



# High Needs Block

Schools Forum briefing  
November 2021

# Project Scope

- Project Objective, Problem Definition, Timescale and Savings Impact

## Project Objective:

Reduce deficit of the High Needs Block (HNB) element of the schools budget by implementing and monitoring key elements of the SEND commissioning plan and undertaking a service review for the SEND team.

## Project Problem Definition:

The HNB grant provided by the DfE to LA's is intended to fund support for SEND children in the borough. The grant, even after the latest increase, is insufficient to meet demands despite an ambitious cost saving and improvement programme. The HNB budget over spent by £4.8m in 2020-21 and the current forecasted deficit at 31 March 2023 (September) has increased to £20.4m. The DfE has strengthened their financial monitoring arrangements and interventions with those LAs experiencing the most significant difficulties which includes BFC.

## Timescale:

3 years

## Savings Impact:

TBC

# Project Workstreams

- Project Workstreams

- 1. Governance Framework & processes**

- 2. Building relationships**

- 3. Service & Process Review**

- a. Service Review

- b. Process Review: assessments

- 4. Data**

- a. Update sufficiency analysis & align data to service needs

- 5. Developing the market for SEND / AP & Support**

- a. Specially Resourced Provisions (SRP)

- b. Banding Matrix

- c. Update against priorities and deliverables

- 6. Commissioning**

- a. East Berkshire Integrated Therapies (detailed update to follow)

- b. Short Breaks and future commissioning approach (detailed update to follow)

- c. Alternative Provision (AP) - Review Quality Assurance & Due Diligence processes and Commissioning approach

- d. Explore effective routes to market for complex placements

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# 1) Governance Framework and processes

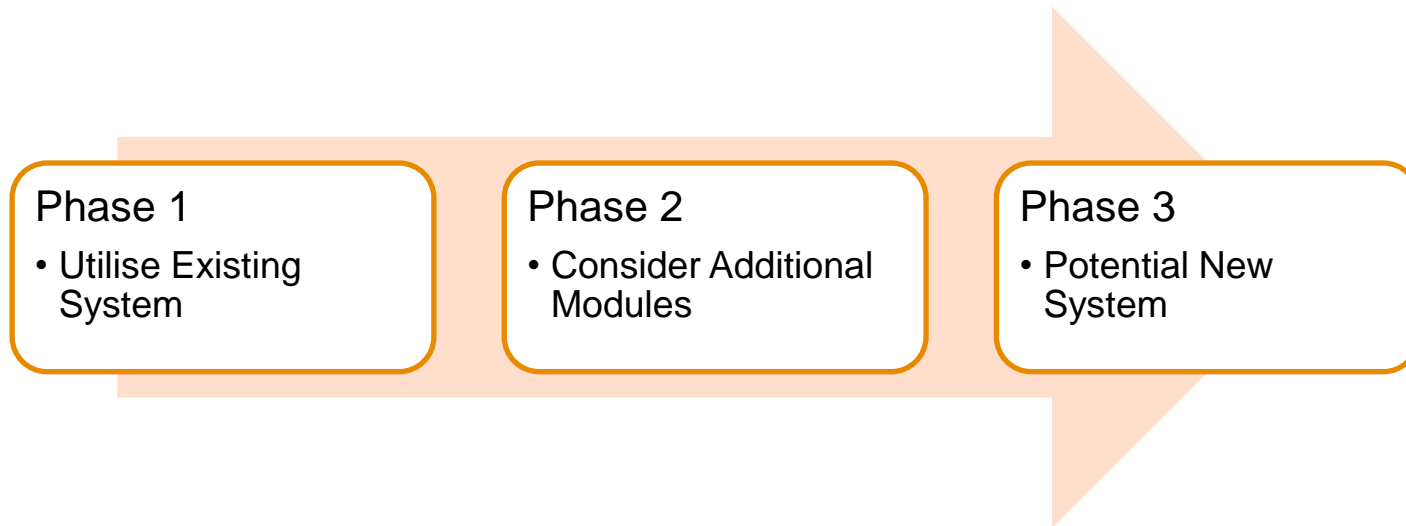
- Capita ONE update
- Emma Shenton and Mike Carne are leading work on improvements to Capita ONE between now and end of December 2021 and have split this piece of work down into three phases:
  - Phase 1 – Utilise the existing system
  - Phase 2 – Consider additional modules
  - Phase 3 – Potential new system

# 1) Governance Framework and processes

- Capita ONE update (cont.)
- Priority focus at the moment is working on Phase 1, Stage 1 – Urgent Basics – We have determined with Nicola and the team that the urgent basics that need capturing within the Capita ONE system and the priorities at this stage are:
  - Capturing where we are in the assessment process
  - Making sure all children with EHCP's are in the system – records do not have to be complete but a minimal level of essential data should be captured.
  - A meeting with Rhian and Paul S to discuss data – clear understanding on what the data they need to be there, what needs to be cleansed, what needs to be sorted and what is the basic reporting.
  - Planning how we are going to get the current data
  - Meeting regarding the assessment stage (Start of stage 2) the week Emma is back from leave
  - Making sure the right caseworker is assigned to the child
- We now have access to the Capita ONE test system so we can start planning how the data will be inputted and assessing the fields and modules currently within the system and can begin checking the system configuration.

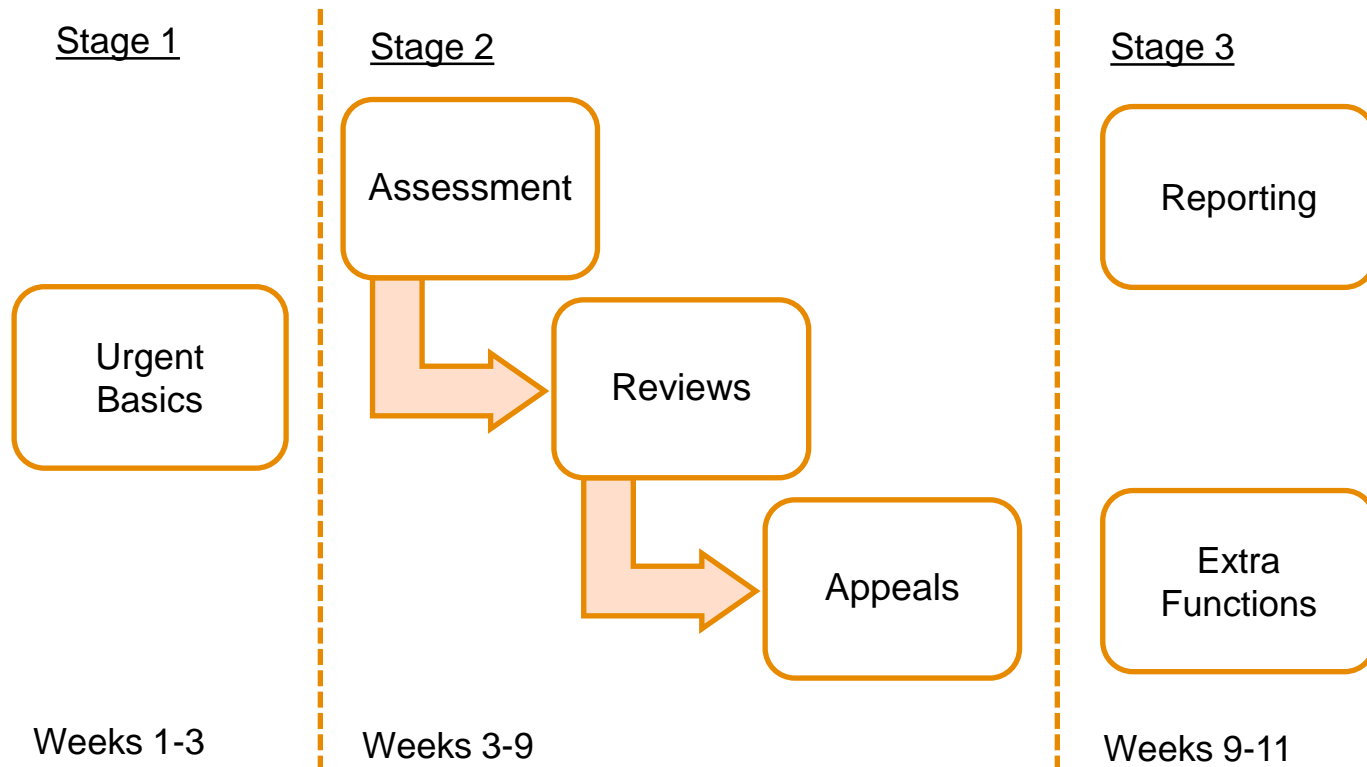
# Systems Workstream

- Phases of Workstream



# Phase 1 - Detail

- Detailed Implementation





# Each Stage to Include

- Click to add text

## System Configuration Check

- What fields do we need?
- Anything we need to change in configuration?
- Make changes

## Training

- Sufficient rough and ready training to enable short term activity

## New Entries

- Starting to use system

## Feedback

- Capture new entries feedback and RAG rate the opportunities (R-Immediate, A-this phase, G – future phases)

## Catch up data

- Begin using individuals spare time to populate missing live records

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## 2) Building Relationships

- SEND communication with schools and families

### **We have prioritised our communication with schools by:**

- Sending out to all schools a 'Who is Who' list and contact details for all SEND support officers attached to each school in the borough and as well as the link professional attached to each of the schools
- Putting in place Individual schools meetings with the SEND team manager with a focus on annual reviews outstanding for the last academic year and date setting for the reviews for this academic year with a focus on transition
- We will use the meeting to update SEND school contacts as well as discuss children who are currently undergoing assessment
- Linking with IASS and the PCF to prepare a newsletter for families and develop locality 'drop-ins' for families to commence in November

## 2) Building Relationships

- Keeping in touch – regular SEND meetings
- Half termly primary head teacher meetings from Autumn 2021 will now take place across the three local areas and half termly headteacher meetings with secondary headteachers commencing in November
- Half termly SENDCo network meetings took place in October and are planned for December
- Half termly individual SENDCo meetings with the SEND team managers are taking place throughout October and are planned in December

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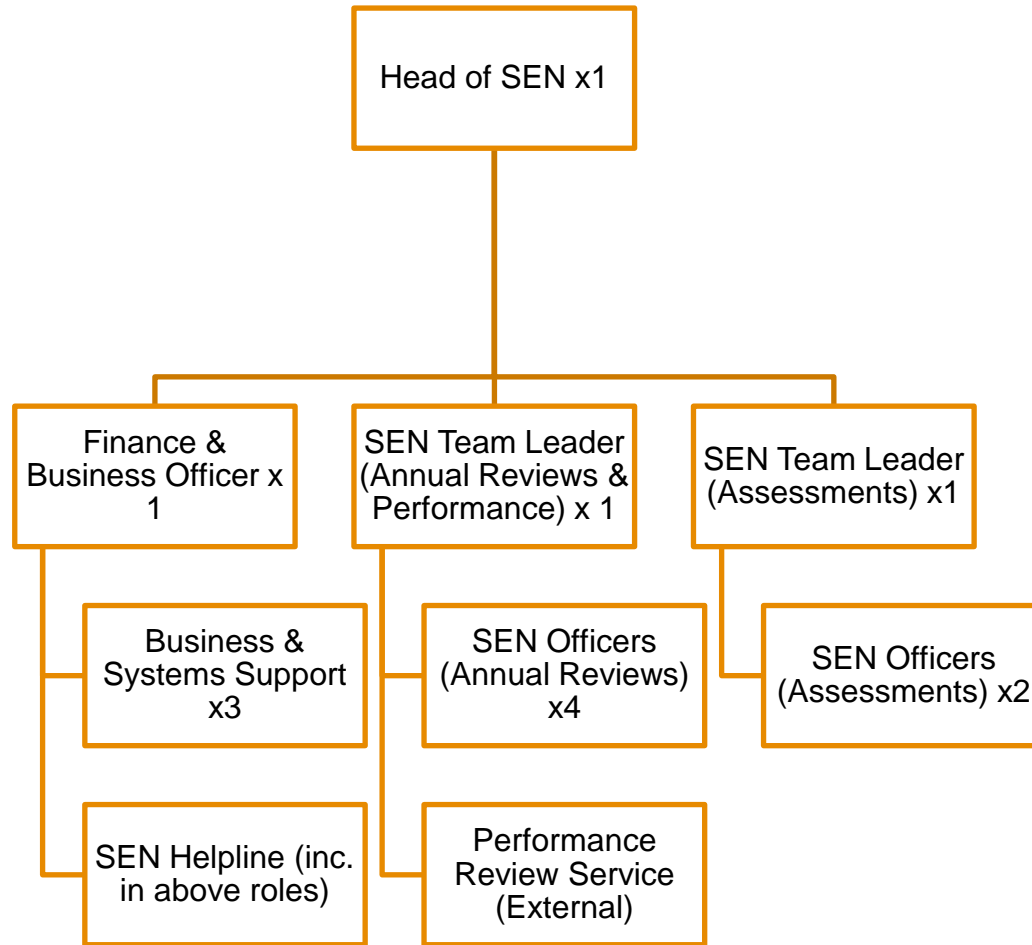
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## 3a) Service Review

- Update on Service Review
- Modelling finalised: **15<sup>th</sup> October**
- JDs to be drafted/reviewed/approved for all roles in new structure: **29<sup>th</sup> October**
- CL to work with HR/Finance to complete impact documents: **2<sup>nd</sup> November**
- CL to meet with CE/NJ to get sign-off: **3<sup>rd</sup> November**
- CL to present 3 docs to PY/ PC (with CE): **4<sup>th</sup> November**
- CE to draft paper for Grainne/DMT/CMT: **5<sup>th</sup> November**
- Paper to be presented and approved @ CMT (allowing 2 weeks for DMT/CMT process): **19<sup>th</sup> November**
- Consultation to start: **22<sup>nd</sup> November (30 days)**
- Consultation to end: **21<sup>st</sup> December**
- Post consultation CMT approval required: **(TBC)**
- Recruitment to begin: **January 2022**

# 3a) Service Review

- Proposed SEN Size and Shape



Information Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)

Bracknell Parent and Carer Forum

## 3b) Process Review – Assessments

- Final remaining action regarding website pages for SEND in progress



# Project Workstreams

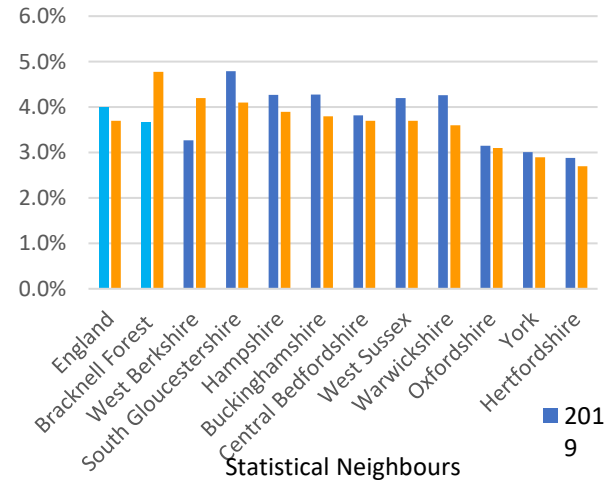
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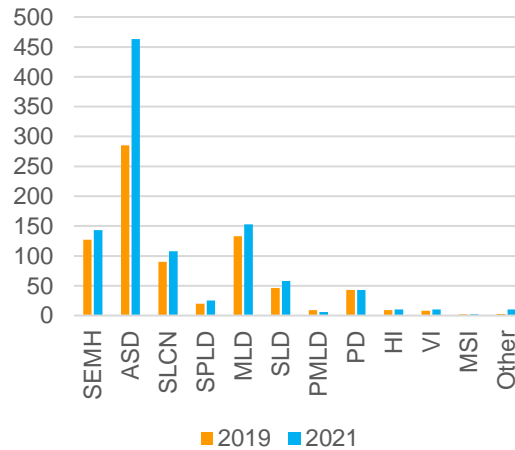
# 4a) Sufficiency Plan – Key Headlines

- Updated Sufficiency Plan to be circulated in October

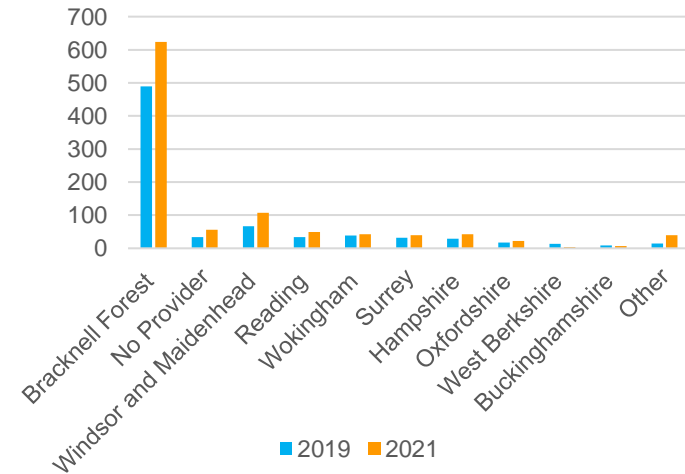
Percentage of CYP with EHCP in 2021



Primary Needs of CYP with EHCP



Location of providers for CYP with EHCP



- The percentage of CYP with EHCP in Bracknell Forest is higher than England and our statistical neighbours.
- ASD remains the highest primary need, however ASD has increased by 62%, and MLD by 15% with SEMH increasing by 13%.
- Of the 1031 CYP with an EHCP, the needs of 624 of these are met in placements within the borough (figure 21). For CYP not placed in Bracknell Forest, the majority are placed in the nearby boroughs of Windsor & Maidenhead, Reading and Wokingham
- Where CYP have been placed in special schools outside the borough specifically in independent and non-maintained special schools, the most common primary needs are SEMH and ASD. There are 86 CYP with these two primary needs who are placed outside the borough

- The total spend on provisions for special school placements in other local authorities, BFC mainstream school and in independent schools has shown a notable increase. Over the three-year period (2019-2021)
- The needs with the highest average placement cost are PMLD and SEMH where over half these CYP are placed outside the borough or in independent and non-maintained schools.
- The total spend on out of borough special schools grew by 31% with the cost of each placement at those schools having increased by an average of 3%. The total spend on independent schools increased by 144% in three years and the cost of each placement only increased by 22%.

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# 5a) SRP – current position

Blue = new provision    yellow = existing provision    \* = R & KS1 to start    \*\* = YrR only

Setting	Specialism	Nursery	KS1	KS2	KS3&4	October 2021 Uptake	Places when fully commissioned
<b>North Bracknell</b>							
Birch Hill	Autism & MLD	x	✓	✓	x	5	10
Harmans Water	SEMH	x	✓	✓	x	4	14
Kings Academy	ASC	x	✓	✓	x	1	10
<b>South Bracknell</b>							
Owlsmoor	SLD (SEN Unit)	x	✓	✓	x	5	8
	Communication & Interaction / ASC						
Rainbow		✓	✓	x	x	2	10
Meadow Vale	Speech & Language	x	✓	✓	x	4	TBC
<b>Crowthorne and Sandhurst</b>							
Sandy Lane	Autism and / or Language & Communication	x	✓	✓	x	9	14
The Pines	MLD with Autism or Speech & Language needs	x	✓	✓	x	9	20
The Rise	ASC	x	x	x	✓	56	56
<b>Total</b>						<b>95</b>	<b>142</b>

## 5b) Banding Matrix

- Work is currently being undertaken by the Head Teachers Working Group
- Work will then commence for specialised services to review, update and agree Head Teacher Working Group outputs

# Setting the Scene:

1. High quality outcomes supported by the most appropriate service in education, health and care
2. Back mainstream schools to better meet the needs of the majority of children with SEND
3. Make the EHCP process more streamlined and consistent, and increase capacity in the specialist sector to place children close to home, at a sustainable cost

Co-production with children, young people, their families and carers to continue being the underpinning principle across the system

**Bracknell Forest strategy closely aligned with DfE priorities**

# Setting the Scene:



Department  
for Education

## Groups of schools model

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For the vast majority of children with SEND, they can and should have their needs met in mainstream settings.

One of our biggest areas for reform is aimed at reforming SEND provision in mainstream settings so that it is easier for schools to access resource without the need for an EHCP and they are incentivised to intervene early. We are exploring a groups of schools model, to put a greater share of budgets in the hands of local school leaders whilst recognising that SEND provision is generally above what an individual school would be able to arrange.

The overarching aims of a groups of schools model is therefore to:

- Put funding for the majority of children with SEND firmly in the hands of schools to make access to the necessary provision easier, quicker, supporting improved early intervention and consistent high-quality support
  - Promote co-operation and inclusion through a clear funding, incentive and accountability structure which leads to improved financial sustainability, without creating unnecessary complexity or burden
-

## 5c) Update against priorities and deliverables

- Our Three Key Priorities

To support schools in developing local provision by strengthening an early help offer of **SEND health and education local teams around our mainstream schools**

Working closely with the Commissioning team to review and develop **responsive, flexible, and effective local specialist provision**

Ensuring the special educational needs team **responds to EHCP requests and reviews and the allocation of resources** efficiently and effectively, resolves concern early and **performs highly against its performance indicators**

A SEND programme has been developed and project leads meet fortnightly. A weekly sit – rep has been developed to **drive through improved performance**



# Key Deliverables: Priority One – September 2021

- Transformation of the SEND Support Services
  - A recovery programme is in place for the completion of out of time assessments
  - Roll out is now taking place for cycle 4 of the multi-agency quality assurance of EHCPs
  - Specific focused work for children with EHCPs transitioning is being closely monitored
  - Additional legal and officer resources with daily monitoring is in place to address the backlog of complaints and tribunals
  - Decision Making Groups are being finalised and implemented to ensure tight governance for the allocation of specialised resources for special schools/SRPs/allocation of local resources
  - Terms of reference have been drafted and consultation rolled out with stakeholders
  - A SEND interim leadership structure has been developed along with job descriptions and implemented
  - Demand modelling is in the final stages of completion
  - Business case developed for the new structure and awaiting financial costing based on the outcomes of the demand modelling

# Key Deliverables: Priority Two – September 2021

- Developing responsive, flexible and effective local specialist provision
- Planning is now completed, and individual desk top school documentation developed for the roll out of the independent schools' review for pupils currently accessing the provision and will commence w/c 18 October.
- SLA template has been finalised for SRPs and decision-making groups (including draft terms of reference) now in place for the allocation of resources led by SEND managers who over-see the specialist provision. Individual meetings with HTs are in place for November as well as HT/SRP network meetings to share the new documentation and governance arrangements. Further work is taking place to consider gaps in SRP provision across each of the three localities at Key Stage three.
- Initial discussions have taken place with the special school to develop outreach for mainstream schools
- Work is due to commence to develop the service criteria for accessing special school and SRPs and monthly reporting with the team managers to ensure accountability and escalate requests for additional resources.

# Key Deliverables: Priority Three – September 2021

- Building the SEND early help local team and offer around mainstream settings
- SEND specialised teams are being reconfigured to work across three clusters to maximise integrated working
- Individual and network meetings with all school leaders and SENCOs and the SEND cluster team are in the first roll out
- Regular meetings are in place with IASS and the PCF to play a strategic role within the SEND programme and in generating and shaping of solutions.
- Development of an early support offer for individual families including drop ins, professional meetings, and networks for parents/carers is underway working closely with IASS
- The service is working closely with IASS to put in place a SEND young people's forum to play a key role in shaping the work of the programme

# Key Metrics

- Key metrics will include:
  - **Greater inclusion** of children educated in their local community school
  - **Fewer** pupils in **segregated independent** provision
  - **Reduction** in **complaints, mediations, appeals and tribunals**
  - **Reduction** in **exclusions**
  - **Less demand and pressure on high-cost** provision
  - **Improving outcomes for children and young people**

# Challenges going forward

- Key challenges
  - The disruption caused by the re-design of the SEN support service and the changeover of staff to implement the interim structure
  - The longstanding systemic issues around governance and allocation of resources means the changes in culture and systems will take time to embed the new processes needed
  - The change in culture and ways of working to ensure co-production of services with families and schools and capturing and acting on improvements needed
  - Prioritising really robust and regular communication with all our stakeholders

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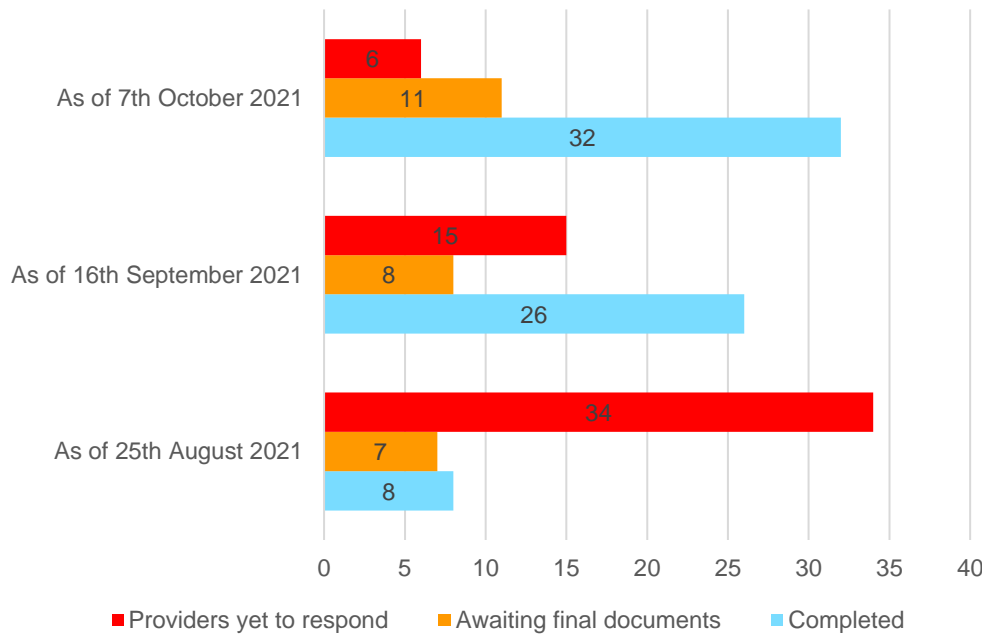
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## 6) Commissioning

- Updates
- **East Berkshire Children and Young Peoples Integrated Therapies Project** - work to explore joint commissioning options with Slough and RBWM resumed in October 2021. Next update to be provided in January 2022 when next steps and scope of work have been agreed. Work to review Speech and Language Therapy services delivered within Bracknell Forest will be completed by Nichola Jones and Manjit Hogston as part of the quarterly contract monitoring with Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
- **Short Breaks recommissioning** – Strategic Procurement Plan is being developed and will be taken to DMT in Autumn 2021. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) and Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) are underway. Parent/Carer and service user consultations will take place in November/December 2021. Tender process will commence in January 2022 with governance via DMT and Childrens Social Care.
- **Quality Assurance & Due Diligence processes** – Joint briefing note developed by Commissioning and SEN and shared. (Further detail provided in Slides 4, 5 and 6).
- **Individual Placement Agreements (IPA's) for SEN out of area independent school placements** – SEN to retrospectively issue IPA's where missing (Estimated number of missing IPA's 270). Resource within SEN identified to undertake work and approximately 25% of missing IPA's have been drafted to date, with a target of 31<sup>st</sup> December to issue all missing IPA's.

# Retrospective Due Diligence Process

- Commissioning



## Providers yet to respond

Provider	DD status	No of CYP	Associated Spend £
New Barn School	No response	4	245,951
Serendipity	No response	1	66,987
TLG Reading	No response	1	5,569
Southlands Residential	No response	3	333,265
Purbeck – Cambian Group	No response	1	27,593
St Edwards	No response	1	27,798
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>707,163</b>

- The number of providers successfully completing retrospective due diligence checks continue to increase as shown in the graph above.
- We are yet to receive communications from **6 providers** named in the table above despite chaser emails
- We have **10 CYP** on placement with these providers

with an associated cost of **£707, 163** per academic year

- It is the commissioning position that no further invoices are paid to these 6 providers until they engage with the Due Diligence process
- This option is open to Bracknell Forest Council legally and contractually



# Project highlight report – High Needs Block

**Aim:** Reduce deficit of the High Needs Block budget by implementing and monitoring key elements of the SEND Commissioning Plan, and undertaking a service review for the SEND Team.

## Project Health

Rationale	Engagement	Progress	Resource	Outcomes	Total
4	4	4	4	3	76 %

## Status summary

Recruitment issues mentioned in previous report have been largely resolved, with key posts within the SEN Team filled on an interim basis, allowing progress against key deliverables to continue

## Delivered in last period

- Service review continuing to progress - demand modelling completed
- Stakeholder relationship-building is ongoing, with significant progress made against development of relationships including but not limited to: schools; parents and carers; Social Care; Public Health
- Schools Forum Sub-Group have provided input on banding matrix (see below for next steps)

## Planned delivery

- Timeline outlined for SEN Service Review, including input from Finance and HR (recruitment to begin in Jan 2022)
- Review of Capita ONE is ongoing. Three initial phases (to be completed between now and end of December 2021) have been identified and are in progress
- Review by SEN and specialist services teams (including Finance) of banding matrix proposals
- Retrospective Due Diligence and Individual Placement Agreements on track for completion by Dec 2021 by Commissioning
- Embed processes and procedures for placements into SRPs – SLAs due to be signed off on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021

## Financial health



### Savings

Year	Target	Projection
2021/22	TBC	TBC
2022/23 +	TBC	TBC
<b>Total</b>	TBC	TBC

### How will the savings be achieved?

- Demand projection for places and development of provision across Bracknell Forest Council
- Commissioning review, quality assurance and procurement framework
- Early support localised model
- Shared accountability and decision-making on spend within a local model

### Is any further work required to validate savings?

The savings will be delivered...		
Early	On time	Late
		✓

# Project highlight report – High Needs Block

## Top risks and issues

Description	RAG status	Mitigation
SEND Service Review	Orange	Demand modelling now completed. Requires Finance and HR input, job descriptions to be completed, and CMT sign-off. Mitigation to avoid delay includes: meetings are being pre-booked with Finance and HR, and 2-week contingency has been identified for CMT sign-off before consultation is due to begin
Single points of failure (SEND team)	Orange	To be addressed in service review to eliminate areas where single points of failure are a risk
Limited understanding of roles & responsibilities and needs between stakeholders	Orange	To be addressed by building relationships workstream
Scope Creep	Orange	PID drafted in Aug 21 and shared with AD & interim HOS outlining what is within the project scope – change to scope requests to be send to Business Change team
Currently no framework in place around provider commissioning	Orange	Workstream added to address this together with commissioning (linked to complex placements milestone) due for completion December 2021
SRP Savings – Unable to generate savings in the first 3 years	Red	To be discussed by HOS and Finance to clarify position

## Milestones

Milestone	Deadline	RAG status	Comment
SEND Service Review	Consultation due to begin end of November 2021	Orange	Demand modelling now completed, consultation start date is contingent on previous deadlines being met (please see risk log on left-hand side for further details.)
Specially Resourced Provision (SRP)	September 2021	Green	In progress against new target deadline – SLAs due to be finalised 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2021
Banding / Funding Matrix	April 2022	Green	In progress
Short Breaks (commissioning)	Spring 2022	Green	Currently under review
Alternative Provision (commissioning)	Spring 2022	Orange	Ongoing (in review), HOS reviewing this currently. Significant stakeholder engagement ongoing. Work to finalise Commissioning Framework also ongoing, alongside discussions re. legislation.
Integrated Therapies (commissioning)	Summer 2022	Green	In progress, HOS reviewing this currently
Complex placements	Summer 2022	Orange	In progress
Governance Framework and Processes	Summer 2022	Orange	Capita One proposal being investigated
Building Relationships	Summer 2022	Orange	Significant positive reciprocal engagement now taking place between SEN and key stakeholders

## Any decisions required / exceptions to raise?