current academic year. If an application is to go ahead, there will be a need for a commitment to commissioning a minimum of ten post-19 places.

If a partnership to remodel provision with the school is not forthcoming, the number of places commissioned by BFC could be reduced by ten to better fit with current student numbers. A new commissioning agreement should be implemented, which would set out arrangements for increased places if demand changes over the next three to five years.

b. Resource centres:

The Review recommends:

- a) All resource centres should have an outcome-based service level agreement (SLA). These should be monitored by the LA clearly identify the number of places funded and a process by which this can be increased or decreased based on demand. Each resource centre should

produce an annual report that demonstrates improving pupil outcomes as a result of placement in the provision. This should be signed off by April 2017.

- b) Agreement should be reached with Ranelagh School to close its resource centre that has operated well below capacity for some time. The majority of pupils supported can and should have their needs met from within mainstream schools and transition arrangements can be agreed for the top-up funding for the few pupils with an EHCP.
- c) The resource centre at Meadow Vale Primary School should have its designation extended to provide specialist support for primary age children with ASD as well as some of the more complex children with SLCN it currently supports. This should form part of its SLA agreement and be a condition of maintaining the current 20 places commissioned. Transition arrangements should be made to support a move for some children currently supported back into mainstream classes, with appropriate support. New assessment criteria will need to be developed with the speech and language therapy service.

c. College Hall:

The current scale, resource level and premises for College Hall undermines its viability as a standalone alternative provision that offers sufficient quality of education and learning for its vulnerable students, both those in the PRU and accessing home tuition.

The Review recommends the following options are considered for future PRU and home tuition provision, in consultation with the SEND Strategic Group, either:

- a) Reach agreement with one local secondary to take over College Hall and its services and remodel and update the alternative provision, in agreement with the LA and in consultation with other local secondary schools; or
- b) Reach agreement with all the local secondary schools for the responsibility for alternative provision to be shared between them and to reach a decision about the best arrangements for home tuition; or
- c) Reach agreement with another provider, such as an outstanding PRU in a neighbouring local authority or with a multi-academy trust, to agree to be commissioned to deliver College Hall's alternative provision.

The Review also recommends that:

- The SEND Strategic Group should consult with secondary schools in Bracknell Forest about their responsibilities and role in providing alternative provision.
- Whatever delivery model is selected, there should be an SLA agreed, with effective monitoring arrangements and an outcome-focused performance management framework. The separate home tuition and outreach SLAs should be incorporated into the over-arching SLA and consideration given to whether sufficient capacity is being commissioned to meet the current expectation of up to 25 hours a week for home tuition.
- The LA, with the support of the SEND Strategic Group, should ensure all mainstream schools are fully meeting their statutory responsibilities for excluded pupils. BFC are recommended to establish a clearly defined referral process for the PRU, with a pupil having been subject to two permanent exclusions being a pre-requisite.

d. Partnership with the main NMSS providers:

Bracknell Forest places a significant number of children in out of area placements: 103 pre-16 pupils in 2015/16. Pre-16 placements are considered carefully via the SEND Panel and efforts have resulted in there being a downward trend in numbers placed over the past three years (see: [fig 17](#)). This focus should be maintained.

In order to maintain this downward trend, the Review recommends that the Head of SEN establishes a partnership arrangement with each of the two main NMSS providers, High Close School and Chilworth House School, to:

- a) develop closer management of support for pupils who show the potential to move back to local provision and innovative arrangements piloted, such as what transitional support could be funded from the NMSS to facilitate this;
- b) ensure better forward planning of future demand for places from Bracknell Forest with these schools;
- c) agree a framework for payments and service contracts for places taken by pupils from Bracknell Forest that reflects the scale of the funding from BFC. Other local authorities have arranged lower costs per placement, for a minimum number of pupils.

The Review also recommends that:

- d) BFC ensures there are adequate contracts in place for all out-of-area placements and move away from the current “spot purchase” commissioning arrangement. It is recommended to move onto a framework such as the ‘Multi-supplier Flexible Framework Agreement for Provision by Independent Special School and NMSS’ led by Gloucestershire County Council. (It should be noted that there are some schools that are not part of this framework and would still have to be ‘spot purchased’).

The Review team found Chilworth House School open to new ways of working; they cited examples where they have flexible arrangements with other social care and SEN teams to develop provision near to these LAs including residential or short breaks support.

5.2.2 CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR ALL HIGH COST OUT OF AREA PLACEMENTS

High-cost, out-of-area SEND placements are a major financial commitment: £3,314,895 from the HNFB in 2015-16 and it is not unusual for the ‘school career’ costs for a student to be in excess of £500,000 (see: [fig 16](#)).

The Review recommends:

- a) A new approval process is developed and that decision-making for high cost placements in the Department of Children, Young People and Learning: be subject to approval by the nominated Chief Officer. We recommend the new process applies to all placements over a defined figure (we suggest over £20,000 pa).
- b) The new approval process should require the SEN Team to summarise the case for the placement (including travel costs, estimated lifetime costs and how local provision within Bracknell Forest was not an option for placement). Evidence should be provided about proposed support strategies and thresholds for the pupil to potentially move back into area in the future.

- c) All current out-of-area placements in independent and NMSS schools should be assessed, between education psychologists and the SEN Team, to identify those pupils with the greatest potential for future move back into Bracknell Forest provision. For those with the most potential, there should be early consultation and discussion with parents / carers as part of assessing the time-frame for their child's return to local provision.
- d) Social care colleagues should attend all key transition annual reviews (years 9, 11 and 13) to prepare for adulthood and for services to be provided through community social care rather than educational organisations.

5.2.3 ROBUST JOINT COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEND SHOULD BE DEVELOPED; THESE SHOULD START WITH JOINT PLANNING FOR 14 – 25 YEAR OLDS

The Children and Families Act (2014) extended responsibility for ensuring access to education up to the age of 25 for those with high needs to LAs and that a young person's EHCP should effectively capture the joint planning across health, education and social care. It is recommended that Bracknell Forest Council should develop stronger, more strategic, joint commissioning arrangements for children and young people with SEND.

The Review recommends:

- a) Bracknell Forest Council and partners update the existing joint approach to commissioning (BFC 2013).
- b) As a priority, the Head of SEN, other senior LA officers and the CCG should establish more strategic arrangements for joint commissioning. This should implement improved, joint planning for all young people with an EHCP or statement from age 14, as learners move towards adulthood. Working with the SEN case officer, the lead social worker for each young person should ensure that adult care assessments are completed in time for all young people whose needs meet the thresholds, including consultation with parents / carers. Where appropriate continuing health care assessment will need to be part of the process and feature as part of the overall EHCP.
- c) Progress with improved multi-agency planning for young people with an EHCP or statement should be monitored by a strategic joint commissioning body with representation from health, education and social care.
- d) The young person and their parents or carers should be involved throughout the process, with Mental Capacity Act assessments completed where necessary.

5.3 Greater coherence to the SEND system, designed with the child's need at the centre

As part of updating the Local Offer, BFC should map the support pathways for each major, SEND category and the SEND Strategic Group should be consulted about this. This mapping will help to identify support that schools might ask BFC to commission on their behalf and support they might commission, or provide, themselves. This should form part of establishing a strong continuum of support for children and young people and their families.

5.3.1 A SENIOR BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL OFFICER SHOULD REVIEW CERTAIN LONG-STANDING, SEND SUPPORT CONTRACTS

Tasked by the SEND Strategic Group, the Head of Targeted Support should oversee a review of the existing contracts for speech and language therapy (SALT), sensory support and occupational therapy (OT). The Group should also be consulted about BFC's move towards a traded model for other SEND support services, including the Autism and Social Communication Support Service (ASSC), Support for Learning and Traveller Education that are currently financed from the HNFB.

The Review recommends:

- a) The contracts for SALT, OT and sensory support be revised to be worded on a performance basis and more closely monitored, with a clear recharge facility at the end of the year if the level of service varies from what was originally commissioned. The funded provision for SALT and sensory impairment should be reduced and be primarily for pupils with moderate to severe needs. There should also be a purchasing framework established for schools to commission and fund additional SALT and sensory impairment support on an annual basis.
- b) Traded arrangements are established for ASSC and Support for Learning, aligned with others being developed by BFC, and that these are led by the respective team managers. The traded service should include clearly defined, funded, core services for high needs children attending mainstream schools or resource centres. Each traded service should set out costed support package options that schools can choose to sign up to annually. The view of the Review team is that the HNFB element for the ASSC service should remain the same and that traded provision facilitates an extension of the service, whilst the HNFB funding for Support for Learning should gradually be phased out.

As a result of these recommendations, mainstream schools will need to increasingly meet the costs of low to medium level support for pupils on SEN support, from their SEND delegated funding.

5.3.2 IMPLEMENT A CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT FOR ALL PUPILS WITH SEND, THROUGH BUILDING ON LOCAL STRENGTHS AND PROCESSES

The Review recommends:

- a) As part of updating the Local Offer, BFC should map and summarise the local assessment and support pathways for pupils from each primary need category of SEND.
- b) BFC should involve SENCOs and consult with parents and carers as the pathways are mapped. This will help to ensure the pathway summaries are clear and easy to use. The opportunity should be taken, through this process, to highlight best practice locally, such as when pupils can be stepped down from requiring an EHCP or when children have been supported to achieve improved outcomes.
- c) During this academic year, the SEND Panel and the SEN Team should work with SENCOs to review local EHCP evidence gathering and decision-making processes. Where possible this should include representation from the health provider and social care too. The review should aim to achieve a process that is not unnecessarily burdensome, keeps the child's needs central and develops a focus on learning outcomes, as well as the provision of support in school.

5.4 A data-rich SEND system that understands the difference it is making

Good quality, reliable data is necessary to underpin developments across the renewed SEND system in Bracknell Forest. The Head of SEN should be tasked by CYPL's Departmental Management Team (DMT) to ensure a core dataset is defined and this should underpin the Council's understanding of the performance of the system and processes that achieve greater transparency and connectivity between existing data held by teams in the Department and with other partner organisations.

5.4.1 CONSISTENT, RELIABLE AND ROBUST SEND DATA ACROSS THE LOCAL SYSTEM

The Review recommends work begins this academic year:

- a) To establish a core SEND dataset to be assembled and reported quarterly to DMT and that this is aligned with the extended reporting indicators being proposed by the DfE (see: [appendix 6](#)). The development of this should build on existing performance monitoring of EHCP conversions and completions together with HNFB financial data, in order to assess progress and pressures.
- b) To urgently ensure that data about pupils assessed at SEN support, received from schools as part of their school census reporting, is routinely collated from January 2017 alongside existing data gathered about children and young people with statements and EHCPs for inclusion in the core dataset. BFC should have a picture for all children and young people with SEND of any issues with attendance, exclusions or poor attainment. The data accessible from 'Raise Online' for pupils at SEN support should be collated to ensure individual schools are meeting the needs of these pupils.
- c) To ensure financial reports about pupil top-ups and out of area funding are compiled by academic year, calendar year (linked to school census), as well as the existing financial year and by place numbers and full costs, as well as FTE and pro-rata costs. This will better assist performance management of the commissioning of places: helping to identify successes with moving pupils back into area and to estimate the costs of future support demands for those with high needs.

A briefer core dataset should be agreed for reporting to the Strategic SEND Group, covering data about finance and the provision for children and young people with SEND.

5.4.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORECASTING AND COST PROJECTIONS TO INFORM FUTURE SEND DECISION-MAKING

The Review recommends:

- a) The existing BFC platform for modelling future demand for school places be extended to include modelling scenarios for the potential future demand for SEND places for up to ten years in the future. This should be led by the Chief Officer Strategy and Resources and supported by the Head of SEN.
- b) The assumptions for future modelling are reassessed annually against the improved SEND data, due to 5.4.1. In particular, more granular, high needs cost projections should be developed and projections improved for post-19 provision as both joint commissioning improves and demand is better understood.

Glossary

Abbreviation	DfE category of SEND
ASD	Autistic spectrum disorder (or autistic spectrum condition)
HI	Hearing impairment
MLD	Moderate learning difficulty
MSI	Multi-sensory impairment
PD	Physical disability
PMLD	Profound and multiple learning difficulty
SEMH	Social, emotional and mental health
SLD	Severe learning difficulty
SPLD	Specific learning difficulty
SLCN	Speech, language and communication needs
VI	Visual impairment

Acronym	Meaning
Annual review	Review of an EHCP that local authorities should ensure take place every 12 months.
ASSC	Autism and Social Communication support service (Bracknell Forest)
BFC	Bracknell Forest Council
BHFT	Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – local mental health and community health provider
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health service
CCG	Clinical commissioning group
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CYPL	Department of Children, Young People and Learning (Bracknell Forest)
DfE	Department for Education
DSG	Direct schools grant
EFA	Education Funding Agency
EHCP	Education health and care plan
EYFS	Early years and foundation stage
FE college	Further education college

HNFB	High needs funding block
IHCP	Individual health and care plan
KS	Key stage (of the National Curriculum)
LA	Local authority
LDA	Learning difficulty assessment
Local Offer	Information about provision the LA expects to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled.
NMSS	Non-maintained special school - school which is not maintained by the state but charges fees on a non-profit-making basis.
OT	Occupational therapy
Personal budget	Money identified by the LA to deliver provision set out in an EHCP where the parent or young person is involved in securing that provision.
PRU	Pupil referral unit
SALT	Speech and language therapy
SEN	Special educational need
SEND	Special educational need or disability
SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator (in a school)
SLA	Service level agreement
SPI	Special Post 16 Institution

Appendices

Appendix 1: National context for SEND

Schools Funding and High Needs Funding

The DfE distributes funding for schools in England through the dedicated schools grant (DSG), which totals £40.22 billion in 2016-17 (DfE 2016b). Figure 20 illustrates the schools funding streams and the DSG is split into three blocks: the schools block, the high needs block and the early years block. These blocks are notional, and local authorities (LAs) have the freedom to move funds between them. The LA also has a responsibility to define the local funding formula for schools, following formal consultation with school leaders, via their local Schools Forum (DfE 2016b). The LA's agreed funding formula is used to allocate funding to both maintained schools and academies; however, the Education Funding Agency (EFA) allocates funding directly to academies.

For pre-16 pupils with special educational needs (SEN) at mainstream schools and academies, LAs provide sufficient funding in their delegated budgets to enable the schools to support these pupils' needs, up to the cost threshold of £6,000 per pupil per year. This is called the notional SEN budget. LAs specify how much of the funding a school receives through the school funding formula constitutes its notional SEN budget. Should a pupil require further support, which must be assessed through the statutory education and health care assessment process, any additional funding is met by a top-up from the HNFB of the LA placing the child at the school. Top-up funding rates are agreed locally.

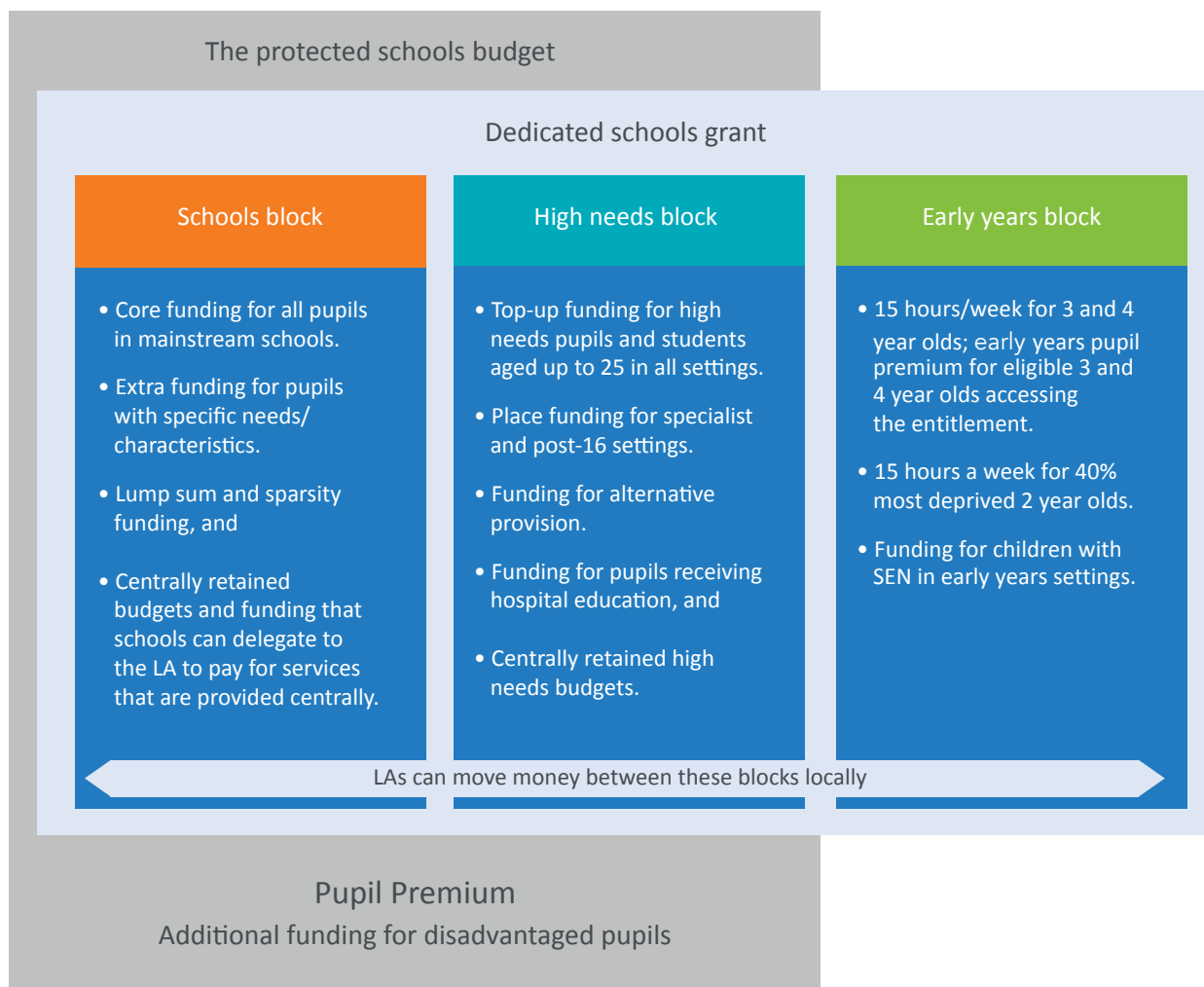
Although not the focus of this Review, the schools block, and its per pupil payment and each school's notional SEN budget (these used to be known as 'element 1' and 'element 2' funding respectively), underpin the provision for each pupil with SEND. Table 12 sets out the amount allocated to schools per pupil for the academic year 2016-17 in Bracknell Forest and compares this with that for its nearest statistical neighbours.

Table 12: Schools funding per pupil 2016-2017

Phase	Bracknell Forest	Statistical neighbours average
Primary	£3,042	£3,111
Secondary	£4,548	£4,624

(Source: BFC Education Finance Team)

Fig 20 : Schools revenue funding streams (DfE 2016b)



High needs funding supports 0-25 year olds with more complex SEND. It also supports pupils who are not in school because they are excluded or otherwise not able to attend school. Alternative provision (AP) for such children and young people includes pupil referral units (PRUs) and hospital schools. A pupil has ‘high needs’ if their education costs more than approximately £10,000 per year (DfE 2016b).

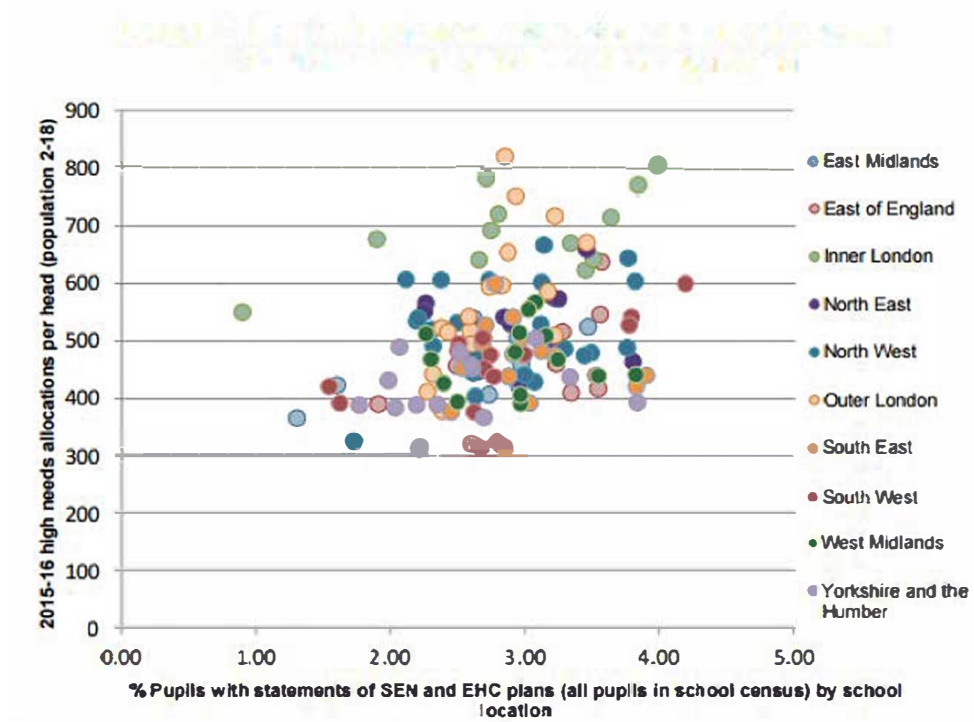
The components of the HNFB distributed to schools consists of:

- Place Funding - Special schools, and special units within mainstream schools and academies, receive place funding of £10,000 per place, which is drawn from the high needs block funds.
- Top-up Payment (also known as ‘element 3’) – if a pupil with SEND is assessed, through the education and health care planning process, to have additional needs, then the LA makes a top-up payment to the school according to locally set formulae (EFA 2016). The range of top-up payments in BFC can be found in [appendix 5](#).

The new funding system under the Children and Families Act (2014) makes LAs responsible for commissioning and funding all additional high needs provision across early years, schools and post-16 education and training (LGA 2014). LAs are also expected to use their HNFB to fund central services related to SEND and can also commission support services for the benefit of pupils with SEND (DfE 2016b).

All LAs are delegated powers to develop their own approach to high needs funding (element 3), and this includes top-up funding levels for mainstream schools and special schools. All special schools are funded at the same base rate of £10,000 per planned place regardless of whether the place is filled or not, however the local flexibilities ensure there is significant local variation about element 3 payments received. Research commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE 2015c) showed that the current funding distribution between LAs does not correlate well with measures of need (see figure 21).

Fig 21: 2015-16 high needs allocations per head against % SEN statements and EHCPs by region



FAIRER SCHOOLS FUNDING

In November 2015 the government announced its intention to move to a national schools funding formula (HoC 2016) and, in March 2016, the DfE launched a consultation about moving to both a national funding formula for all schools in England and for the HNFB (DfE 2016c and 2016a). The latter consultation provides for a revised HNFB funding formula based on an LA's current SEND profile combined with a weighting dependent on levels of deprivation and health need in the local area. LAs, in the proposal, would retain responsibility for the distribution of high needs funding to schools (DfE 2016a). Following ministerial changes, the DfE has delayed action on 'fairer funding' for

at least 12 months. Although the details of the reforms areas yet undecided, it is expected that further, national high needs funding reform will take place.

SEND policy and legislation

The current arrangements for the education of children and young people with SEND are largely set out in the Children and Families Act (2014). Part 3 of this act requires LAs, all schools and academies, early years' providers and NHS bodies to pay regard to the new regulations and to the new statutory Code of Practice for SEND (see: 3.3). LAs must:

- Work with health and social care colleagues jointly to commission services to deliver integrated support for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25.
- Consult children, young people and their parents, and co-operate with a range of local providers across education, health, social care and voluntary sector partners to deliver the new system, including post-16 education providers such as FE colleges and training providers.
- Work with local partners, parents and young people to co-produce and publish a Local Offer of SEND services and provision to assist young people in finding employment, obtaining accommodation and participating in society.
- Provide a co-ordinated education, health and care assessment for children and young people aged 0-25 and new education, health and care plans (EHCPs) that will replace the two existing systems of SEN statements (in schools) and learning difficulty assessments (LDAs), in FE colleges and training.

In addition to the Children and Families Act (2014) there are several other pieces of legislation that LAs and schools need to pay regard to in supporting the learning of pupils with SEND. These include:

- The Equality Act (2010): the particular responsibilities on schools to prevent discrimination against and ensure the fair treatment of all children and young people with disabilities.
- The Children Act (1989) and supporting guidance: children and young people with SEND are often additionally vulnerable and there is a need to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and consistently implemented.
- The Care Act (2014): the provides the framework for wider duties of care of local authorities for children and young people with disabilities and their families, including personal budgets and supporting transitions to adult services.
- The Mental Capacity Act (2005): provides a statutory framework to empower and protect vulnerable people who are not able to make their own decisions and is underpinned by five key principles including a presumption of capacity, a right to be supported to make decisions and actions must be in a person's best interests.

National monitoring of SEND

The national accountabilities framework sets out that the bulk of statutory duties as well as delivery for SEND lie at local level (DfE 2015b). The national roles of the DfE are summarised as:

- Monitoring the health of the SEND system and intervening where it is failing
- Overseeing the statutory framework and publishing guidance

- Publication of data
- Promoting innovative and best practice.

The established DfE and EFA monitoring arrangements are largely: financial, school population-based or focused on transitional processes for the implementation of the SEND Code of Practice. An example of a transitional process that LAs have to report on is the progress they are making towards all SEN statements and learning difficulty assessment (LDAs – for those over 16) being transferred to EHCPs by April 2018 and the proportion completed within the 20 week timescale. These indicators, together with each LA's profile of children and young people with high needs, is reported to the DfE via the annual SEN2 return.

Work is underway, linked to local area SEND inspections (see: 3.2.3), to develop and trial a core dataset of indicators for LAs to report to DfE. The aim is that these will provide a detailed picture of the outcomes and attainment of children and young people with SEND to sit alongside existing data about the SEND assessment processes and where pupils attend school.

Ofsted Local Area SEND Inspections

From May 2016, Ofsted and the CQC have been carrying out an external evaluation of all local areas in England (defined by LA) and their support for children and young people aged 0–25 with SEND. Inspection teams are assessing the effectiveness of the local system in identifying and meeting the needs of these children and young people. The local system includes: the LA, CCG, NHS services, schools and early years and tertiary providers. The inspection will review how local areas support these children and young people to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, such as being able to live independently, secure meaningful employment and be well prepared for their adult lives (Ofsted 2016a), fulfilling the duties set out in the Children and Families Act (2014).

The report produced from the external evaluation will provide an assessment of how well the local area is meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND, and how well service providers work together to deliver positive outcomes. It will also inform national government about how well the local area is delivering its statutory responsibilities and the SEND Code of Practice. The process should promote improvement in the education, health and social care provision. (Ofsted 2016a).

The SEND Code of Practice

The statutory Code of Practice for SEND (DfE 2015a) completely revised the arrangements for children and young people with SEND. The legislation and Code of Practice has sought to focus practice on better consultation and participation of children and young people and their families in the SEND system and closer partnership working by organisations supporting them. Amongst these are the new statutory process for joint education and health care assessment and for plans (EHCPs), where there are complex needs to be met, and expectations of quality teaching and learning being available to all those with SEND, whether in mainstream schools or in specialist provision.

Among the financial guidance for schools and colleges set out in the Code of Practice are:

- That all mainstream schools and colleges are provided with resources to support those with additional needs, including pupils with SEN and disabilities. This includes an amount

identified within their overall budget, called the notional SEN budget. This is not a ring-fenced amount, and it is for the school to provide high quality appropriate support.

- The headteacher / principal, governing body and SENCO should establish a clear picture of the resources that are available to the school. They should consider their strategic approach to meeting SEND in the context of the total resources available, including any resources targeted at particular groups, such as the pupil premium. As a result, schools should provide a clear description of the types of special educational provision they normally offer. This will help parents and others to understand what they can expect the school to provide for pupils with SEND.
- Schools and colleges are not expected to meet the full costs of more expensive provision from their core funding. The responsible LA, usually the authority where the child or young person lives, will have a process to assess additional top-up funding where the cost of the special educational provision required to meet the needs of an individual pupil exceeds £6,000pa.
- FE colleges are funded by the EFA for all 16-18 year olds and for those aged 19-25 who have EHCP or statement to a level of £6,000pa (deducted from a LA's high needs funding in advance), with additional support from the home LA for students with high needs (EFA 2016). Apprentices aged 19 to 25 with EHCPs are fully funded on the same terms and funding rates as 16- to 18-year-old apprentices. The Local Offer should include apprenticeships for this age group. (DfE 2015a)

The Levels of SEND Across England

There are 8.560 million children and young people recorded as attending a school in England in January 2016. Of these 991,980 (11.6%) have been assessed by schools as having a need for SEN support and 236,805 (2.8%) have been assessed as requiring a statement of SEN or an EHCP (DfE 2016d and e). In England (see Fig 22) the most frequent primary need of pupils assessed as requiring SEN support is moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Whilst for those with a statement or an EHCP, autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) forms the largest group of children and young people. Professionals also expect that, over time, the proportion of these with an EHCP or statement with MLD will reduce, as their needs are increasingly met in mainstream.

Fig 22: Percentage of pupils in England with an EHCP / statement or at SEN support, by primary need (DfE 2016e)

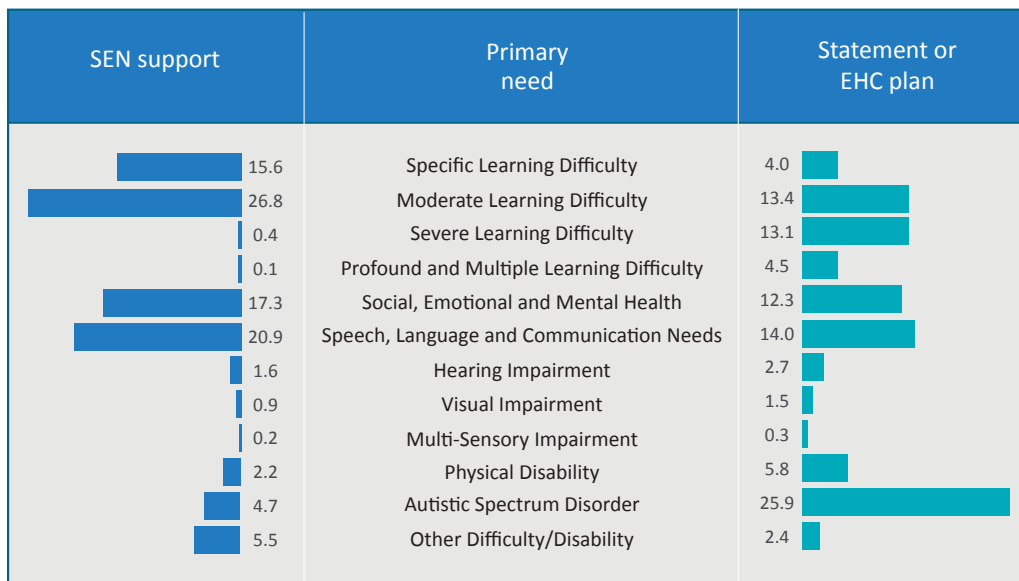
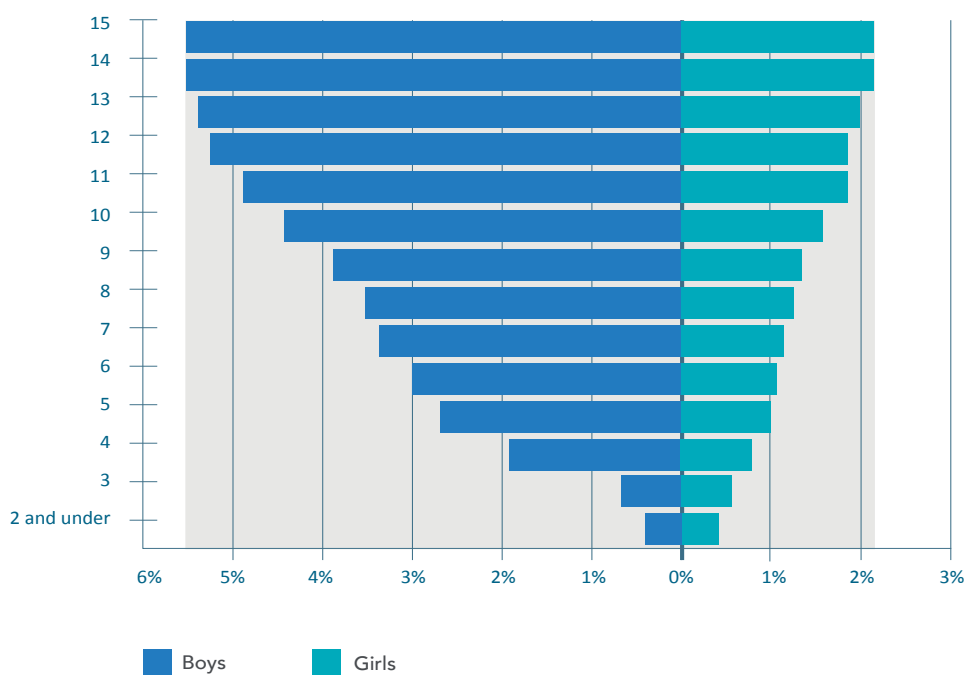


Fig 23 shows that more than twice as many boys as girls are assessed as requiring a statement or an EHCP. For the large majority of these children and young people their needs are identified and assessed during primary school. The graph suggests that for the large majority, once a need for a statement or EHCP has been confirmed, that this remains throughout their school career.

Fig 23: Percentage of pupils with a statement or EHCP plan by age and gender in state-funded schools (DfE 2016e)



Appendix 2: Surveys and visit schedule

a. Schools SEND survey

A SCHOOL SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. How effectively are the needs of pupils with SEND identified across Bracknell Forest?
2. How effectively do you identify the needs of pupils with SEND at your school?
3. How effectively do the funding arrangements in Bracknell Forest contribute to improved outcomes for SEND pupils?
4. How effectively do you think funding for SEND is allocated to your school?
5. How effectively do you think you allocate your funding to meet the needs of pupils with SEND?
6. Please identify one aspect of the current SEND system in Bracknell Forest that works well:
7. Please identify one aspect of the current SEND system in Bracknell Forest that could be improved and how.

B HNFB REVIEW SUMMARY INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS

“Bracknell Forest Children’s Services have appointed Chow Solutions Ltd to work with us to undertake a review of how our High Needs Funding Block is currently used. Through analysing local evidence and reviewing good practice elsewhere in the country, the review will produce recommendations for the future. The specification used in the tendering for the review has previously been shared with headteachers.

BFC has been allocated a HNFB of about £11.7 million by the DfE for 2016-17. This funding is used to:

- fund places in specialist and post-16 institutions (e.g. special schools, special post-16 institutions and pupil referral units)
- top-up funding for individual pupils and students with high needs, including those in mainstream schools
- fund services that the local authority provide directly to schools, with the bulk of the funding going to schools.

The Review is taking place between May and September 2016 and a Headteachers Reference Group has been appointed to ensure that school leaders continually inform the Review and are aware of the interim findings. A series of visits and interviews will take place with a cross section of mainstream schools and with special education providers and consultations carried out with parents/carers and with partner organisations. During this time officers will work in partnership with the consultants to identify how funds are currently deployed, both to schools and other education providers and to teams run by the Children’s Services Directorate.

The Review will produce a report including recommendations for the future and the first draft of a new special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) Strategy for Bracknell Forest. The outcomes will be consulted on over the autumn term, to inform spending decisions for the financial year 2017 onwards.”

b. Parent / carer's SEND survey

This survey is for parents / carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to help us get your views about how your child or children are supported at school and how the council supports learning for children with SEND (e.g. education and health care plans).

The survey was accessible online from the last week of July to September and forty responses were received from parents.

1. Are you male or female?
2. How many children under 25 do you have?
3. How many of your children have SEND (defined as have a statement or EHCP or receiving SEND support at school/college).
(Questions 4 – 10 are completed separately for each child with SEND)
4. How old is your child (with SEND)?
5. Does your child: receive SEN support / have a statement / have an EHCP:
6. How effectively was your child's special need or disability identified:
7. How effectively is your child supported at school
8. How well does your child's school listen to your suggestions and comments?
9. How well does your child's school keep you informed about their learning?
10. Does your child enjoy school?
(Questions 11 – 18 – completed by each parent / carer)
11. How easy is it to find out the information you need about SEND?
12. Please tick the most important sources of information for you as a parent of a child(ren) with SEND?
13. Do you think you have enough information about how SEND arrangements work in Bracknell Forest?
14. Does one or more of your children have an EHCP?
15. What has your experience been of the EHCP process, overall:
16. Were you kept informed sufficiently during the EHCP process?
17. Were your views as a parent / carer sufficiently taken account in the EHCP?
18. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how your child(ren) is supported at school or the SEND assessment processes? (e.g. preparation for transfer or transition, the annual review process)

c. School visit and interviews

The following mainstream schools participated in the interviews: Easthampstead Park School, Garth Hill College, Binfield Primary School, Birch Hill Primary School, Crownwood Primary School, Meadow Vale Primary School, Whitegrove Primary School. Plus Bracknell and Wokingham College.

Example schedule for a special school visit

The purpose of the visit: to familiarise ourselves with the provision and find out more about how the school uses its funding to support its pupils. This will be carried out by visiting the school and meeting with a range of staff for the afternoon.

Proposed timetable for the visit:

12.00-12.15 Welcome and introductions

12.15-12.45 Tour of the site

12.45-1.45 Meet with the Headteacher, Business Manager and any other staff as specified by the school

1.45-2.30 Time for consultants to review any documentation provided by the school

2.30-2.45 Final meeting with the Headteacher and/or senior leader

Questions to be addressed during the visit:

1. What is the context for the school? (including staff and pupil numbers for each part of the school *)
2. How is the school structured and organised? *
3. How does BF and other local authorities consult and refer pupils to the school? Do they come in all year round? Do you have any "bulge" year groups?
4. What access to therapies is there for students? (type and sessions per week) *
5. How are the pupil's funded currently?
6. How is this funding deployed? How well do the funding arrangements with BF work for the school? Please talk us through an overview of the budget and funding for places / top-ups.
7. What impact is the school having (school's last 3 years' performance data, including attendance and exclusions)?*
8. What is your experience of the SEND Panel and EHCP processes in BF? Do you have any part-time placements with mainstream schools or assessment placements where a pupil does not yet have an EHCP?

Appendix 3: documentary evidence accessed

Key:

P = policy or strategy; F = financial; S = SEND; R = BFC report; D = other;

Sc = school documents

Document number	Document	Content	Date received / accessed
D 1	LAIT stat neighbours tool	Downloaded by team	20/06/2016
D 2	binfield-learning-village-exhibition-boards.pdf	Overview of new free school	Jul-16
D 3	SEND Public Health Needs Assessment 2016_BFC.docx	Final draft of SEND needs analysis from BF Public Health	June-16
D 4	BFC Services to Schools Customer Satisfaction Survey 2015	Summary of responses from schools about the contracted services from BFC	Jul-16
F 1	HN Pupil tops up in BF Mainstream Schools 16-17.xls	Individual top-up payments budget for BF mainstream schools 2016-17	31/05/2016
F2	HN Pupil tops up in BF Mainstream Schools 15-16.xls	individual top-up payments budget for BF mainstream schools 2015-16	31/05/2016
F3	pre+16+non-lea+15-16+	Individual list & payments of NMSS up to age 16 2015-16 (v3 includes our graphed analyses)	31/05/2016
F4	post+16+non-lea+15-16+	Individual list & schools & actual payments of NMSS post 16 2015-16 (v2 includes our graphical analyses)	31/05/2016
F5	BF Centrally Managed HNB budgets - v5 June 2016	Detailed financial breakdown of HNFb for 2015-16 & 16-17 incl detailed LA breakdown (2 versions)	28/06/2016
F6	HN Pupil top-ups for BF pupils on roll OLA Establishments 15-16.xls	Top-ups by indiv & school for BF pupils in other LA schools 2015-16	16/06/2016
F7	HN Pupil top-ups for BF pupils on roll OLA Establishments 16-17	Top-ups by indiv & school for BF pupils in other LA schools 2016-17	16/06/2016
F8	a. LA funding data_AWPU 2015-16 b. statistical+neighbours+15-16+awpu+rates+and+ratio.xls	Data from finance about comparative levels of per pupil funding in BFC	Jun-16
F9	pre+16+non-lea+15-16+v2.xlsx	2015-16 complete expenditure on OOA places for up to year 11/12.	Jun-16
F 10	Summary of pupil top-ups in BFC HN resources 16-17.xls	Per pupil payments to resource bases at mainstream schools 2016-17	Jun-16

F 11	BFC SEND mainstream Cost Codes_bands.pdf	Cost coding for top-ups for mainstream schools	31/05/2016
F12	Summary of pupil top-ups in BFC HN resources 15-16.xls		Jul-16
P1	BFC Direct Payments Policy.pdf		Jul-16
P2	BFC EHCP Transfer Process Guidance for Schools.pdf		31/05/2016
P3	BFC ehcp-thresholds guidance Sept14.pdf	Guidance for schools about the local EHCP processes	17/05/2016
P4	BFC Personal Budgets policy Jan16.doc		Jul-16
P5	BFC Post 16 Transport Policy 2016-17 V2.0 FINAL.pdf		Jul-16
P6	BFC SEN Education Transport Policy 16-17.pdf		Jul-16
P7	BFC Family Info SEND-support-school-leaflet.pdf		May-16
P8	BFC Approaching Adulthood: policy and procedure	Joint policy & procedures for ASCHH & CYPL about 14 to 25 transfer	01/08/2016
P9	BFC cypl-commissioning-framework-2013-16.pdf	CYPP statement on approaches to joint commissioning	Jun-16
R1	BF SEN working group - update report Q4 FINAL received July16	Report to CS DMT about SEND finances 2015-16	13/07/2016
R2	BF SchoolsForum 2016-17 Funding Allocations report March 2016	Report to Schools Forum incl HNFB proposed budget for 2016-17	Apr-16
R3	BFC School Places Plan 2015 - 2020	Report setting out developments to meet projected demand for school places	Apr-16
R4	BFC mins March 2016 Schools Forum_incl HNFB.pdf	Schools Forum papers about funding plans for the year ahead	May-16
R5	Update (for Schools Forum) on cost pressures being experienced on supporting high needs pupils & proposals for the 2015-16 budget	Outline of cost pressures under new SEND Code of Practice, proposal to release funds to set up The Rise & to transfer £1.9M from DSG to HNFB	Jul-16
R6	BFC SEN working group - update Q2	Update to DMT about working group's progress to address HNFB financial pressures	Jul-16
R7	BFC SEN working group - update Q3	Update to DMT about working group's progress to address HNFB financial pressures	Jul-16

R8	BF SEN working group - update report Q4 FINAL received July16	Update to DMT about working group's progress to address HNFB financial pressures	Jul-16
R9	Children, Young People & Learning. Service Plan, April 2015 – March 2016	Director's summary of Dept of CYPL's performance during the year.	Jul - 16
S1	BF Q1 2016-17 Lilic Book Data	Lilac book return for EHCP conversions	13/07/2016
S2	BFC SEN Funding Indiv YP Dataset update	List of all EHCP/statements by school & primary need - updated June2016	05/07/2016
S3	BFC SEND EHCP Base Sheets 2010-16 - Updated LDA	EHCP/S data by primary need over 2011-16 - Jan16 census update	05/07/2016
S4	Berks_sensory_consortium_contract.pdf	Berks sensory consortium contract	July-16
S5	SEN Team Structure 2016-17 structure v6	Team structure map	Jun-16
S6	BFC SEND leaver_NEET data Virtual School	Leavers information about those with SEND	Jun-16
S7	SALT_contract_BHFT_signed.pdf	Contract with BHFT for SALT 2013-16	Jul-16
S8	TASS_S4L SLA charges 2016-17	Charges for the Support for Learning service	Jul-16
S9	BFC SEND HNS template FE_post16.xlsx	Templates for EHCP provision mapping provided to colleges/schools by SEND team	31/05/2016
S10	Staffing_Support for Learning	Staff family tree	Jul-16
S11	support-for-learning-SLA.pdf	Services delivered as part of the school SLA from Support for Learning	Jul-16
S12	BFC support-for-learning-costed-additional-packages.pdf	Costings for schools of additional packages that can be bought in	Jul-16
S13	ASSC SLA 2016.docx	Draft service spec for ASSC service	Apr-16
S14	BerkshireFE cost analysis Report_201015 v1.pdf	Copy received from SEND manager. Part of review of place costs at FE colleges across Berkshire	May-16
S15	BFC-conversion-to-EHCP-plan2014.pdf	Transition plan for conversion of statements to EHCPs in BF	31/05/2016
Sc1	Top-up Funding for all pupils in Kennel Lane 16-17.xls		
Sc2	College Hall Budget 2015-16.xls		

Sc3	College Hall Budget 2016-17		
Sc4	KL Top-up Funding 14-15		
Sc5	KL top-up+funding_15-16.xls		
Sc6	KLS band descriptors 2014.pdf		
Sc7	4.3 KL staff FTE role July 16		
Sc8	1. KL School Context Autumn 2015.docx		
Sc9	2.2 KL attendance data (incomplete).xlsx		
Sc10	3.1 KL Nos in each year group.xlsx		
Sc11	3.2 KL Range of Needs Across School.xlsx		
Sc12	3.3 KL Anonymised Class List - June 2016.xlsx		
Sc13	4.1 KL SLT organisational chart April 16.doc		
Sc14	4.2 KL Staff Role FTE June 16.xlsx		
Sc15	6. KL 15-16, 16-17 budget information.xls		
Sc16	2.1 KL Data Report 2014-2015 V3 Governors.doc		
Sc17	5. KL Provision Mapping Headings.docx		
Sc18	2016-17 High Needs Resource Rise Garth Hill		
Sc19	Kennel Lane Ofsted Nov15.pdf		
Sc20	Chilworth Early placement discount letter 2016		
Sc21	Chilworth OFSTED 2012.PDF		
Sc22	Chilworth-House-School-info-sheet.pdf		
Sc23	GHC Reading group interventions.docx		
Sc24	GHC SEF.docx		
Sc25	GHC SEN and Inclusion policy 2015.doc		
Sc26	GHC SEN Case Studies 2016.docx		
Sc27	GHC SEND report.docx		

Sc28	2016-17 High Needs Resource Rise Garth Hill	Budget for financial year places	
Sc29	Interview Schools Website Info SEND		
Sc30	Local Offer Garth Hill College		
Sc31	KLS band descriptors 2014.pdf	Band descriptors used with KL with top-ups / assessing need	
Sc32	College Hall 3 years academic data		
Sc33	College Hall Attendance Analysis 2013 -16		
Sc34	College Hall context data 2013-16		
Sc35	College Hall Exclusion Analysis 2013-16		
Sc36	College Hall OFSTED Dec14.pdf		
Sc37	College Hall Outreach data		
Sc38	College Hall Pen Portraits		
Sc39	College Hall Staffing Structure - Summer Term 16		
Sc40	College Hall student risk factors June 2016 anon		

Appendix 4: HNFB Review materials – terms of reference, reviewer biographies and detailed timeline

INVITATION TO TENDER DOCUMENT

RFQ Reference:	HNB funding review	Issue Date:	11/03/2016
Brief Description:	Independent review of the use of the High Needs Funding Block including SEND provision in Bracknell Forest.		

To Contractor:			
Representative	E-Mail	Telephone	Fax (Optional)

You are invited to quote your best price(s) and delivery date(s) for the items detailed below. Please return to the nominated Council Representative at the Issuing Office below by email. Your quotation should reach the Council on or before **10 am Tuesday 29th March 2016**.

The Contractor understands and agrees that any contract resulting from this RFQ shall be subject to Bracknell Forest Borough Council Standard Conditions of Contract: Orders. (Copies available from <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sellingtothecouncil> then download from the Documents section or on request), subject also to any Instructions to Contractor detailed above and any specification provided.

Unless otherwise agreed and detailed specifically in the order, payment will be made within 30 days of receipt and agreement of invoices following satisfactory completion and/or acceptance of the items.

Issuing Office:	BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL Times Square Market Street Bracknell RG42 1YJ		
Representative	E-Mail	Telephone	
Christine McInnes	christine.mcinnes@bracknell-forest.gov.uk	01344352000	

Background

Bracknell Forest has 39 schools, of which

- six are secondary (one with a newly opened Autistic Spectrum Disorder resource base and the Academy hosts an integrated Specific Learning Difficulties unit),
- 31 are primary phase schools (one with an Early Years ASD unit, one with a resource base run by the special school, one with a Speech and Language Therapy resource and six running nurture groups),
- one is a special school EY to KS5 and
- one is a secondary Pupil Referral Unit.

Pupils with special needs are placed in a variety of educational provision outside of the borough and this pattern continues with post-16 provision resulting in a significant cost pressure.

Benchmarking against other SE region LAs shows Bracknell Forest has a higher than average percentage of pupils with statements/EHCP for the region and substantial difference to some other unitary authorities although the trend is downward.

Key Stage / Age	Resource Placements	Maintained Special Placements	Independent Specialist Provision	Cost £m (excluding transport)
1	2	4	4	£0.221m
2	1	3	14	£0.550m
3	2	16	21	£1.024m
4	3	11	34	£1.583m
Age 16-19	0	11	19	£1.186m
Age 20+	0	0	10	£0.405m
Total	8	45	102	£4.970m

Changing needs

Data shows an acute pressure in relation to ASD needs (as evidenced by CAMHS waiting list for diagnosis and feedback from headteachers about the paucity of specialist commissioned services to support pupils both pre and post- diagnosis), there is a cohort of PMLD children currently attending the local special school who will require specialist post-18 provision in the next two years which presently would require costly out of borough provision.

Requirements

An independent review is being commissioned to assess and make recommendations on

- current effective SEND, Targeted Services and externally commissioned service provision which should continue
- emerging and future pupil and student demands
- improving the alignment of current service provision (including commissioned services) to current demand, identifying the potential for savings
- the development of new ways of working and service provision to meet emerging and future needs funded from savings

and to reflect recommendations in the development of a draft Bracknell Forest SEND strategy.

Areas for consideration

1. To assess if the current SEND funding system in the range of maintained education provision, meets needs, delivers effective outcomes and value for money
2. Identify existing good practice and make recommendations on improvements in SEND processes and funding allocation specifically the SEN panel process which considers whether or not pupils should be given an Education, Health and Care Plan and the current base funding and bandings used to agree top up funding
3. Analyse the use of funding in
 - a 20% sample of mainstream schools,
 - the local special school and one other comparable special school where BF places pupils
 - two post-18 providers
 - the secondary PRU

and benchmark against schools and providers that the review team consider have good practice; collect and analyse the views of a focus group of key stakeholders including parents/carers about the provision

4. Analyse the evidence base for the model used in some LAs of devolving a higher level of funding to schools (sometimes to geographic school clusters) to meet SEND needs prior to the formal EHCP processes and comment on the desirability of this approach in BF.
5. Analyse the existing LA wide provision against current and projected needs and make recommendations on
 - how mainstream provision could be developed to better meet needs
 - the best use of existing specialist provision
 - the scope for re-directing resources into additional specialist provision locally in the medium and long term.

The intention is to conduct the review during the summer term 2016, with a final report available at the end of September 2016 so that the findings and recommendations can inform budget planning for the 2017-18 financial year.

Governance

Governance will be through three interim reports to the Director's Management Team

- April - project plans, intentions, timelines
- June - update on progress, emerging findings
- August - draft report for comment
- September – final report.

A Project Board will meet monthly with the team to monitor progress, guide, advise and support the work and consider the findings. The Project Board will include representation from SEN, targeted services and finance.

Updates on progress will be reported to Schools Forum through the Head of Finance report and to the Director's meeting with Headteachers.

Following consideration of the recommendations arising from the review, the LA will formulate proposals for consultation with key stakeholders to agree on future use of the High Needs Block.

Day to day management of the project will be through the Head of Targeted Services.

Outputs

- _ A report which describes the process, the evidence base and makes recommendations on points 1-5 above
- _ A draft SEND strategy reflecting the recommendations made.

Expectations of the contractor

We are seeking the following expertise to be represented in the team

- Headteacher with successful leadership experience of both mainstream and SEND provision
- LA officer with experience of managing at least one SEND service.

Selection process

Your quotation should reach the Council on or before **10 am Tuesday 29th March 2016**.

Contractors will be informed by the **evening of Tuesday 29th** if they being invited to interview.

Interviews will be held on **Friday 1st April** in Bracknell and will include a 10 minute presentation on *What value will you add to the review process?*

TIMELINE

Activity	Description	Proposed date	Delivery date
1.	Drafting of Project Initiation Document and project timeline completed and submitted.	6 th May	6 th May
2.	Project Initiation Document signed off by Bracknell Forest Council commissioning officers	13 th May	13 th May
3.	Nomination and agreement with mainstream and special schools to take part in the review	13 th May	13 th May
4.	Sign off questions and communications for schools survey	13 th May	18 th May
5.	Notification to Chow Solutions of finance and data officers to support the review	13 th May	20 th May
6.	First HT reference group & visit to school	16 th May	16 th May
7.	List of SEND data (LA & school-level) requested	20 th May	20 th May
8.	Nomination and agreement with a post-16 provider and an out-of-area special school to take part in the review.	20 th May	31 st May
9.	Consultation meeting with parents of children with SEND <i>Delayed due to time availability in meetings of the Bracknell Parents Dialogue Group</i>	w/c 23 rd May	5 th July
10.	Close online survey <i>Delayed to allow for reminders and late responses</i>	27 th May	8 th June
11.	Receipt of first tranche of data from BFC	27 th May	27 th May
12.	Interviews with mainstream schools	w/c 13 th June	15 th June
13.	Cut off for remaining data from BFC	17 th June	21 st July
14.	Second HT reference group & visit to school	20 th June	20 th June
15.	Visit to post-16 provider & out-of-area special school	w/c 20 th June	School – 22 nd June; FE College – 12 th July
16.	Focus groups with health / social care / vol sector <i>Delayed to consult on emerging themes</i>	w/c 27 th June	w/c 3 rd Oct
17.	Emerging themes presentation to Project Board	12 th July	12 th July
18.	Feedback on emerging themes from BFC	15 th July	20 th July
19.	Proposal to allow for short extension of review to allow for delays in accessing certain data	10 th Aug	10 th Aug

20.	Writing draft report	Through Aug / early Sept	End of Sept
21.	Presentation of recommendations and elements of draft report	20 th Sept	20 th Sept
22.	Third HT Reference Group	27 th Sept	27 th Sept
23.	Feedback on draft recommendations received	30 th Sept	30 th Sept
24.	Final HNFB review report and draft SEND Strategy	14 th Oct	14 th Oct

The specific items to be delivered from the Review are:

- _ An interim presentation of emerging themes and issues.
- _ A final report and recommendations for a future funding system across Bracknell Forest to achieve improved outcomes and better value for money.
- _ A draft SEND policy for Bracknell Forest.

Outputs include:

- _ Project Initiation Document – signed off by Project Board
- _ Framework for case studies and an SEND strategy
- _ SEND survey for schools and one for parents / carers
- _ Findings from the SEND surveys
- _ Three case studies of practice from local authorities; the proposed focus for these is:
 - o a local approach to traded SEND support,
 - o local area where high needs funding is not attached to an EHCP and
 - o case examples of funding arrangements in specialist provision.

REVIEWER BIOGRAPHIES

a. Kate East – Education Consultant

Kate has over 25 years’ experience of delivering education, social care and public health programmes in both the public and the private sector. She has demonstrable abilities to operate not only at a strategic board/senior officer level within local authorities but also as a leader within the private sector of education services and contracts.

Her excellent track record involves delivering positive impact through setting strategy, implementing change and ensuring high levels of stakeholder engagement – working as a senior local authority leader and external consultant at DfE, DH and Public Health England. Working as Head of Education, for Mouchel Management Consultancy she led contracts with local authorities and central government, including ensuring quality delivery on new academies and free school projects for the DfE, together with school improvement and project management.

Kate is a Chartered Psychologist, HCPC approval, Member of British Psychological Society and Royal Society of Medicine.

b. Chris Owen – Children and Young People’s Specialist

Chris has over twenty years’ experience as a service leader and programme manager across health, education and local authorities. He has a proven track record of leading and delivering innovative projects and working across different sectors. Chris has delivered measurable improvement for children and young people at local, regional and national level and many of these successes have been built on cross-sector partnerships that he has developed and often have schools at their heart. He has a strong children and young people’s health and education knowledge base and excellent abilities to communicate with professional and community audiences.

Currently he is supporting change projects and strategy development to improve children and young people’s mental health and provision for those with ASD. He led the initiation and development of England’s first health research network for schools and universities, overseeing the transfer of its hosting to a charity, the Anna Freud Centre. Prior to working for UCL Partners, he was a senior consultant for Mouchel, and provided leadership consultancy to the National Healthy Schools programme and advisory support to local authorities.

c. Mark Vickers – Director, Olive Education

As Headteacher of Manhood Community College from 2005 to 2009, Mark led its transformation from a school placed in special measures (November 2004) to a thriving, over-subscribed school described by Ofsted in 2008 as a “good and rapidly improving community college.” All subsequent inspections that Mark has been involved in as a consultant have had either ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ outcomes.

Mark’s passion for helping young people develop their own strategies for supporting each other has led to him advising numerous other secondary schools and PRU’s in London and the South-East over the last five years. He now also works with the National Children’s Bureau (NCB) to help develop their strategies for supporting and working with young people.

Mark’s work with PRU’s and alternative providers across the South-East has ensured that improvements have been secured in a range of challenging and complex contexts. Mark has supported strategic leaders and staff to implement the changes required. This work has included leading a reviews of alternative education in local authorities as well as being a member of the London’s Councils’ ‘Back on Track’ Advisory Group.

Mark also works as a School Improvement Partner and consultant in West Sussex, Islington, Camden and Waltham Forest. He combines this work with being the Chair of the PSHE Association and a governor at Chichester College.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR HEADTEACHERS REFERENCE GROUP AND HNFB PROJECT BOARD

Headteachers Reference Group:

Terms of Reference

1. Overall Purpose of Group	To inform the process of the High Needs Funding Block Review. To act as champions of and critical friends for the review.
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2. Specific Objectives / Scope	The focus of the three meetings will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ Perceptions and views of the current SEND system in Bracknell Forest _ Comment and discussion on emerging themes _ Review and discussion of draft recommendations
3. Accountable To	The Chief Officer for Achievement and Learning
4. Reporting	None.
5. Chair	Ian Dixon, Head of Targeted Support
6. Members	6 - 8 headteachers or senior leaders: Liz Cook (Easthampstead Park School), Chani Morris (Garth Hill College), Andrea de Bunsen (Kennel Lane School), Antoinette Butler-Willis (Crown Wood Primary School), Michael Dillon (Birch Hill Primary School), Karen Davies (Whitegrove Primary School), Lee Parsons (Meadow Vale Primary School), Marion Bent (College Hall). Ian Dixon from BFC. Members of the HNFB Review team.
7. Minutes/Notes	Informal notes are kept from each meeting to inform the Review. No formal record will be kept or circulated
8. Confidentiality	Any points in the final report drawn from specific comments will be anonymised or checked with the individual before being ascribed to them.
9. Frequency	Three meetings during the period of the Review: May, June and September.
10. Lifespan of Group	For the duration of the project (until the end of Sept 2016).

HNFB Review Project Board

Terms of Reference

1. Overall Purpose of Group	To monitor progress with the delivery of the agreed deliverables against the timeline as stated in the PID
2. Specific Objectives / Scope	Provide strategic overview, insight and information to the project Monitor the progress of the project and that risks are being dealt with Ensure that the project delivers on time and provides the agreed deliverables.
3. Accountable To	The Chief Officer Achievement and Learning.
4. Reporting	Monitoring of progress with the project. Risk and issues register. Comment on project reports.
5. Chair and other roles	Ian Dixon, Head of Targeted Services
6. Members	Head of SEN, Head of Finance and Head of Targeted Services
7. Quorum	Non-voting group.
8. Minutes/Notes	Notes are kept from each meeting, including the recording of key decisions.
9. Confidentiality	Financial and performance information will be discussed and presented and is to be kept within the group, until after the final report is accepted.
10. Frequency	6 weekly.
11. Lifespan of Group	For the duration of the project (until the end of Sept 2016).

Appendix 5: Bracknell Forest Banding Frameworks for SEND Top-Ups.

A. TOP-UP CODES FOR MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Old Format NWPU 2012 - 2013 Sorted in ascending value						New Format NWPU 2013 - 2014		Top-up funding	Equivalent Hrs above 16	Total equivalent hrs provided including 16 in delegated budget
Additional hours				Add 5	TOTAL					
1T		0	5	5	0	1T		0		
1U		4	5	9	1520	1U		0	0	9
1V		5.5	5	10.5	2090	1V		0	0	10.5
1W		5.5	5	10.5	2090	1W		0	0	10.5
2T		7	5	12	2660	2T		0	0	12
1X		9	5	14	3420	1X		0	0	14
2U		11	5	16	4180	2U		0	0	16
3T		11	5	16	4180	3T		0	0	16
2V		12.5	5	17.5	4750	2V		570	1.5	17.5
2W		12.5	5	17.5	4750	2W		570	1.5	17.5
3U		15	5	20	5700	3U		1520	4	20
2X		15.5	5	20.5	5890	2X		1710	4.5	20.5
3V		16	5	21	6080	3V		1900	5	21
3W		16	5	21	6080	3W		1900	5	21
3X		20	5	25	7600	3X		3420	9	25
1Y		21	5	26	7981	1Y		3801	10.0	26.0
4T		21	5	26	7981	4T		3801	10.0	26.0
4U		25	5	30	9501	4U		5321	14.0	30.0
2Y		26	5	31	9881	2Y		5701	15.0	31.0
4V		26	5	31	9881	4V		5701	15.0	31.0
4W		26	5	31	9881	4W		5701	15.0	31.0
4X		29	5	34	11021	4X		6841	18.0	34.0
3Y		30	5	35	11401	3Y		7221	19.0	35.0
1Z		F/T 1:1			13929	1Z		9749	25.7	41.7
4Y		37.4	5	42.4	14194	4Y		10014	26.4	42.4
2Z		F/T 1:1			15955	2Z		11775	31.0	47.0
3Z		F/T 1:1			16766	3Z		12586	33.1	49.1
		F/T 1:1			20245	4Z		16065	42.3	58.3
		F/T 1:1			27101	5Z		22921	60.3	76.3

1 Schools were expected to provide 5 hrs additional support per week from their delegated budget before asking for additional finance and pupils were then given a NWPU, as above(column B). (calculated at the rate of £380 per hour for the year)
£1,900

2 Additional funding has been given to provide a further 11 hrs additional support further to the funding reforms. (calculated at the rate of £380 per hour for the year)
£4,180

3 Total funding of 1 and 2 above: £6,080 Note that this does not include the per pupil entitlement

4 As from April 2013, top-up funding is therefore given when a pupil requires more than 16 hrs additional support

5 Only pupils allocated a NWPU with a value greater than £4180, as shown in column F, would trigger top-up funding (italicised)

6 The top-up funding is as shown in column I, with total number of hours it is meant to cover, including those within schools delegated budget, shown in column K

B. TOP-UP BANDS FOR KENNEL LANE SCHOOL

There are band descriptors for less complex SEND set out in Bands 1 – 3 but the school does not receive top-up payments for those pupils.

Funding levels:

Band 4 = £12,372 per pupil per year.

Band 5 = £25,414 per pupil per year.

Band 4

These pupils will have more severe and complex learning and/or communication difficulties together with challenging behaviour when compared with their peers in the same setting.

These pupils require a teaching ratio of 1:8, as well as a qualified assistant at 1:8 and unqualified assistant ratio of 1:4.

Requirement
smaller group teaching (max of 6) for the majority of the week
high levels of teaching input from a qualified and experienced teacher
a substantial component of individual instruction provided by a teacher and/or LSA
individual based pupil management strategies to respond to severely disruptive, aggressive and/or self injurious behaviour
regular access to multi-professional cooperation and planning, with weekly access to therapeutic staff on an individual or paired basis
close individual supervision and consistent management approaches to ensure safety of themselves as well as others and to ensure both access to school curriculum and community activities (eg: off site visits, whole/part school activities – assemblies, concerts).

Band 5

These pupils may have dual sensory impairment, acute medical needs or profound and multiple learning difficulties. Alternatively they may have extreme requirements for support with their behavioural and social needs. There will be little separation of teaching, therapy and physical care. Curriculum experiences will be developmental and reflect the principles of the National Curriculum rather than its detailed content.

These pupils will require at least additional 1:1 support.

Requirement
a high level of specialist teaching to establish basic communication
specific teaching in very small groups (up to 3) plus individual adult support, if any progress is to be made in alleviating the effects of the disability and allowing meaningful curriculum access
either 1:1 support at all times or 2:1 support for 75% of the school day.
daily withdrawal from the small group for either specific activities or to prevent harm to themselves or others.
complex multi-professional planning and cooperation plus a therapeutic programme requiring individual specialist delivery (more than once per week).

Band 5+

Appendix 6: DfE / OFSTED SEND Proposed Dataset**Learning outcomes for children and young people:**

% good level of development (EYFS) – pupils on SEN support	
% good level of development (EYFS) – pupils with EHCP / statement	
Achievement of KS2 level 4 / national expectation for pupils on SEN support <i>Option to break down by maths, reading & writing</i>	
Achievement of KS2 level 4 / national expectation for pupils with EHCP / statement <i>Option to break down by maths, reading & writing</i>	
GCSE 5 A* - C (inc E & M) for pupils on SEN support	
GCSE 5 A* - C (inc E & M) for pupils with EHCP / statement	
GCSE 5 A* - G for pupils on SEN support	
GCSE 5 A* - G for pupils with EHCP / statement	
% E Bacc for pupils on SEN support	
% E Bacc for pupils with EHCP / statement	
Absence rates for pupils on SEN support	
Absence rates for pupils with EHCP / statement	
FP exclusion rate – SEN support	
FP exclusion rate – pupils with EHCP / statement	
Permanent exclusion rates - SEN support	
Permanent exclusion rates – pupils with EHCP / statement	

Preparation for adulthood:

% 19 year olds qualified to level 2, including Eng & maths – on SEN support	
% 19 year olds qualified to level 2, including Eng & maths – with EHCP / statement	
% 19 year olds qualified to level 3 – on SEN support	
% 19 year olds qualified to level 3 – with ENCP / statement	
% of KS4 on SEN support in education, employment & training 1 year later	
% of KS4 with EHCP / statement in education, employment & training 1 year later	
% of KS5 on SEN support in education, employment & training 1 year later	
% of KS 5 with EHCP / statement in education, employment & training 1 year later	
(per 100,000 population) number of young adults (18 – 25) with SEND whose long term support needs are met by admission to residential / nursing home care	

**Demographic / census information (by LA & by school by primary need by gender by ethnicity by age)
(school census)**

Number & % pupils on SEN support	
Number & % pupils with EHCP / statement	
Number & % pupils on SEN support who are looked after	
Number & % pupils with EHCP / statement who are looked after	

Demographic – LA level information

SEND – S251 outturn weekly unit costs (approx.)	
% children in need with EHCP / statement	
% children in need on SEN support	
Number of personal budgets taken up	
Statements to be converted to EHCP – Sept 2014 baseline & March 2016	
Proportion new EHCPs issued within 20 weeks (inc exemptions & excluding exemptions)	

References

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TO: EXECUTIVE
DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2017

CORPORATE PARENTING SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS
Director of Corporate Services / Director of Children, Young People and Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report outlines the case for Bracknell Forest Council to proactively discharge its duty as Corporate Parent in effecting and supporting Care Leavers (aged 18 – 21).

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **The Executive note the positive work the Council is doing in its role as Corporate Parent.**
- 2.2 **As part of the ongoing support to care leavers in its role as Corporate Parent, that Council Tax exemption be granted to care leavers aged 18-21**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Bracknell Forest Council's role as Corporate Parent to care leavers justifies this group of young people being seen as a priority for this exemption. Corporate Parenting is the term used for the collective responsibility of the Council and partners to ensure the care and protection of children and young people in care, and care leavers. This term refers to all elected members and council employees, regardless of the department they are employed in.
- 3.2 A range of Local Authorities across the country have introduced measures to exempt care leavers from Council Tax, (examples below), following publication of The Children's Society's 'Wolf at the Door' report 2015, which shows care leavers to be a group who are particularly vulnerable to falling into Council Tax debt when they move into independent accommodation for the first time.
As responsible Corporate Parents we want to assist our care leavers to work towards managing independent living in a positive and supportive way.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not providing this exemption was considered but agreed that this would not meet the Council's objectives as a corporate parent.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The underlying principle of Corporate Parenting is that the Local Authority will seek outcomes for children and young people in care that every good parent would want for their own children or children within their family. This will encompass the chance to have stability and form healthy attachments; their health, safety and emotional wellbeing; their education and training opportunities; having opportunities to engage in leisure and community activities; being able to celebrate their culture, and identity, and having the right support to move on into adult life. Most importantly, corporate

parents, when making any decisions relating to services for children in care should always ask themselves ‘would this be good enough for my child?’

- 5.2 In the Government’s care leavers’ strategy, *Keep on Caring*, published in July 2016, Councils are encouraged to consider the role of a corporate parent ‘through the lens of what any reasonable parent does to give their child the best start in life’. In relation to this, local authorities are encouraged to consider exempting care leavers from Council Tax using the powers already at their disposal. In August 2016, through their report into homelessness, the Communities and Local Government Select Committee recommended to Government that care leavers be made exempt from Council Tax up to at least the age of 21.
- 5.3 All young people setting up home for the first time need particular support and guidance at this period of transition, especially those who are leaving care and often have little choice or control. Care leavers go from being looked after and having their needs met, to living independently with a whole new set of often overwhelming responsibilities without the family support that most other young people can rely upon. Once care leavers have a tenancy, they can find it difficult to keep their independent accommodation. Many are not realistically prepared for the realities of managing their own household budget, or handling negotiations with a landlord. Care leavers can be vulnerable to homelessness, particularly when they struggle to maintain tenancies.
- 5.4 For young people Leaving Care within Bracknell Forest, the Pathway Planning process seeks to engage young people in establishing Permanency for themselves which includes living in safe, stable and appropriate accommodation in a locality of their choice. The Bracknell Forest Leaving Care Service (LCS) works in partnership with agencies such as Housing, The Department of Work and Pensions, Adults Social Care, Health Services, National Careers Services, Adviza and the Voluntary Sector to ensure that young people leaving care are provided with opportunities and appropriate Pathways to achieve Permanence, which for LCS refers to a goal of "Successful Independence". The LCS provides each young person with a tailored package of support, led by their Pathway Plan, to ensure that their progress to achieving successful independence is timely and sustained.
- 5.5 In Bracknell Forest all care leavers are allocated a personal advisor from the Leaving Care Service to support and advise them and we endeavour to make leaving care and living alone a positive opportunity for them to start rebuilding their lives, putting down roots for the first time, particularly those who have had many moves during their childhood. Feedback from care leavers has told us that this would be a positive step for them in their journey to independence: “I think council Tax should be exempt for care leavers to stop them getting into debt and introducing some sort of financial education – it saves the council money by having to chase these vulnerable people by getting bailiffs involved and with that money they could use it to educate young people in how to manage finance. In my experience I faced financial challenges due to my status and not being able to work – but I strongly recommend the proposal as it will take some strain off these young people who like I already said struggle financially”.

Local Impact

- 5.6 As the corporate parent, the Council will want to do as much as possible to support care leavers to find and maintain suitable accommodation and learn how to support themselves in time without falling into debt. By granting exemption from

Council Tax the Council will be providing real practical help to those leaving care who are starting out in life on low incomes, whilst they are working with the Leaving Care Service to develop budgeting and independent living skills.

- 5.7 A growing number of Local Authorities have introduced measures to exempt care leavers from Council Tax, e.g. Cheshire East, Wolverhampton, North Somerset Councils. Cheshire East Council have anticipated that this exemption will result in a decrease in emergency payments made to care leavers in crisis as well as further reducing the dependency of these young people on other services.
- 5.8 Based upon previous and current caseload profile and predicted profile for 2017, the number of care leavers who would be aged 18,19 and 20 and be required to pay Council Tax due to them living independently is 18. The calculation below is based on a person occupying a small property, i.e. a 1 bedroom flat in Bracknell.
- 5.9 An occupant of a one bedroom flat (Band B) would be required to pay £1123 council tax per year, before any discounts, exemptions or Council Tax support. It is likely that a young care leaver would be eligible for a single person discount; this means that a young care leaver living independently would have a Council Tax liability of £842 per year.
- 5.10 Based on an average of 18 individuals, the overall reduction in revenue to the Collection Fund from implementation of the proposed scheme would potentially be around £15k per year. This represents 0.03% of the total annual Collection Fund.
- 5.11 However, it is also likely that many of these individuals would qualify for Council Tax Support, reducing the amount even further and they would pay circa £170 per year, with the balance being a cost to the Council. This proposal would reduce the Council Tax liability to zero, meaning that there would be no cost to the Council in providing Council Tax Support. The net financial implication will therefore be in the region of £3k - £6k, subject to the number of individuals who would otherwise qualify for Council Tax Support.
- 5.12 There would be additional administrative effort to manage the scheme, however this is able to be absorbed given the small number of individuals affected.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Council has the power to devise a care leaver policy that exempts them from Council Tax. North Somerset already uses the power to exempt care leavers up until age 22. The guidance "Keep on Caring" encourages these types of initiative as part of the over all corporate parent strategy to give care leavers the best chance of living independently, successfully.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The direct financial implications of the proposal are set out in the body of the report. The Executive will need to give consideration to claims from other groups for similar treatment, which could potentially have more significant financial implications.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 This initiative is aimed at a disadvantaged group of young adults.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 None

Background Papers

http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/wolf-at-the-door_council-tax-debt-collection-is-harming-children_PCR027a_WolfAtTheDoor_Web.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf

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<http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/permanency-strategy-2016.pdf>

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TO: EXECUTIVE
14 FEBRUARY 2017

**ONE PUBLIC ESTATE
AUTHORITY & GOVERNANCE FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE BERKSHIRE PROPERTY
PARTNERSHIP
Chief Executive**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To ensure that the correct governance arrangements, including the authority and terms of reference for the Partnership, are in place for the Council in the One Public Estate programme [OPE].

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the Terms of Reference for the Berkshire Property Partnership, at Appendix A, are agreed.**
- 2.2 **That, where required, match funding for Bracknell Forest projects is met from existing resources.**
- 2.3 **That the Chief Executive may delegate to his representative on the working Partnership authority to make decisions supporting the programme delivery in accordance with the Terms of Reference.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Chief Executives of the Berkshire Authorities agreed for Wokingham Borough Council to take the lead on developing a joint pan Berkshire bid to join the fourth phase of the Cabinet Office initiative the One Public Estate.
- 3.2 The bid is called Berkshire Property Group and has been successful in its application and awarded £500,000 of funding to support the objectives and projects of the joint bid. A condition of the award is that funding is matched by participants although it can be in cash or consideration. Therefore, authority to participate and invest in the programme is now required.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not to join the programme and continue to operate independently.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Cabinet Office has, through its Government Property Unit, a programme called the One Public Estate. The programme is now in its fourth round of funding applications and Bracknell Forest, as part of a pan Berkshire bid, agreed to participate, with Wokingham Borough Council's Chief Executive taking the lead role in the bidding process. Bracknell Forest Council [BFC] has been represented on the cross Berkshire Working Group by the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer: Property.

5.2 One hundred and fifty nine councils working across thirty six partnerships are set to join the next phase of OPE. Partnerships of councils and the wider public sector have been awarded a total of £7.5m to deliver land and property initiatives, delivering jobs, homes, income and savings.

5.3 Launched in 2013, One Public Estate has grown from supporting 12 councils to over 100, all delivering ambitious projects to meet local need.

Under OPE, existing members are set to deliver over 5 years:

- create 36,000 jobs
- release land for 16,500 homes
- raise £138 million in capital receipts from land and property sales
- save £56 million in running cost savings

5.4 Successful Submission

The Berkshire Property Partnership comprises all the Berkshire Unitary Authorities plus representatives from Health, the Police and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. The three core areas of work under consideration as part of the successful bid case are:

5.4.1 Placed Based Projects

These generally look at a geographic area and map out all public assets and seek collaborative ways to deliver services in that locality to drive asset efficiencies, free up capital assets and create jobs and possibly housing. The first area to be considered under this scope is proposed to be a Slough area project.

5.4.2 Property Based Projects

Under this area of work, each participant authority, suggested sites where projects could be worked up with one or more party for a combined gain. There were around 30 locations identified in the bid, some of which were from BFC and included the former Heathlands site and the Commercial Centre and the Northern Retail Quarter, East.

5.4.3 Shared or Combined Professional Service Unit

The group recognise there is a serious pressure on the public sector's ability to attract, retain and incentivise professional property expertise in the South East. This is due to the opportunities offered in the private sector and the proximity to London. A pooling of resources could be a way of dealing with this challenge and is to be investigated as part of the programme with a view to establishing a shared service working across a number of organisations.

5.5 Governance

The Berkshire Property Partnership Governance arrangements set out a two tier structure with Chief Executives of each organisation meeting as a Board to oversee the work of the Berkshire Property Partnership which will act as the operational

partnership board. Decision making will be in accordance with each organisation's internal governance arrangements.

- 5.6 The detailed draft Terms of Reference (have been prepared by Place Partnership) are attached at Appendix A for agreement by the Executive. Appendix 1, Services and Assets Delivery Plan and Appendix 2, the proposed funding breakdown referred to in the Terms of Reference are available on request but are restricted documents.

5.7 Financial Arrangements

The initial bid for funding was £500,000 and the Partnership were awarded £450,750. The Partnership have now been advised they will receive top up funding to the full £500,000 by DCLG. This is the highest award to any bidder in the funding round.

- 5.8 The terms of participation in OPE requires each partner to match fund the award but this can be either in cash or consideration. It is anticipated that all projects within BFC's area will be match funded by work on existing projects and not require any new specific cash funding. Should additional funding be required, this will be sought in accordance with the usual process for additional capital funds.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Berkshire Property Partnership (BPP) has been established as a collaboration of Public Authorities that have combined to bid successfully from the Government One Public Estate Programme for substantial grant funding towards a joint strategic management programme relating to public sector land and property assets across Berkshire. The creation of a governance framework is a pre-requisite for receipt of the grant and Appendix A sets out the proposed arrangements in this regard.

- 6.1.2 It should be noted that BPP does not exist as a separate legal entity. The Partnership will derive its powers from the constitutions of each of the respective partner authorities. Any decisions that the Partnership agrees relating to Bracknell Forest Council have to be approved in accordance with the BFC Scheme of delegation.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Council is already providing officer time and some feasibility work on projects that would contribute to the match funding requirement so no specific financial contribution is required at this stage.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 N/A

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None in participating in the Partnership. Individual projects will have their own risk register.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 All participating organisations.

Method of Consultation

7.2 Meetings.

Representations Received

7.3 Included in the proposals.

Background Papers

Terms of Reference – Appendix A

Restricted Background Appendices available on request

Berkshire Property Partnership OPE Submission (Restricted) - Services and Assets Delivery Plan – Appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference

Berkshire Property Partnership Funding Breakdown December 2016 – Appendix 2 of the Terms of Reference (Restricted)

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BERKSHIRE PROPERTY PARTNERSHIP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

An informal collaboration of public sector owners and occupiers of land and property assets in Berkshire was set up to facilitate application for One Public Estate funding (under OPE Phase 4) and to otherwise identify collaborative opportunities for achieving economic growth, more integrated and customer-focussed service delivery, capital receipts and reduced running costs.

Having been successful in the funding bid it is now necessary for the Berkshire Property Partnership's governance to be formalised, which is a pre-requisite to receipt of said funding. It is also necessary for Berkshire Property Partnership to commit to implementation of the Services & Assets Delivery Plan which was included within the bid application. Said 'Delivery Plan' is attached at Appendix 1.

Structure and support

Berkshire Property Partnership ('BPP') is an Operational Partnership Board, established to oversee and implement the day-to-day roll-out of its One Public Estate ('OPE') Programme. It consists of both a Chair and also operational leads nominated by each BPP member organisation, whose role is to represent said member organisation ('the partners'), to promote BPP's aims and to work together collaboratively to both devise and implement BPP's delivery plans and other OPE-related objectives.

To support and oversee the BPP, each of the partners' Chief Officers will meet as the Berkshire Partnership Executive Group ('BPEG') every second month, in the cycle of the existing Berkshire local authorities' Chief Executives' meeting. The locations of these meetings will alternate between the partners around the County and will be formally administered and recorded.

This two-tier governance structure is intended to provide strong programme leadership, driving pace and unblocking issues where they may arise. Progress reports are to flow to the BPEG via BPP's Chair, who is to be a nominated BPEG representative. Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive of Wokingham Borough Council, is currently BPP's Chair. He also represents Wokingham Borough Council as 'Lead Authority' for OPE purposes.

A Non-Executive Board will also be consulted via BPEG, ensuring that elected members, the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, the NHS, Fire Authority and other agency stakeholders are involved, informed and able to influence the programme as it develops.

Frequency and notice of meetings

BPP will meet monthly, unless otherwise agreed, with meetings scheduled to last 90 minutes and to be hosted by the Lead Authority. A notice, agenda and any supporting papers will be circulated at least 5 days in advance of the meeting by the Secretary of the Meeting, who will be supplied by the Lead Authority and who will take the minutes of each meeting.

A quorum will be at least six members. Operational leads may send a substitute should they be unable to attend.

Chair

BPP's appointed Chair shall:

- Facilitate discussions in support of BPP's aims and objectives
- Seek to resolve any issues which may delay delivery of BPP's strategic objectives/plans
- Ensure that the decision-making process is informed, fair and appropriately minuted
- Report progress to both the BPEG and OPE representatives as required.

Member responsibilities

- To develop and implement a County wide borderless common estate strategy
- To pro-actively identify opportunities for service transformation, co-location (including but not limited to multi-agency hubs) and regeneration
- To seek to identify potential strategic development sites within and outside public ownership
- To commit to and manage delivery of the Berkshire One Public Estate programme
- To seek to maximise overall grant funding and other available strategic funding, and to explore alternative or innovative funding models to drive economic regeneration and growth across the region in support of the overall strategic brief
- To explore innovative models for delivering housing and employment at pace
- To embrace BPP's suggested principles of partnership working

Principles of partnership working

Key principles shall include:

- Collaboration - adopting a constructive, co-operative and pro-active approach to delivering OPE outcomes
- Mutuality – understanding the common purpose with mutual benefit for the partners and BPP
- Commitment – committing appropriate resources in support of BPP's objectives whether in kind or financially (within reason)
- Clarity – being clear about objectives, roles and accountabilities
- Openness – being open about any difficulties in partnership working
- Benefits realisation – quantifying the added value derived from partnership working
- Fairness – partners will not seek to profit from each other
- Sovereignty – recognising that asset ownership and related decision-making remains with individual partners.

Accountability

Unless otherwise agreed by BPEG (and in accordance with each partners' normal governance arrangements), BPP does not have any statutory or delegated powers other than in relation to the application for and allocation of external funding awarded to BPP.

Its focus is on consultation and influence to achieve shared priorities and vision. It is recognised that any course of action that BPP agrees will have implications for partner organisations and these will need to be fully approved through their normal governance arrangements. It will be the responsibility of each partner to ensure compliance with their own governance procedures.

Membership and representation

Those partners engaged to date are as follows:

Partner	BPEG Representative	Operational Lead
Local Government Association		Mike Brough OPE Regional Adviser
Homes & Communities Agency		Catherine Turner Area Manager
Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership	Tim Smith Chief Executive	Tim Smith Chief Executive
West Berkshire Council	Nick Carter Chief Executive	Richard Turner Property Services Manager
Reading Borough Council	Simon Warren Chief Executive	Giorgio Framalico Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services
Wokingham Borough Council (Lead Authority)	Andy Couldrick Chief Executive (also BPP Chair)	Chris Gillett Service Manager, Strategic Assets
Bracknell Forest Council	Timothy Wheadon Chief Executive	Steve Caplan Chief Officer: Property
Slough Borough Council	Roger Parkin/Ruth Bagley Chief Executive	Joe Carter Assistant Director - Assets, Infrastructure & Regeneration
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead	Andy Milner Chief Executive	Chris Hilton Director of Development & Regeneration
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service	Andy Fry Chief Fire Officer	Alex Brown Strategic Property Manager
Thames Valley Police	Francis Habgood Chief Constable	Peter Smith Acting Strategy & Assets Manager

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Julian Emms Chief Executive	Greg Scott/Mark Davison Director of Estates & Facilities
NHS Property Services	Elaine Hewitt Chief Executive	
Berkshire West CCGs Federation	Cathy Winfield Chief Officer	Rebecca Clegg Acting Chief Finance Officer
Berkshire East CCGs Federation	John Lisle Accountable Officer	Nigel Foster Director of Finance & Performance
Frimley Health NHS Foundation	Andrew Morris Chief Executive	John Smith

Partner representatives will need to ensure that they have delegated authority from their organisations to make decisions on behalf of that organisation.

Aims

With the support of the BPEG, the intention of the BPP is to pursue a collaborative approach to the strategic management of public sector land and property assets across the County, with a view to:

- Achieving enhanced value from the public estate for members of BPP and wider stakeholders including the community;
- Driving savings through more effective property planning, use and management and to release surplus assets for re-development;
- Aligning the public estate to future delivery requirements of the wider public sector where practical;
- Facilitating change in public service delivery through better use of less property, facilitating joined up service delivery with the development of multi-agency hubs wherever practicably possible;
- Promoting and, where practical, facilitating or enabling Place Making within local communities aligned to One Public Estate objectives, implementing a programme of Area Reviews;
- Promoting regeneration of surplus/vacant publicly owned land and property assets across Berkshire to improve provision of new housing and new employment opportunities;
- Facilitating the associated infrastructure growth in support of the overall regeneration brief;
- Exploring greater collaborative working on facilities management taking advantage of the procurement and purchasing power opportunities afforded by viewing the public estate as a borderless common estate.
- Establishing a Memorandum of Understanding initially, but also scoping the options for a single, joined up service vehicle for delivering Operational Property and Facilities Management leading to operational efficiencies, recognising that not all partners may want to participate directly or from the outset.

- Implementing identified quick wins, developing relationships, progressing more strategic/complex projects and generally identifying new opportunities in support of overall One Public Estate objectives.

Berkshire One Public Estate Programme

For the avoidance of doubt, the Berkshire OPE programme must include, but is not limited to, implementation of the detailed Services & Assets Delivery Plan submitted as part of BPP's bid for funding under OPE Phase 4. Said Delivery Plan includes the following key elements:

1. Progressing & accelerating the 14 major projects identified;
2. Area Reviews in Slough, Reading, Wokingham & Bracknell to drive delivery of co-location, asset rationalisation and integrated health & social care (it is noted that a number of potential projects have already been identified for consideration as part of these reviews);
3. Scoping for a multi-agency property vehicle, initially with an FM focus.

Engagement with new & existing stakeholders is also vitally important.

Any additional delivery plans, amendments or objectives agreed by BPP will be minuted.

Funding

Allocation of funding under OPE Phase 4 is both based on the Delivery Plan and subject to agreement with OPE representatives. The proposed breakdown of the Phase 4 award of £450,750 is included at Appendix 2.

The funding breakdown may be subject to change, as agreed between OPE representatives and Berkshire Property Partnership from time to time.

Implementation timeline

A programme for Delivery Plan implementation is to be developed and updated no less than quarterly.

Appendix 1: Phase 4 Services & Assets Delivery Plan

The relevant Services & Assets Delivery Plan for Phase 4 is attached at Appendix 1 to these Terms of Reference.

Appendix 2: Funding Breakdown as at 31/12/16

The funding breakdown may be subject to change, as agreed between OPE representatives and Berkshire Property Partnership from time to time, but the latest breakdown is attached at Appendix 2 to these Terms of Reference.

DRAFT

TO: EXECUTIVE
14 FEBRUARY 2017

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) ORDER
1995 AS AMENDED
DIRECTION UNDER ARTICLE 4(1)**

Director of Environment, Culture and Communities

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Executive's approval to pursue the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction to remove the permitted development right to change offices to residential use within certain key business areas in the Borough without the need for planning permission.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Executive:

- (i) **notes and approves the draft Article 4(1) Direction at Appendix A for the purposes of consultation; and,**
- (ii) **notes and approves the service of notice of the Article 4(1) Direction locally and the notification of the Secretary of State.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Recent evidence gathered for the emerging Local Plan has shown that over the last ten years there has been a net loss of employment floorspace in the Borough. The study also recommends that Bracknell Forest Council should be planning for an increase of nearly 350,000 sqm of additional employment floorspace to support economic growth.
- 3.2 The Council is also aware of concerns raised by a number of local employers that the change of use of neighbouring office buildings within an established employment area to residential uses would undermine the quality of the environment as an attractive business location.
- 3.3 In order to preserve and control the character of the Borough's key business areas as attractive locations for occupiers of office space and help reduce the loss of needed office floorspace it is proposed to remove the permitted development right for such changes of use.
- 3.4 Appendix B identifies the areas which the Council is seeking to protect. These areas are also those protected in the Council's Development Plan as defined employment areas. These cover the Western Business Area in Bracknell, the Eastern Business Area in Bracknell, and the Southern Business Area in Bracknell.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The option of not making an Article 4 Direction has been considered. However, in light of the concerns of local businesses, the forecast future need for employment floorspace and the need to protect the attractiveness of our business areas for existing and potential occupiers, it is considered appropriate to take action.
- 4.2 There is also an option of making an Article 4 Direction with immediate effect as opposed to a Direction with non-immediate effect as proposed. This however would expose the Council to potentially significant compensation claims. The proposed process would mean that the Article 4 Direction will only come into effect following consultation with the owners and occupiers of the properties that would be affected by it.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background Information

- 5.1 Since 30 May 2013, changes to the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) have meant that the conversion of offices to houses or flats does not require planning permission. Such changes are required to follow a prior approval process. This process significantly limits the matters that the Council can take into consideration when considering such proposals. In particular, no account can be taken of the impact on the proposal on the quantity and quality of available business floorspace in the Borough or the impact on existing businesses.
- 5.2 Where the use of permitted development rights has the potential to create the impacts set out above, Local Planning Authorities have the ability to consider making Article 4 Directions to remove such rights within identified areas.
- 5.3 Government advice is that local planning authorities should consider making Article 4 Directions only in those exceptional circumstances where evidence suggests that the exercise of permitted development rights would harm local amenity or the proper planning of the area. In deciding whether an Article 4 Direction would be appropriate, local planning authorities should identify clearly the potential harm that the direction is intended to address.

The harm the direction is intending to address

- 5.4 Planning to support the local economy is an important objective for the Council as set out in the Council's Core Strategy objective J - To maintain high and stable levels of economic growth. Core Strategy Policy CS20 seeks to protect the function of the Borough's defined and major employment areas by setting restrictive criteria against which proposals for alternative uses will be assessed.
- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. It says that to help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.
- 5.6 As part of the evidence base to inform the preparation of a new Local Plan the Council jointly commissioned a study to establish the Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) within which the Borough is located. This established that Bracknell Forest is within a Central Berkshire FEMA along with the Boroughs of Reading,

Wokingham and Windsor and Maidenhead. The FEMA study can be found on this link: <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/evidencebaseforcomprehensivelocalplan>

- 5.7 A further study was jointly commissioned by the Central Berkshire FEMA authorities and the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) to produce an Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA). This study made the following findings:
- The commercial centre of Bracknell stands out as supporting a substantial cluster of B Class employment floorspace in the Central Berkshire FEMA.
 - While a significant amount of new B Class floorspace has been completed within the FEMA over the last 10 years in all the Boroughs apart from Wokingham this has been exceeded by the amount of floorspace lost.
 - In Bracknell Forest the gross loss of B Class floorspace was around 167,100 sqm with the net figure being a loss of 90,600 sqm.
 - The losses are predominantly of office floorspace while industrial floorspace has remained relatively stable over this period.
 - Market signals indicate that while demand for office space in Bracknell has struggled in recent years there are now signs of an uplift.
- 5.8 The study recommends that to meet the NPPF requirement to plan positively for growth Bracknell Forest should plan for at least an additional 348,500sqm of floorspace from 2013 to 2036 which equates to 102.8 ha of employment land.
- 5.9 The Council's monitoring shows that prior approvals have already been granted for the conversion of over 13,000 square metres of office floorspace to residential through landowners exercising their permitted development rights under Class O since their introduction.
- 5.10 There have been concerns expressed by neighbouring businesses when prior approval applications have been made about the impact of such changes on the role of key employment areas. The most recent of these prior approval applications was in the Cain Road area of the Western Business Area, where the neighbouring business raised serious concerns regarding the proposed change of use. It is a significant concern for the Council if the role of these employment areas is diminished and they are no longer attractive for existing and new businesses to locate in.
- 5.11 In order to preserve the quality and integrity of the Borough's key employment areas it is proposed that an Article 4 Direction is made to cover the Defined Employment Areas on the adopted Bracknell Forest Policies Map.

Making an Article 4 Direction

- 5.12 The first step in the process is to consider whether an Article 4 Direction is appropriate, and whether the direction should come into force following consultation or immediately. This report sets out the reasons why it is considered that an Article 4 Direction is appropriate and recommends that it comes into force following consultation. By leaving a period of over twelve months between notification of the Article 4 Direction and it coming into effect the Council will avoid any liability for compensation.

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- 5.13 The second stage is to draft an Article 4 Direction and a proposed draft is attached at Appendix A to this report. Notice of this draft is then served locally and the Secretary of State is notified of its contents.
- 5.14 The regulations require that Notice of an Article 4 Direction shall be given by the local planning authority as follows:
- by local advertisement (as defined in article 1(2) of the GPDO)
 - by site display at no fewer than two locations within the area to which the direction relates (or if the direction relates to a particular development, on that site) for a period of not less than six weeks);
 - individually on every owner and occupier of every part of the land within the area or site to which the direction relates (unless it is impracticable because it is difficult to identify or locate them, or the number of owners or occupiers within the area to which the direction relates would make individual service impracticable- this exemption from individual service of notice does not apply, however, when the owner/occupier is a statutory undertaker or the Crown).
- 5.15 On the same day that notice of an Article 4 Direction is first published or displayed locally, the local planning authority shall notify the Secretary of State. A copy of the direction (and a map defining the area/ site to which it relates) as well as a copy of the local consultation notices should be sent to the relevant address. Where it is not possible to send a copy of the local publicity notices themselves on the same day as those affected by the direction are notified it is acceptable to send a copy of the notices as will be published.
- 5.16 Any representations received during consultation must be taken into account by the local planning authority in determining whether to confirm a direction. Material changes to the direction resulting from consultation will require re-consultation.
- 5.17 The local planning authority shall not confirm a direction until after the expiration of either a period of at least 28 days following the latest date on which any notice relating to the direction was served or published, or such longer period as may be specified by the Secretary of State (after having been notified by the local planning authority of making a direction). Following this the Council would be in a position to confirm the Direction.
- 5.18 If confirmed by the local planning authority, a non-immediate direction comes into force on the date specified in the notice that the local planning authority served on those that would be affected. Taking into account representations received during consultation may require that the direction comes into force later than specified in the initial notice of the direction. Once confirmed, directions are permanent (unless cancelled by the local planning authority or Secretary of State).
- 5.19 In all cases the notice of an Article 4 Direction must:
- Include a description of the development and the area/site to which the direction relates (as the case may be);
 - Include a statement of the effect of the direction;
 - Specify that the direction is made under article 4(1) of the GPDO;
 - Name a place where a copy of the direction and a copy of a map defining the area/ site to which it relates (as the case may be) can be seen at all reasonable hours;
- 5.20 Where notice is of the making of any Article 4 Direction the notice must specify a period of at least 21 days, stating the date on which that period begins, within which

any representations concerning the direction may be made to the local planning authority

- 5.21 Where notice is of the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction (as proposed by this report), the notice must also specify a date on which it is proposed that the direction will come into force (which must be at least 28 days later, but no longer than two years after, the date upon which the consultation period begins)

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 sets out classes of development for which a grant of planning permission is automatically granted, provided that no restrictive condition is attached or that the development is exempt from the permitted development rights.
- 6.2 Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (GPDO) empowers the planning authority to withdraw specified Permitted Development (PD) rights which would otherwise apply under the GPDO. Where an Article 4 Direction is in existence, planning permission will be required for the development covered by the direction. This gives a local planning authority the opportunity to consider a proposal in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.3 Currently, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O of the GPDO only requires prior approval from the local authority for a determination of the transport and highways impacts of the development, and contamination, flooding risks and the impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development. As set out in paragraphs 3.1-3.3 the Council seeks to preserve and control the character of the Borough's key business areas and the further loss of employment floorspace. The statutory criteria applicable to the exercise of current PD rights in respect of the change of office to residential uses do not afford the Council any scope to remedy this planning harm.
- 6.3 Article 4 Directions can only be used to withdraw PD rights under the GPDO. They cannot be applied retrospectively to development undertaken before a Direction comes into force, or to development that has commenced at the time that a Direction comes into force. It should be noted that where submission of a planning application is required as a result of withdrawal of permitted development rights through an Article 4 direction, the Council cannot charge a planning application fee.
- 6.5 As set out in the report, national guidance advises that the use of article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area. The potential harm that the direction is intended to address should be clearly identified. There should be a particularly strong justification for the withdrawal of permitted development rights relating to a wide area. Paragraphs 5.1-5.11 clearly address the Council's justifications for the recommendations.
- 6.6 The procedures for making an Article 4 direction are set out in schedule 3 of the General Permitted Development Order as set out at paragraphs of the report 5.12 – 5.21. The recommendation seeks the approval of the Executive Committee to the draft Article 4 Direction for the purposes of commencing the initial stages of this

process by undertaking the specified period of statutory consultation and serving the requisite formal notification upon consultees and the Secretary of State.

- 6.7 Members will note that an Article 4 direction can take immediate effect (an 'immediate Article 4 direction'), or can take effect after a period of consultation (a non-immediate Article 4 direction'). The choice of directions can have implications upon the future liability for costs. The recommendation (i) therefore seeks approval of a draft non-immediate Article 4 Direction for the reasons set out at paragraph 4.2 of the report.
- 6.8 The statutory provisions governing the compensation provisions applicable to Article 4 directions is set out in sections 107 and 108 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Compensation) (England) Regulations 2015.
- 6.9 Section 108 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) specifies the circumstances under which compensation is payable for the refusal or a conditional grant of planning permission which was formerly granted by a development order or a local development order. In regards to immediate Article 4 directions a local planning authority can only be liable to pay compensation to individuals affected by the withdraw of permitted development if it subsequently refuses planning permission for development which would otherwise have been permitted development or grants planning permission subject to more limiting conditions than the General Permitted Development Order. The grounds on which compensation can be claimed are limited to abortive expenditure or other loss or damage directly attributable to the withdrawal of permitted development rights.
- 6.10 Section 108 has been recently amended to deal with those circumstances where permission granted under a development order has been withdrawn for development of a 'prescribed description' which is defined in section 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Compensation) (England) Regulations 2015. The consequence of this has been the limitation of circumstances where compensation is payable for 'prescribed description' development. In cases where notice of the withdrawal of the permitted development rights was published at least 12 months before the direction took effect as proposed by the recommendation no compensation will be payable.
- 6.12 The recommendations of the report are reserved to the Executive Committee in accordance with Part 5, sub-paragraph 5.6(2) of the Bracknell Forest Council Constitution, November 2016.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.13 There are no financial implications arising from this report and the process of preparing the Article 4 Direction and consulting upon it can be met from within existing budgets. Following the consultation the Council will need to consider the risks associated with any claims for compensation which may arise if the direction is confirmed.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.14 Not required

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.15 There is a risk of compensation if the Article 4 Direction is implemented following Consultation and before a twelve month period has elapsed after publication of the

notice of withdrawal of permitted development rights. Where compensation is payable its scope is limited to;

- where the Council refuses planning permission for development, which would otherwise have been permitted development; or
- Grants planning permission subject to more limiting conditions than the General Permitted Development Order.

6.16 The grounds on which compensation can be claimed are limited to abortive expenditure or other loss or damage directly attributable to the withdrawal of permitted development rights. In the case of the withdrawal of the right to change the use of an office building to a residential use the compensation could be substantial.

6.17 Following consultation consideration can be given to the need for a 12 month grace period before implementing the Article 4 Direction to avoid any compensation claims being made as referred to in paragraph 6.13 above.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 In order to make an Article 4 Direction all owners and occupiers of buildings and land within the area proposed to be covered by the Direction must be notified and given the opportunity to make representations. The Council must take into account any representations received prior to making the Direction.

7.2 The procedure for this is described in paragraphs 5.12 to 5.18 above. It is proposed that the 6 week notification period would begin on Monday 27 February 2017 and close at 5pm on Monday 10th April. Following consideration of the consultation a provisional date of the 14th June has been set for Confirmation of the order.

Background Papers

Appendix A Draft Article 4 Direction

Appendix B Maps showing the areas to be covered by the Article 4 Direction

Contact for further information

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TO: THE EXECUTIVE

14 FEBRUARY 2017

TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – LEISURE REVIEW PROCUREMENT PLAN
Director of Environment, Culture & Communities

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the Procurement Plan to market test and potentially outsource the management of the three major leisure sites; Bracknell Leisure Centre (BLC), Coral Reef (CR) and Downshire Golf Complex (DGC).

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Procurement Plan for the market testing and potential outsourcing of the three major leisure sites is approved.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Leisure review forms part of the Council's wider Transformation Programme and has been exploring the ways in which the savings target of £1m could be achieved. It has been identified that the outsourcing of these three major sites could result in a saving in the region of £650,000. The Plan Phase Gateway review held on 8 December 2016 saw members support the direction of travel to market test these sites, and also support the Heads of Terms upon which any agreement with a contractor will be based.
- 3.2 In line with the Contract Standing Orders it is required that procurement plans over the value of £400k require sign off by the Director and Executive Member. However, in light of the significant nature of this procurement the approval of The Executive is sought in respect of this procurement plan.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Various sourcing options were considered during the Analyse Phase of the review including retaining the service in-house and cessation of the services but the current proposal was the proposed way forward.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The leisure review is led by the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities, supported by a Project Board involving managers from outside the leisure field who can contribute to the review and external specialist advisors, Activist. The project has reviewed the performance of the Council's leisure offering within the borough and examined the financial position associated with operating the leisure facilities at all leisure sites.
- 5.2 The recommendations from the Gateway Review was to market test the three major leisure sites based on the Heads of Terms supported by Members who attended.

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Those Heads of Terms are the framework for detailed specifications and contract terms which are in the process of being finalised.

- 5.2 As this is above the OJEU threshold, the opportunity to tender will be advertised on OJEU as well as the South East Business Portal and Contracts Finder.
- 5.3 The cost quality split is shown in the procurement plan.
- 5.4 The anticipated timetable for the procurement process will be as follows:

Task	DATE
Procurement Plan Sign Off	21 February 2017
Project advertised on the S.E Business Portal	1 March 2017
PQQ response deadline	31 March 2017
PQQ evaluation process complete	13 April 2017
ITT issued	14 April 2017
ITT response deadline	13 July 2017
Evaluation Process Complete	October 2017
Executive decision to award	November 2017
Contract award	December 2017
Contract start date	1 March 2018

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 Legal comments have been made in the Procurement Plan.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The financial implications of the procurement exercise are set out under section 5 of the Procurement Plan. The costs of the exercise will be met from the Transformation Programme.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Attached as Annex A to the Procurement Plan.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Key risks and issues identified within the Procurement Plan itself.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 The Analyse Phase gateway Review was held on 14 July 2016 where members were asked to support a number of recommendations, one being that the outsourcing of the three major sites be considered in further detail.

A member workshop was held on 2 November 2016 and a staff workshop on 3 November 2016; the feedback received from these sessions has informed the formulation of the Heads of Terms.

The Plan Phase Gateway Review took place on 8 December 2016 where members were asked to support the direction of travel to market test the facilities and to agree the Heads of Terms.

A Public Meeting was held on 5 January 2017 in order to inform members of the public prior to the decision proceeding to the Executive for a decision on the procurement plan.

- 7.2 Council Officers including the Head of Procurement, Borough Solicitor and the Borough Treasurer were consulted in the drafting of this plan.

Contact for further information

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